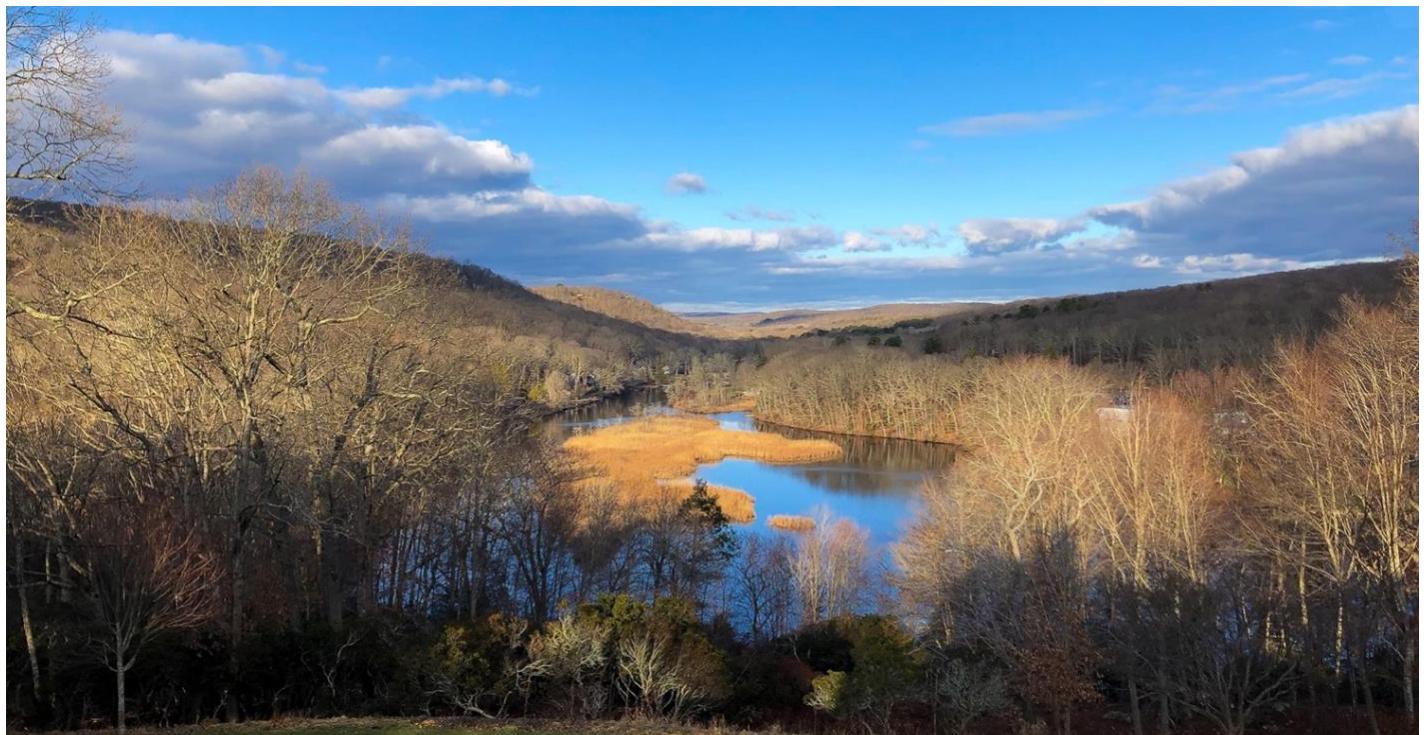


2025
Plan of Conservation and Development
Lyme, Connecticut



Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission
Effective _____, 2025

Acknowledgements

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission appreciates the dedication of these volunteers who produced the 2025 POCD Survey and report.

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2025 Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Updating the Plan

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission has completed its 2025 Town Plan of Conservation and Development, as required by State law. Lyme has maintained a consistent vision for its future since the first plan was prepared in 1964 and was updated in 1990, 2001, and 2015. As in 2015, a detailed questionnaire was made available to Lyme property owners, registered voters, and active emergency service volunteers, in both online and paper versions. The 2025 questionnaire repeated some of the questions asked in the 2001 and 2015 versions and also asked additional questions designed to address current issues. See [Methodology](#).

The 2025 survey showed that residents remain strong in their desire to preserve Lyme's rural environment and natural resources, and they remain willing to travel outside Lyme for employment, shopping and services in order to maintain that rural environment.

A Vision of Lyme

Lyme is a quiet rural community. Scattered homes lie among the wooded hills and along the clear streams flowing down to the coves and marshes of the Connecticut River estuary. Sailors returned to Hamburg Cove after time on the water. Life in Lyme has continued to have a timeless, unhurried quality. There's an aged, well-worn character to its landscape with houses and the few commercial and civic uses fitting comfortably on the land, even with the addition of the new Town Hall and Public Library. Lyme once had more industry and manufacturing, with quarrying, lumbering, fishing and farming providing employment for Lyme families, but time has removed most traces of such activity. Through the ups and downs of the economy during the time since the 2015 Plan, Lyme has continued to remain quietly "off the beaten path." According to respondents in all surveys, they intend to keep it that way.

Lyme residents continue to have a strong appreciation for the natural resources that bless the area. The Connecticut River Estuary and its tributaries are recognized nationally and internationally as a unique natural area. Preservation of these special resources, in many areas of the lower River Valley, have been assured through a series of connected greenways that preserve the water quality, habitat and visual quality of the community. Within the balance of the Town's regulatory authority and the landowner's rights, existing views and vistas have been and will continue to be preserved. The people of Lyme will still be able to look at the stars, unhindered by light pollution from nearby development.

Lyme residents continue to appreciate their sense of community, but they value the privacy provided by the rural landscape. Responses to the 2025 survey indicate that residents continue to be willing to forego easy access to retail businesses and services, and they remain willing to commute longer distances so that they may enjoy the peace that Lyme provides. In-town services, as evidenced by the

recent Town Hall building and Public Library, will be modest in size and be located only in areas where such uses already exist. Hamburg Cove will still provide a refuge to boaters.

Lyme will not attempt to become frozen in time, but will continue to adjust to the demands and opportunities of modern life. As new technologies create the possibilities of new lifestyles, Lyme will adjust its regulations and requirements to allow people to work at home or to live in non-traditional family households. Changes will occur as a result of our changing society, but in a way that preserves the quality of life and natural resources of Lyme.

In the Midst of Change

Through the early 2000's and continuing into the past decade, Southeastern Connecticut has experienced a shift in its economy, moving from a very heavy reliance on the defense industry to significant new economic activity in tourism and biotechnical research. At the same time, there has been a move toward more in-home work, made possible by better Internet service, which is dramatically changing the way we do business. The recent COVID epidemic accelerated the trend toward working from home, as well as a population exodus from the cities to rural areas. As with other shoreline towns and rural areas, Lyme has experienced real estate price increases largely due to population shifts resulting from the pandemic. As was the case in 2001 and 2015, the public's awareness of the uniqueness of the lower Connecticut River continues to grow, as does the interest in protecting "one of the last great places."

Challenges

In the next 10 years, Lyme's greatest challenge will be how to protect and preserve the town's rural character and natural resources. Volunteer participation in community activities has been encouraged and residents continue to respond, all while continuing to respect residents' desire for privacy in a peaceful and serene setting. The Town should continue to allow new development at a scale and design which is compatible with the rural landscape. Efforts should be continued to increase population diversity through a variety of present and additional housing opportunities for various income levels.

Recommendations

Lyme has been largely successful in directing its past growth in a manner compatible with the Town's vision. The 2025 Plan update recommends that current policies and practices be continued. Land use regulations should continue to be reviewed to ensure that tools are included to better manage future development. Continued emphasis should be given to the proven successful working relationship with private land owners for open space preservation outside the regulatory process. Collection and maintenance of up-to-date information on Lyme's natural and human resources will continue to be essential to informed decision making. Additional emphasis should continue to be placed on acquisition of permanent Open Space, while allowing the traditional community land uses of farming, forestry and agriculture. It will be essential to continue to limit non-residential development, encourage appropriate design and scale for new residential structures, and encourage population diversity.

INTRODUCTION

a. Statutory Responsibility

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) requires that all local Planning Commissions periodically review and update the local Plan of Conservation and Development and adopt such amendments as the Commission deems necessary to update the Plan. The contents and issues considered in the 2025 Plan are specified in CGS Section 8-23. This update of the Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development is within the mandated 10-year deadline and conforms to the provisions of CGS 8-23.

b. The 1964 Plan

The first Plan of Development for Lyme was prepared by the Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission in 1964. The planning process included a questionnaire survey of Lyme residents by the League of Women Voters. That Plan estimated the town's population at approximately 1,300 people, slightly more people than the population had been 100 years earlier, in 1860. Because Lyme was part of a rapidly growing region which had become more accessible by the completion of the Connecticut Turnpike in 1958, the 1964 Plan raised concerns that this growth would change the character of Lyme. Looking ahead to 1990, the Town's planning consultants anticipated a possible population increase to 5,000 people.

The first Plan noted that preservation of the town's rural character would require a special type of zoning and subdivision control, going beyond simple large lot area requirements to set aside land for community uses and enjoyment. A major issue identified was the need to take steps "to keep large tracts of undeveloped and open land" intact. To accomplish this goal, the Plan recommended that farming activities be encouraged and that more land be brought under public ownership. Establishment of a local conservation commission was also recommended.

The Plan recommended that civic activities continue to be concentrated at one location on Route 156, as the most efficient means of providing services. The Plan recognized existing commercial areas at Hamburg on Route 156 and at the Hadlyme crossroads, but also recommended that commercial areas be restricted to prevent "a spreading hit-or-miss along the principal town roads." A waterfront business district was recommended for the head of Hamburg Cove, recognizing the sizable marina and car dealership. Unlike many other communities, Lyme paid attention to its Plan and proceeded to adopt its recommendations. The base laid by the 1964 Plan and its implementation has created the town of today – a true planning success story.

c. The 1990 Plan

In 1988 and 1989, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed its Plan of Conservation and Development to assess its effectiveness and to see if additional recommendations were in order. The 1990 Plan noted that the trends observed in 1964 had occurred at a slower pace than anticipated, in

large part because intervening actions to maintain a rural landscape had been successful. The 1990 Plan noted that the 1980 Census reported a population of 1,822 people and cited projections from the State Office of Policy and Management estimating a 1990 population of 1,970 people. (After the Plan was completed, the results of the 1990 Census showed an actual population of 1,949 residents.) The fact that the rate of population growth was much slower than earlier predictions was attributed to Lyme's land use controls, its geographic distance from major employment centers and distance from the region's expressways, and national demographic trends such as lower birth rates and smaller household sizes.

The 1990 Plan included a detailed summary of a questionnaire distributed by the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission. The survey results indicated that respondents were very interested in preserving the rural character of their community, and most were willing to shop and work elsewhere to retain that atmosphere. By a large percentage, residents opposed zoning additional areas for commercial development of any kind. Residents favored preservation of natural resources, especially along the Connecticut River and its coves and within the Eight Mile River watershed.

The long-term goals and recommendations of the 1990 Plan focused largely on preservation of open space through as many methods as possible, including town purchase, cooperation with other land preservation organizations and individuals, and subdivision dedication. The economic boom of the late 1980s had resulted in high housing costs statewide, and the State Legislature responded by requiring consideration of affordable housing needs in every local plan. Accordingly, the Lyme Plan included the goal of creating "an atmosphere that allows a wide variety of socioeconomic groups to live in town," and a recommendation to explore and pursue options for provision of affordable housing to address this need. The Plan concluded that the area zoned for commercial uses was adequate for the foreseeable future, and that all commercial activities should be concentrated into existing locations. Other recommendations concerned community services, including schools, recreation, water supplies and sewage disposal.

d. The 2001 Plan

Since Lyme's original Plan of Development was produced in 1964, the Town has maintained a constant and consistent vision of the type of community it wishes to be, according to the two first Plans. For the 2001 Plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission again mailed survey questionnaires to all Lyme residents and property owners. Of the approximately 1400 questionnaires distributed, 420 responses were received, a 30% return rate. Responses from that questionnaire reaffirmed that Lyme residents continued to strongly desire to preserve and protect the rural character of the area and were willing to travel outside of Lyme for shopping and employment to do so.

The revisions to the 1990 Plan of Development did not alter the focus of the Plan. The land use pattern and priorities established in 1964, and refined in 1990, continued to accurately reflect what residents of Lyme wanted for the future of their town. The 2001 Plan was viewed as a continuation of the work done in the previous two Plans. That said, some new concepts and techniques were developed between

1990 and 2001, and new tools were made available to address Town concerns and to assist the Town in meeting its goals.

e. The 2015 Plan (revisions to 2001 Plan)

The 2015 Plan update continued the blueprint established by previous Plans and included similar provisions for retention of rural character and natural resources so important to its residents. In order to track any changes in residents' thoughts about the future of Lyme, the Planning and Zoning Commission again mailed a survey to Town residents and property owners. The survey repeated the questions and format of the 2001 survey while including some new questions reflecting anticipated future changes. Although the survey was made available by mail *and* online on both the Town and the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments websites (thus being more widely distributed than past surveys), approximately 25% (300) fewer responses were submitted. Detailed results and analysis of the survey are included as an appendix to the 2015 Plan revision.

These revisions to the existing 2001 Plan of Conservation and Development did not alter the focus of the Plan. The land use pattern and priorities established back in 1964, refined in 1990 and again refined in 2001 still accurately reflected what the people of Lyme people wanted their town to be in the future. The 2015 Plan continued the work already begun. Some new concepts and techniques had been developed over the thirteen years since the Plan was last reviewed in 2001, and new tools were available to address Town concerns and achieve Town goals. The 2015 Plan revision identified these approaches where applicable.

f. The 2025 plan

The 2025 Plan uses the blueprint established in previous plans. It includes a similar emphasis on retaining the rural character and natural resources so important to Lyme residents. The Planning and Zoning Commission made the 2025 survey available to Town residents, property owners, and active emergency volunteers, both online and on paper. The survey repeated a few of the questions from the 2015 survey pertaining to land, farms, and open space, while offering new questions to address developing issues. The final results were 704 complete responses, considerably more than the approximately 400 responses received in 2001 and 300 in 2014.

The latest revisions to the existing Plan of Conservation and Development do not alter the focus of the Plan. The land use pattern and priorities established in 1964 and refined in 1990, 2002, and 2015 still accurately reflect what Lyme people want their town to be in the future. The 2025 Plan continues the work already begun. Some new concepts and techniques have been developed over the ten years since the Plan was last reviewed. New tools are available to towns to address their concerns and achieve their goals. The 2025 Plan identifies these approaches where applicable.

CHANGES SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE 2015 PLAN

This part of the Report summarizes responses for each section of the 2025 Survey. Appendix A contains the survey methodology and data sets for each question. Click on the [Q#](#) with each footnote or summary to be taken to that data set.

Section One – About You (Demographics)

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The 2020 US Census data¹ shows that between 2010 and 2020, Lyme's population decreased from 2406 to 2352. This 2% decrease compares to a 2.5% decrease for the Lower Connecticut River Valley (LCRV) region as a whole.² However, the Census Bureau's more recent numbers estimate a small increase in population in the years ahead. If trends remain constant, population projections from the CT State Data Center indicate that Lyme's population will increase to 2697 in 2030 and to 2742 in 2040.

The median age in towns varies by almost 20 years across the region. Lyme has the second highest median age of 52.9 years, with 57% of Lyme's population being age 65 or older.²

According to the 2020 US Census, Lyme has the fifth highest median income in the region (\$111, 534) after East Hampton, Durham, Old Lyme and Killingworth. According to Federal poverty level standards, 7% of the LCRV's region is living in poverty. Lyme and Old Lyme have the lowest poverty level (2.3%)⁴ in the LCRV Region, an insignificant change from the 2021 RiverCOG POCD.

WHO RESPONDED TO THE 2025 SURVEY?

The Town reached out to its residents and property owners through both Stakeholder Group interviews and the 2025 Survey to provide critical input into the 2025 Lyme POCD. [Survey Methodology](#) has a detailed description of its development and implementation. The 2025 Survey was open to all adults 18 years or older who owned property here, even if residing elsewhere. These people were identified by the latest Town property records. The Survey was also open to all adults who were permanent residents of Lyme, regardless of whether they owned property in Lyme. This group was identified by the list of registered voters. Duplication of names was eliminated. Active responders for Lyme Fire and Lyme Ambulance who lived out of town were also invited to respond to the survey.

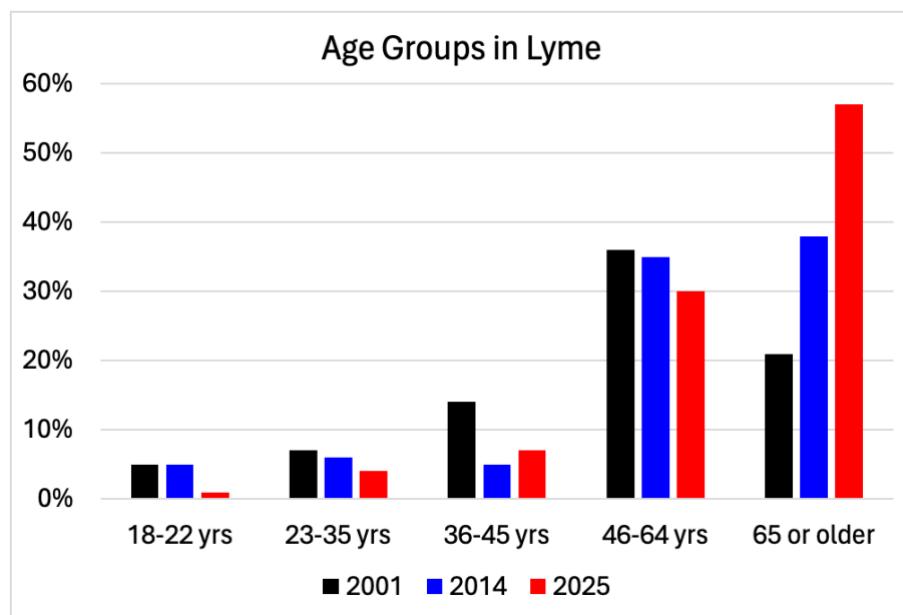
866 online and paper responses were submitted. To be included in this summary, responses had to display an authentic individual survey code and be completed by either submitting the survey online or delivering or mailing the paper version to Lyme Town Hall. Of the 866 responses, 38 used erroneous survey codes, and 127 began the online survey but did not complete it. **The final tabulation is based on 704 authentic, completed responses.** This compares with just under 300 tabulated responses in 2014 and 400 tabulated responses in 2001. The percentages calculated for each question are based on the number of respondents who answered that question.

Ninety-five percent of survey respondents currently **live in Lyme**, and 5% live elsewhere. Those who currently live in Lyme were asked how many years they have lived here. [Q1, Q2](#)

| <i>Do you currently live in Lyme?</i> | 2001 | 2014 | 2025 | Responses |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|-----------|
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| YES | 90% | 93% | 95% | 655 |
| NO | 10% | 7% | 5% | 36 |
| Years in Lyme (Question 2) | 2001 | 2014 | 2025 | Responses |
| Less than 3 years | 15% | 7% | 7% | 47 |
| 3 - 9 years | 25% | 17% | 21% | 148 |
| 10 - 25 years | 30% | 34% | 27% | 187 |
| More than 25 years | 30% | 42% | 42% | 291 |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | | | | 673 |

The survey asked respondents to provide their **age groups** and the age groups of others living in their households. 57% are age 65 or older, and 87% are over 45 years old. This age distribution is likely due to both retired people moving to Lyme and a population that is aging in place. [Q3, Q4](#)



The survey asked **where respondents lived before moving to Lyme**: 58% had moved from another location within Connecticut, while 33% had moved here from outside Connecticut. In 2014, 70% reported they had moved from within Connecticut. One factor that likely affected the increase in respondents moving here from outside Connecticut was the Covid-related exodus from cities and suburbs in adjacent states into rural areas such as Lyme. [Q5](#)

The survey asked about **tenancy**. In both 2014 and in 2025, 90% of respondents reported they lived in a family-owned residence in Lyme. In 2014, 3% of respondents and in 2025, 1% of respondents reported that they rented their residence in Lyme. In 2014, 8% of respondents reported that they own property here but currently lived outside of Lyme. In 2025, that percentage was 6%. [Q6](#) **Approximately the same percentage of respondents in 2014 and in 2025 reported paying rent versus owning their residence.**

If employed, respondents were asked whether they worked “in Lyme outside their home,” “worked in Lyme primarily at home,” or “worked outside of Lyme.” The percentage of respondents

working outside of Lyme fell from 63% in 2014 to 53% in 2025. Between 2014 and 2025, respondents working at home rose from 27% to 35%. [Q7](#)

Of those who reported working outside of Lyme, only about half provided their location. Of those who did list where they worked, 30% worked within the Lower CT River Valley (LCRV) group of towns. Another 30% worked in towns along the Shoreline east of Lyme, 14% worked in towns along the Shoreline to the west of Lyme, and 16% worked in the Hartford area. [Q7](#)

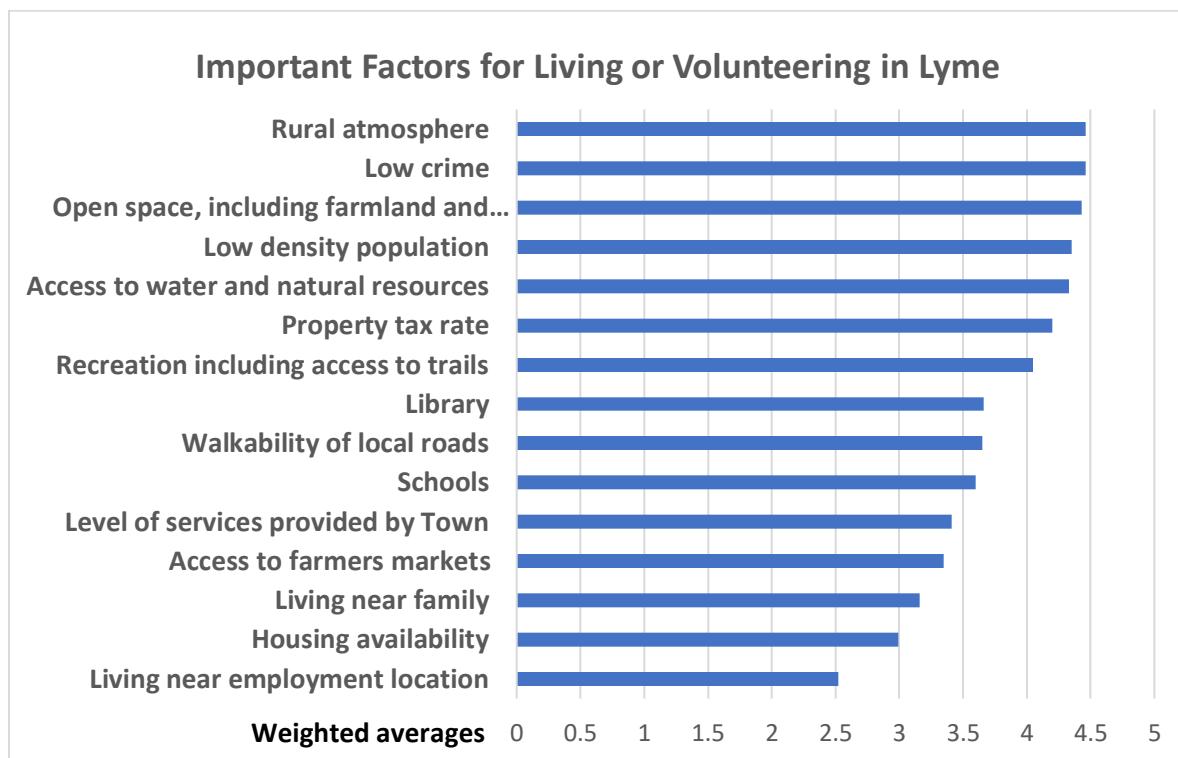
Of those who reported they were not currently employed, 87% indicated they were retired, and 2% reported they were in school or a training course, and 10% reported “Other.” [Q8](#)

The 2025 Survey asked respondents about their **volunteer activities**. Only 30% (207) of respondents volunteer within Lyme, and 27% (190) volunteering outside of Lyme. Some individuals reported volunteering both in and outside of Lyme. There were 331 (48%) who indicated that they did not currently volunteer, while 6% answered “Other.” This result indicates that many in our community may need further encouragement to volunteer. The fact that almost half of the survey respondents do not volunteer at all, either within Lyme or outside of Lyme shows that there is opportunity to expand community participation. The Town should provide additional information about volunteering opportunities and strongly encourage such participation. [Q9](#)

The vast majority of respondents (88.12%) said that **the ability to remain in their homes and community** as they age was a **High or Highest priority**. Only 1.72% of respondents considered this the lowest priority. The weighted average for this question was 4.3, indicating a strong desire to “age in place.” [Q17](#)

Section Two – Guiding Future Services and Development

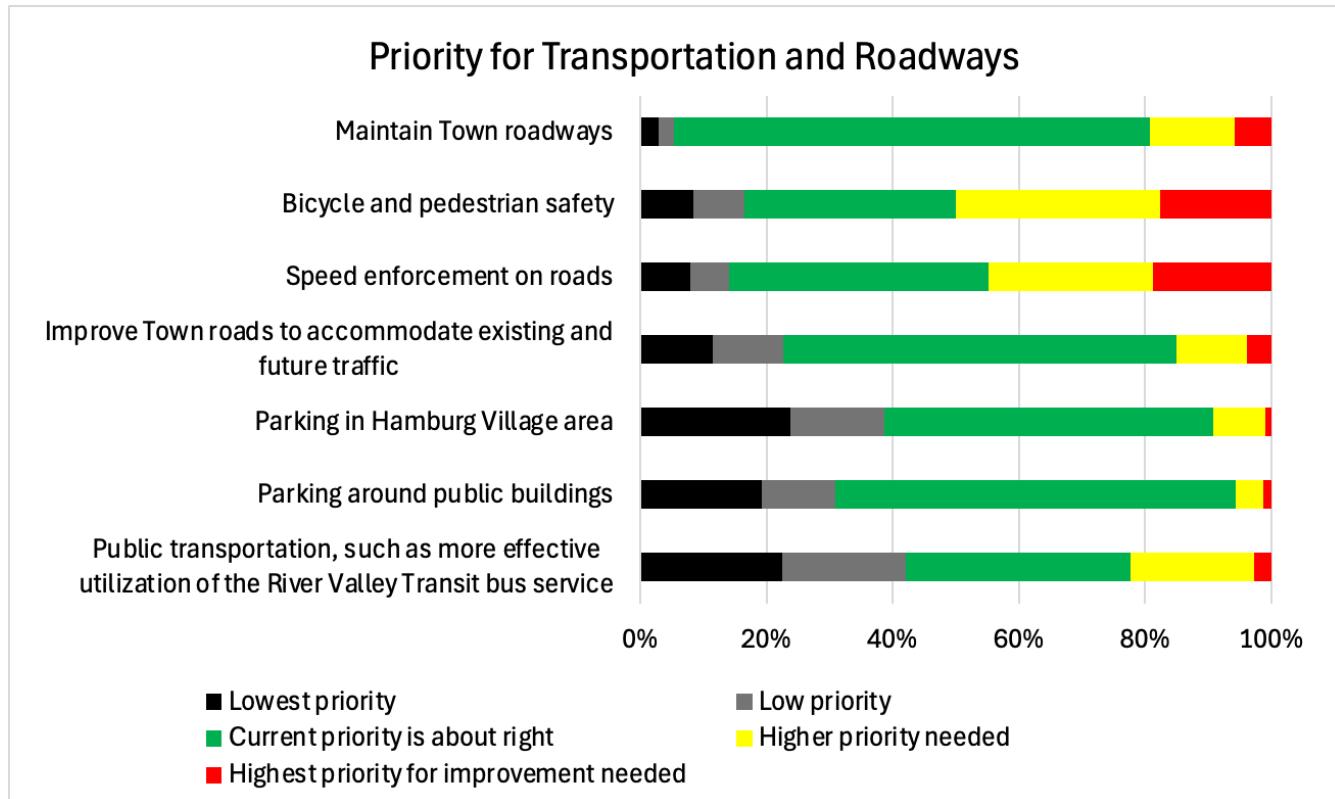
Respondents rated the importance of a list of factors in their choice to live or volunteer in Lyme. This question generated some of the most enthusiastic responses in the entire survey. The highest rated factor for choosing to live in Lyme was a tie between **Lyme's Rural Atmosphere** and the **Low Crime Rate**, *the two most-valued factors reported for any question*. The second most important factor was **Open Space and Farms**. The lowest priority factors were **Housing Availability**, followed by **Living Near Employment**. Residents have consistently placed their highest values on **Rural Atmosphere**, **Open Space and Farms**, and **Low-Density Population**. The high ranking of **Low Crime** is a new finding based on a new question. [Q10](#)



When asked about **additional services or commercial activities**, “Local tradespeople and service providers” (3.18) and “Farm stores” (3.10) were the only two choices which exceeded the neutral weighted average of 3. Lowest priority was given to “Medical offices” and “Other professional offices.” In 2025, survey respondents still did not support most additional services and commercial activities. They continued to be willing to travel out of town to obtain goods and services. [Q11](#)

The 2025 Survey also asked how the Town should prioritize **improvements to transportation and roadways**. Maintaining Town roadways and Bicycle and pedestrian safety were tied for Highest priority. Previous POCD surveys in 2001 and 2014 have reflected the common problem of speeding, as well as an interest in pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways. The 2025 Survey mentioned the necessity of additional tax funding for these improvements. Most respondents in 2025 felt that the current priority level of roadway maintenance was appropriate. However, 50%

of respondents thought that Bicycle and pedestrian safety needed a Higher or Highest priority. They said the current priority is about right for Parking around public buildings. Low and Lowest priority ratings were given to Public transportation, such as more effective utilization of the River Valley Transit bus service. [Q12](#)

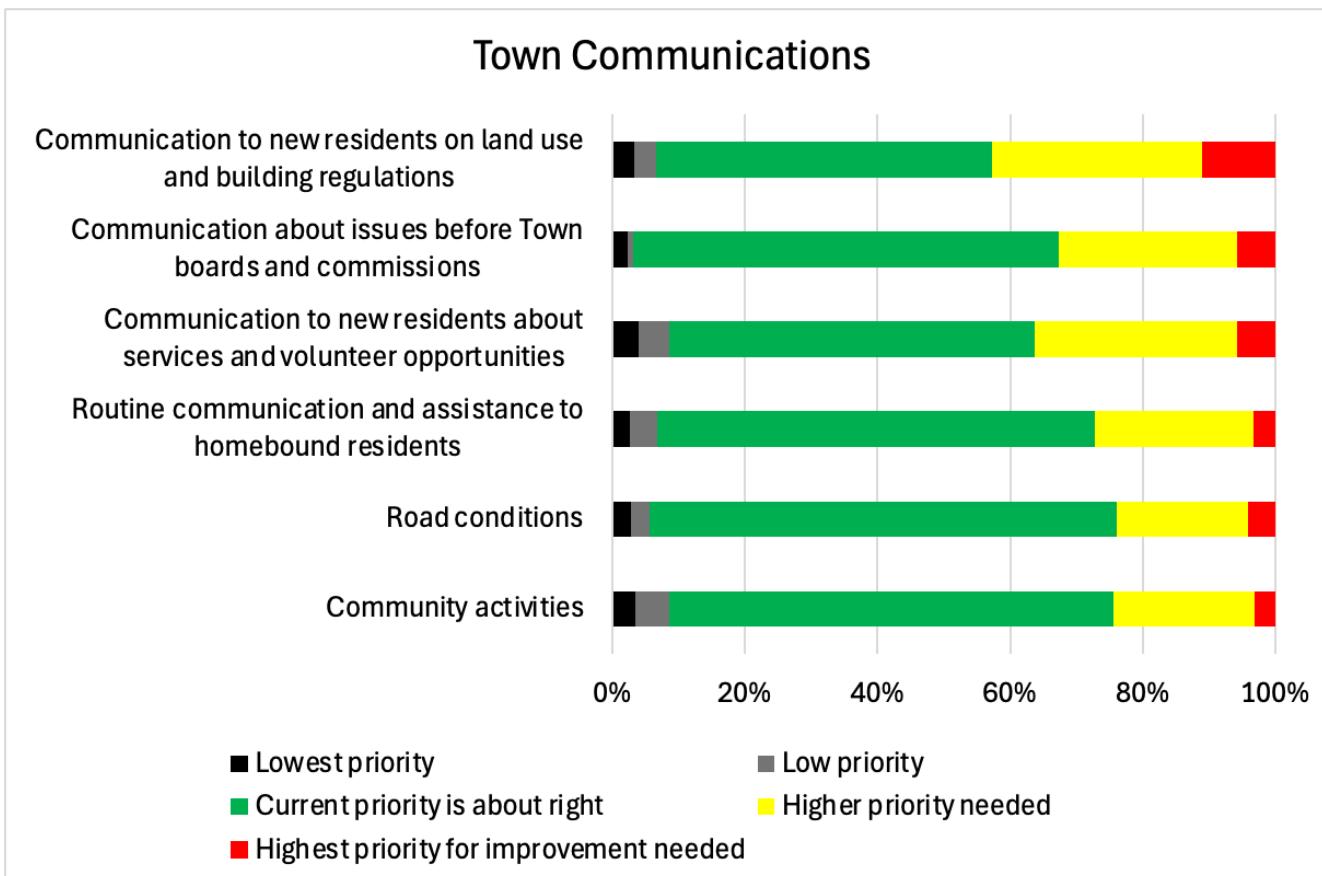


When asked whether the Town should prioritize **improvements to recreational facilities**, with the understanding that additional tax funding would be necessary, respondents once again voiced their strong support for the hiking and walking nature trails provided by the Town of Lyme and the Lyme Land Trust. However, interest was low in options like ball fields, pickleball courts, or the creation of a recreation or community center. As for the few swimming and boating opportunities available to Town residents, some respondents voiced concern about the overuse of the Swimming Hole and Ely's Ferry. However, more than 50% of respondents indicated the current priority is about right. [Q13](#)

The 2025 Survey also asked about possible **improvements to recycling access**, with the understanding that additional tax funding would be necessary. Residents offered a variety of comments about Lyme's two recycling sites. In general, they placed a low priority on improvements to recycling access, indicating general satisfaction with the current system. Over 50% were satisfied with the current hours at our recycling and transfer stations. The option of adding **recycling for food waste** was the lowest priority item. [Q14](#)

The 2025 Survey asked respondents to prioritize possible **improvements in Town communications** and how they wanted to receive them. More than 50% of respondents said that the current priority is about right in all categories. Respondents indicated that “Communication to new residents on land use and building regulations” needed to be a higher priority. “Communication to new residents about services and volunteer opportunities” also needed improvement. Communication to new residents about services and volunteer opportunities was third highest in priority. [Q15](#)

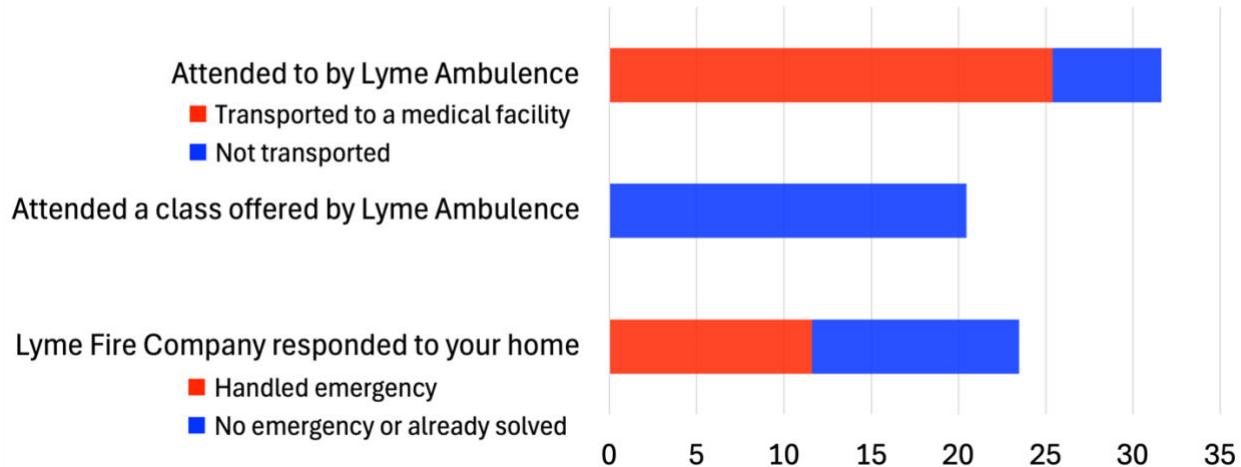
When asked their preferred method of receiving Town communications, 54.92% of respondents preferred e-mail, with the U.S. Postal Service a distant second at 15.26%. Several comments suggested using multiple options. [Q16](#)



SECTION THREE – EMERGENCY SERVICES

Previous surveys did not ask about emergency services. The 2025 Survey asked Lyme residents about their interactions with the Lyme Fire Company and the Lyme Ambulance Association: “Has anyone in your household used these services in the last five years?”

Percentage of Respondents using Emergency Services
in the Last 5 Years



Section Three began with this statement:

Lyme has a volunteer fire company and a separate volunteer ambulance/EMS service.

Currently, the Lyme Fire Company is supported by the Town budget and private donations, whereas Lyme Ambulance's operations and equipment purchases are supported solely by private donations.

Respondents were asked for their opinions about how these organizations should be staffed and funded in the future. While most respondents reported limited knowledge with which to answer, the Survey did produce some interesting thoughts to refer to for planning purposes. Many comments related positive, life-saving interactions with the two organizations. [Q18](#), [Q19](#), [Q20](#)

A large majority (78%) of respondents were satisfied with **Lyme Fire Company**’s existing arrangement of volunteer service with taxpayer funding of facilities and equipment. A minority of 12% thought that the staff should be paid, and less than 2% thought that Lyme should transfer to a multi-town service. Most of the comments said they didn’t have enough information to make that decision. Several comments mentioned the increasing difficulty of finding volunteers. See [Q19 – COMMENTS](#) and [Lyme Fire Company stakeholder interview](#).

Respondents overwhelmingly (almost 90%) favored keeping **Lyme Ambulance Association** in Lyme with a local volunteer corps. Almost half of respondents were satisfied with the current arrangement where equipment and materials are funded by private donations, while almost 40% of respondents saw the need for taxpayer funding of facilities and equipment. In the Stakeholder interview, Ambulance leaders stated that this will become necessary within the next two to three years. See [Lyme Ambulance Association stakeholder interview](#). Respondents also commented on alternatives to the two models of emergency EMS service mentioned in the question. [Q20 – COMMENTS](#)

Section Four – Land, Farms, and Open Space

The natural resource base in the Lower Connecticut River Valley, and the Town of Lyme in particular, is one of the region's prime assets. As these valuable and finite attributes lure more people and development to the area, resource protection will require an even greater degree of stewardship.

Lyme sits on the banks of the Connecticut River with important tributaries flowing through its land. These include *The Wild and Scenic Eight Mile River, Beaver Brook, Selden Creek, Falls Brook* and others. Contributing even more to the character and value of the Town are Hamburg Cove, Whalebone Cove, Selden Cove, Lord's Cove, Nehantic State Forest, protected open spaces, forested land, and numerous trail systems.

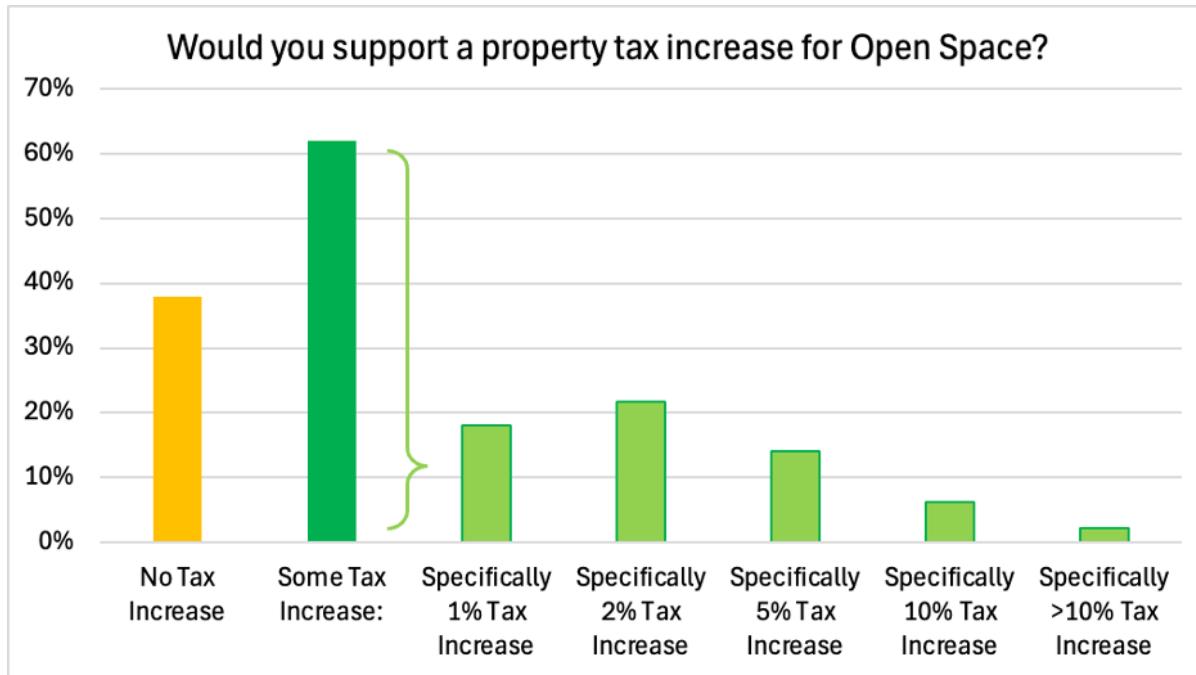
Natural Resource Protection: The 2025 Survey asked respondents about the need to protect natural resources. Lyme has consistently placed a high value on protecting its natural resources. Eighty-four percent reported that there are natural resource areas in Lyme that should be protected, compared to 77% in 2015 and 91% in 2000. [Q21](#) When asked about specifics, all natural resources areas listed on the questionnaire were rated as “Important” or “Most important” rather than “Not important.” *Rivers, coves and The Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed* were the highest rated with over 97% of respondents in the 2025 survey rating them as “More important” or “Most Important.” [Q22](#) Respondents also provided specific locations in town that should be preserved but are not currently protected. The following were mentioned by three or more respondents: Candlewood Ledge; Hamburg Cove; parcels that extend wildlife corridors or protect unusual species; Hamburg Fairgrounds and surrounding area; areas bordering rivers and wetlands, Uncas Lake area, Whalebone Cove, Beaver Brook watershed, and areas around Joshuatown Road connecting to the Mount Archer trail. Additional comments may be found in Appendix A, [Q23](#).

Open Space: The 2025 Survey asked whether the Town had enough open space or whether it needed to acquire more. This question was intended to show trends from both the 2001 and the 2014 surveys. However, the 2015 survey provided a specific definition of “open space” which was not provided in the 2001 and 2025 surveys. The data shows an upward trend in the percentage of respondents reporting that the Town has enough open space (50% in 2025, up from 36% in 2014 and 5% in 20001. The trend also showed a decrease in the percentage of respondents reporting that the Town needs more open space (35% in 2025, down from 64% in 2014 and 95% in 2001). The 2025 Survey allowed the option of “No opinion” (14% with no opinion), while the 2014 and 2001 surveys did not have this option. The trend could be influenced by wording differences, or could indicate that a balance has been reached regarding our important Open Space. [Q24](#)

The Survey asked whether the Town should use taxpayer money for the acquisition and maintenance of open space. In 2025, 53% of respondents stated YES to using taxpayer money for this purpose. This is down from 63% in 2014 and 72% in 2001. In 2025, 32% answered NO to using taxpayer money. This is up from 28% in 2014 and 21% in 2001. [Q26](#)

The 2025 survey also asked respondents how much of a property tax increase they would support for the purpose of open space acquisition and maintenance. 62% of respondents would support a

property tax increase of 1% to greater than 10%, and 38% indicated no support for a property tax increase. These numbers are not directly comparable to those reported on previous surveys. [Q27](#)



Respondents were asked about the importance of various **open space categories**. [Q25](#)

The most important open space categories in all three surveys over the past 25 years have been:

- protection of the aquifer and groundwater recharge areas,
- protection of The Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed,
- protection of inland and tidal wetlands, and
- protection of wildlife.

The two least important open space categories in all three surveys have been:

- active recreation and
- providing greater river and cove access.

Farms: The 2025 Survey asked about Lyme's **small farms**. Respondents continue to value these small farms, with 84% of respondents rating Lyme's small farms as "Important" or "Extremely important."

The 2025 survey results are comparable to the 2014 results. [Q32](#)

The 2025 survey also asked about allowing certain "**value-added**" **activities** to take place on Lyme's small farms. Definitions of several farm-related terms helped respondents understand the activities. All seven activities were rated as *Neutral/No Opinion* or higher. The highest-rated activities were *Allowing a Farm Stand* (78% rated this as Important or Extremely Important) and *Allowing a Farm Market* (75% rated Important or Extremely Important). Respondents were somewhat less enthusiastic about the use of *High Tunnels* (17% – Not important), *Agritourism* (16% – Not important), and *Allowing consumption on-site* (13% – Not important). [Q33](#)

Other Land Related Topics: The 2025 Survey asked about what priority the Town should place on certain resources **considering recent more frequent and stronger storm events**. Five resource areas were listed: Roads and bridges; Floodplains; Tidal Wetlands; Inland and Forested Wetlands; and Building and Maintaining Buffer Zones. Respondents did not differentiate very much between these resource areas. Roads and Bridges received a slightly higher priority than other resource areas. Less than 10% of responses reported a *Lowest* or *Low priority* for any of the resource areas. [Q29](#)

The 2025 Survey asked about the priority the Town should place on aiding private and non-governmental organizations' **efforts to control invasive species and curb the loss of native species**. Respondents indicated support for aiding in these efforts, with over 54% giving a Higher priority or the Highest priority to these efforts. Only 7% indicated that these efforts should be a Low priority or the Lowest priority. [Q30](#)

Lyme's current zoning regulations allow for **minimum lot sizes** of one (1), two (2), or three (3) acres, (except for certain special permits), and the 2025 Survey asked respondents for their opinions of these sizes. The majority of respondents (61%) are satisfied with current lot size requirements. There was some support for larger lot sizes (25% *strongly or somewhat supportive*), while there was very little support for smaller lot sizes (4%). [Q28](#)

The 2025 Survey addressed the importance of the Town supporting **Dark Skies** initiatives. The question was prefaced with the following information:

Dark-sky initiatives seek to restore the nighttime environment and protect communities and wildlife from light pollution. When we over-light, we can negatively affect our environment, including migratory birds, pollinators, mammals, including humans. Natural darkness at night should be protected worldwide as essential for people and nature. [Q31](#)

Survey respondents showed strong support for Dark Skies. The two initiatives with the most support were 1) Limiting the amount and type of outdoor lighting on public buildings and infrastructure (55% with High or Highest priority); and 2) Encouraging private property owners to limit the amount and type of outdoor lighting (59% with High or Highest priority). Lighting limitations through regulation received less support than the other two initiatives (41% with High or Highest priority). Twenty-seven percent of respondents selected Low or Lowest priority for this initiative. [Q31](#)

Section Five – Affordable Housing

The 2025 survey asked nine questions about affordable housing versus four in the 2015 survey. Data from these new questions may provide a more detailed view of respondents' opinions on this issue. One of these questions was worded consistently in all three surveys (2001, 2014, and 2025) in order to track trends. An interpretation of the State's definition of affordable housing preceded this section, whereas the previous questionnaires did not provide the same introduction:

- *"Affordable Housing" must cost 30% or less of household income for those households earning less than 80% of New London County's median income. In 2021, a family of four making less than \$79,000 a year, or an individual making less than \$55,950 a year, could qualify for affordable housing.*
- *In counting affordable housing units, the State includes only protected units reserved for lower-income residents through long-term deed restrictions or through governmental assistance programs.*
- *"Affordable Housing" is NOT "public housing."*
- *Affordable housing comes in many shapes and sizes, and in a variety of architectural styles to blend in with the surrounding community.*

The 2001 and 2014 surveys started by asking whether respondents supported more affordable housing. A comparison of responses from 2001 and 2014 indicated that respondents were consistent in their view that the Town should continue to provide affordable housing (33% in 2000 versus 34% in 2014), while those who felt the Town should stop providing such housing declined by 6 percent (53% in 2001 versus 47% in 2014). In summary, those who thought the town should not be providing affordable housing or had no opinion totaled slightly less than 70% of respondents. Only about 30% expressed a desire for the Town to continue these efforts.

The 2025 Survey did not use the same question. Instead, respondents were first asked to prioritize groups (Volunteer firefighters and EMT's, young people and young families, senior citizens, teachers, town employers and service workers) to receive future affordable housing units. Respondents replied that all groups fall within Current priority is about right to Higher priority as needed. No group was rated at over 17% for Lower or Lowest priority. [Q34](#)

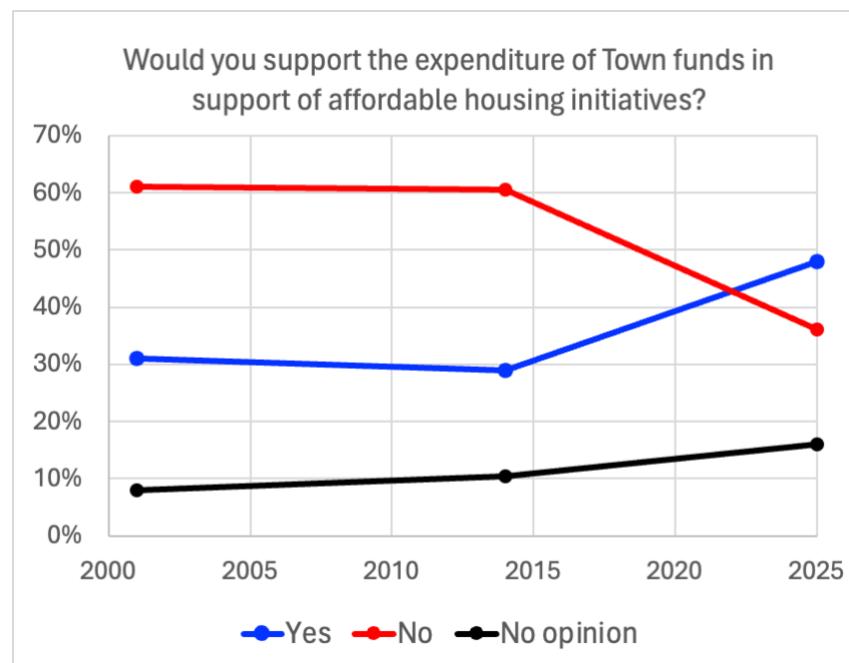
Next, respondents were asked to comment about which forms of affordable housing were most appropriate for Lyme. Despite being presented as a very expensive option, the top choice for affordable housing was single family homes (weighted average 3.15), which follows the results stated in previous POCD surveys. The second choice was accessory apartments (ADUs) on existing house lots, (weighted average 3.07), which also follows support from previous POCD surveys. All other options were below the neutral weighted average, indicating lower interest in these options. The second lowest was owner occupied duplexes on conforming lots, and the least desirable option being small groupings with a maximum of four connected dwelling units. [Q35](#)

Twenty-nine respondents reported renting a home to an individual or families who qualify for affordable housing. That is significantly more than the seven respondents who reported renting rather than owning their residence. [Q36](#)

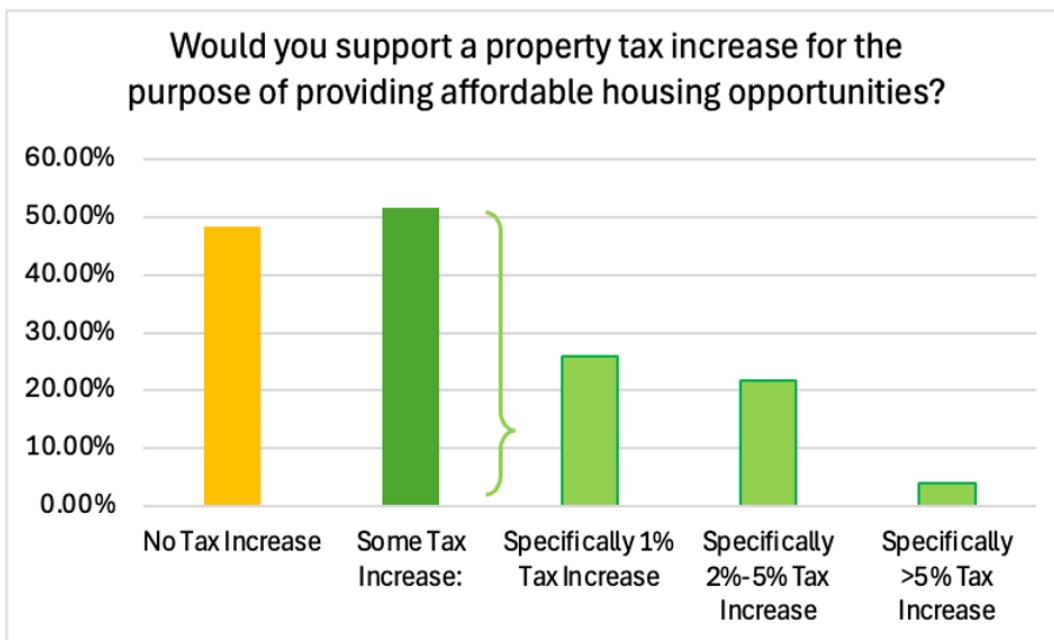
Less than half of respondents (46%) favored providing tax incentives to property owners who rent to individuals or families eligible for affordable housing. Just under a third (31%) of respondents disagreed with this approach. Under a quarter of respondents (23%) had no opinion. [Q37](#) When asked how to afford Affordable Housing acquisition, the first choice was through private fundraising (61.69% in favor). Respondents' second choice was the use of grants and or State or federal funding (44.96% in favor), and using Town funding received a 41.31% favorable response. [Q40](#)

| | Strongly oppose | Oppose | Neutral / No Opinion | Support | Strongly support |
|---|-----------------|--------|----------------------|---------|------------------|
| Private fundraising | 8.58% | 5.18% | 24.56% | 42.90% | 18.79% |
| Use of grants and/or state or federal funding | 21.36% | 12.46% | 21.22% | 29.97% | 14.99% |
| Town funds | 20.65% | 14.71% | 23.33% | 32.84% | 8.47% |

The 2001 and 2014 surveys asked respondents whether the Town should support affordable housing using tax dollars, and the answers were consistent in both surveys. This question was repeated in the 2025 survey to examine attitudes over time. In 2025, just under half of respondents (47.9%) supported the expenditure of Town funds in support of affordable housing initiatives, an increase from 2014, (29%, in favor of using tax dollars). Slightly over a third of the respondents, (36.1%), did not support the expenditure of Town funds in support of affordable housing, a decrease from the 61% who did not support it in 2014. No opinion responses, (16.0%), increased from 10% in 2014. [Q41](#)



Lastly, when asked if respondents would support a tax increase for the purpose of providing affordable housing opportunities, the highest number of responses favored No increase: 48.27%. Those favoring a tax rate increase of 1 to 5% or greater totaled 51.74%. The lowest support was for an increase of 5% or more: 4.05%. [Q42](#)



Three potential ideas for providing affordable housing were explored in the 2025 questionnaire.

1. Allowing tax incentives to property owners who rent existing housing to individuals or families who qualify for affordable housing, as discussed above. [Q37](#)
2. Purchasing existing less expensive single-family properties and improving them or converting them to multifamily dwelling units and then selling or renting as affordable housing. Fifty percent of respondents supported or strongly supported this idea, while 29% opposed or strongly opposed. Neutral or no opinion was 21% putting the weighted average for this option at 3.15 or slightly above neutral. [Q38](#)
3. A taxpayer-funded housing rehab program to provide micro-loans for important safety and quality improvements to existing housing units occupied by low-to- moderate income households. 44% supported or strongly supported this idea, while 26% opposed or strongly opposed. Neutral or no opinion was 20%. [Q39](#)

Section Six – Any Other Thoughts?

The last Survey question offered respondents the opportunity to write additional thoughts on any subject. Those using the paper survey were given a blank page, while those responding online had unlimited space in which to comment. Over 200 comments were returned, many expressing constructive ideas along with much love for the Lyme community and its environment. While many comments clustered around the topics of affordable housing and maintaining the rural character of Lyme, a variety of other topics drew varied opinions. [Section 6](#)

Note: Some topics addressed in the 2014 survey were deemed insufficiently urgent or relevant for specific questions in the 2025 survey. These included:

- a. Industrial and Light Industrial Development
- b. Expansion of Commercial Zoning adjacent to Hamburg and Hadlyme
- c. Development Character
- d. New Development Needing More Attention from Town Officials
- e. Design Review
- f. Establishment of additional Historic Districts
- g. Establishment of a Regulatory Village District
- h. Large-Scale Wind and Solar Farms

CRITICAL ISSUES

The critical issues of 2015 continue to be among the most important today. The 2025 Survey shows a shift in the perception of urgency for some of those issues. Respondents continue to strongly support the retention of Lyme's rural and historic character, the protection of natural resources and the preservation open space. However, Based on new questions in the 2025 Survey, they also place a very high value on Lyme's low crime rate and the ability to remain in their homes and community as they age.

Although 2025 Survey respondents continue to support the Town's acquisition of open space, their support has diminished somewhat, likely due to the successful acquisition of Open Space over the past 25 years. However, respondents are very clear that Lyme's rural atmosphere, low crime rate, open space, farms and farmland, local agriculture, and low-density population are the most important characteristics of their town. They also have been consistent in emphasizing that small farms, local agriculture, and farmland are essential for maintaining Lyme's rural atmosphere.

a) Preserving Rural Character

The visual character of Lyme has always been a combination of its beautiful and abundant natural resources with small-scale cultural features that sit gently on the rural landscape. Construction since the 2015 Plan has continued to consist of new single-family homes and remodeling of existing homes. Although the construction of single-family dwellings has occurred at a slower rate than in the 1980's, the critical issue persists: how to maintain a functionally diverse natural

landscape, while making allowance for new development which complements the land and the landscape, rather than conflicting with or overwhelming them. As development cases arise, **appropriate building size, orientation, and location** will continue to be critical issues.

The 2025 Survey asked people what they liked best about Lyme. As in 2014, respondents overwhelmingly ranked Lyme's rural atmosphere as the most important factor in their choice to live in Lyme. Preserving Lyme's rural atmosphere therefore ranks at the very top of the Critical Issues list. This factor was tied in importance with Lyme's low crime rate, followed by Open Space and Farms and Low-Density Population. These top-ranked choices support a guiding principle and top priority for Town planning: to preserve Lyme's rural atmosphere and low crime rate.

b) Protecting Farmland and Agricultural Opportunities

Lyme's tracts of open land are essential to the rural character of the community. Working farms are important assets not only for farmers and the people who work the land, but also for the Town itself. They can have tremendous benefits, not just for those engaged in agricultural activities, but also as part of the landscape mosaic that strengthens ecological connectivity and resiliency. These large fields and open vistas create the rural, rugged landscape of Lyme. Preservation of the Town's rural character was named overwhelmingly as the most critical issue facing the Town in 2025.

The protection of rural landscapes and of small farms and farmland were closely linked in 2025 Survey responses. The great majority of respondents (84%) named small farms and farmland as one of the two most important components of Lyme's rural character and identity, stating that Lyme's small farms were Important or Extremely important. They have made it very clear that small farms are a critical component of Lyme and warrant strong preservation and protection.

The protection and preservation of these tracts of land is critical to the effort to maintain farms and agricultural uses without undue financial burden (which leads to the sale of properties and, ultimately, loss of the town's rural character through denser development).

The Town's small farms provide locally-produced, healthy food both for Lyme residents and those in surrounding communities. On the 2025 Survey, respondents gave their strong support for farmers' markets and farm stands as value-added farm activities. An increasing demand for locally-grown food supports Lyme's agriculture, especially as consumers become knowledgeable about how their food is produced and gain an appreciation for the value of agricultural land.

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission is currently formulating agriculture regulations in order to create added opportunities and protections to aid the continued viability of Lyme's farms.

c) Preserving Open Space

Lyme considers preserving open space to be a second top priority, topped only by the preservation of its rural atmosphere. There are many reasons for the Town to encourage open space preservation within its boundaries. These include protecting natural resources to assure

public health, such as maintaining drinking water quality, and assuring public safety by avoiding downstream flooding. Another reason is to sustain biodiversity and wildlife habitat, especially where areas of unique habitat are of international significance. Open space is also preserved to provide linkages for wildlife migration and to establish recreational greenways. Undeveloped natural areas are essential in maintaining the visual character of the town. Hiking trails are becoming increasingly popular and offer significant health benefits and a sense of connectivity to the land so important to Lyme residents. Finally, open space typically demands few town services, thus providing a minimal cost impact for local services and thus lower taxes.

Over 50% of Lyme's land area is protected in open space, yet this still leaves a large portion of the Town's remaining unprotected open spaces at risk for development. If future development on Lyme's remaining available land is not carefully monitored and controlled, Lyme could quickly be transformed into a more suburban town.

d) Restricting Future Economic Development

Lyme has two small commercial areas, in Hamburg and Hadlyme, totaling about 15 acres. The Marina at Hamburg Cove is included in this total. Other economic development activities throughout the town include farming and to a lesser extent, resource extraction (sand, gravel, wood). Responses to the 2025 survey echoes past sentiment that there is very little interest in additional commercial or industrial activity in Lyme, with the exception of agricultural uses and local tradespeople and service providers. When asked which additional services respondents would like to see in Lyme, the highest weighted average went to Local tradespeople and service providers (3.18) followed by Farm stores (3.10), with both barely above the neutral level of 3.00. All other commercial activities and businesses were rated well below the neutral level, reaffirming that Lyme residents are not interested in encouraging commercial activities and are still willing to travel out of town for most services.

e) Maintaining Population Diversity

Lyme residents live in a rural area where shopping and service appointments require more travel, and a daily commute to work may consume a significant amount of time. However, as suburban development spreads to rural areas within a reasonable distance of employment, and as services become increasingly rare, the demand for such locations drives up housing prices and the cost of home maintenance. If the housing supply were allowed to increase in response to market demand, Lyme's rural environment would be transformed into a denser residential area with a concentration of larger homes. Like most other places in the United States, Connecticut towns like Lyme continue to wrestle with the dilemma of high housing costs due to a demand for that very rural character. Town officials and local citizens have struggled to find a way to create, finance, and retain affordable housing that is compatible with a rural, low-density environment rather than a more suburban setting. The Affordable Housing Commission will continue to investigate ways to meet these needs.

In past survey results, Lyme residents have not supported affordable housing. The 2025 Survey indicates a softening of the opposition to affordable housing in general, with most answers still below the neutral level. However, respondents' support for using Town funds for affordable housing has increased by almost 19% since 2014. The introductory definitions in the Survey may have affected the 2025 Survey's affordable housing results.

Single family housing and accessory apartments on existing house lots were the more preferred options for affordable housing, both rating slightly above the neutral level.

This year's survey included a new question asking respondents to place a priority on their ability to remain in their homes and community as they age. Over 88% of respondents considered this a high or highest priority, with weighted average of 4.29. This places it this squarely on the list of critical issues.

f) Maintaining Infrastructure

Keeping Lyme's roads in good condition requires routine maintenance, along with minor drainage and sight line improvements. Most respondents (75.36%) felt that the current priority level of roadway maintenance is appropriate. However, 50% of respondents stated that pedestrian and bicycle safety needed a Higher or Highest priority. Many continue to voice concerns regarding speeding vehicles and the amount of truck traffic on Route 156, a State highway.

Since the adoption of the 2015 Plan, bridges on McIntosh Road and lower Birch Mill Road have been successfully rebuilt. Extensive research ensured that the bridges were designed and built to minimize impact on the landscape and environment yet provide long service life through all conditions. Significant road safety improvements were made to Mitchell Hill Road, as well as sight line improvements on Bill Hill Road, Cove Road, and Salem Road. The Town also installed steps to the water just south of the Hamburg Yacht Club and rebuilt the retaining wall at the Marvin Cemetery. Bridges on Salem Road, Beaver Brook Road, and Day Hill Road are scheduled to be rebuilt in the near future.

As a rural community, Lyme relies entirely on subsurface on-site septic systems for sewage disposal. With the exception of the eastern and western shore neighborhoods of Rogers Lake, the Town is zoned principally for large lots, where one, two, or three-acre lots provide adequate space to continue using subsurface septic systems. The Town has no plans for a public sewage system. No areas have been specifically identified as areas where public sewers must be avoided. Lyme contains many environmentally sensitive and Federally protected areas where public sewers would be prohibited by current State and Federal regulations.

LYME'S VISION AND GOALS

Many 2025 Survey respondents wrote thoughtfully about the Lyme in which they would like to live. Almost everyone felt strongly about maintaining the beautiful, quiet, rural character of their community. The following Vision Statement reflects only minor changes from the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development, made to reflect the current feelings of Lyme residents:

Vision Statement

Lyme is a quiet rural community, where scattered homes lie among wooded hills and along clear streams flowing down to coves and marshes of the Connecticut River estuary. Lyme was once a far busier place, where quarrying, lumbering, fishing, dairying, and farming provided employment for Lyme families. However, time has removed most traces of such activity. While growth pressure in Southeastern and coastal Connecticut has resulted in suburban sprawl and a heightened pace of activity in many other nearby towns, Lyme remains quietly "off the beaten path."

Lyme residents have a strong appreciation for its abundant natural resources. The Connecticut River Estuary and its tributaries are recognized nationally and internationally as a unique natural ecosystem. In the future, preservation of these special resources will be assured through a series of connected greenways that preserve the community's water quality, habitat and visual characteristics. Existing views and vistas will be preserved, and perhaps new vistas will be opened to recall the agricultural heritage of the town. The people of Lyme will still be able to look at the stars, unhindered by the glare of light pollution from nearby development. New homes will be compatible with and respect the scale of Lyme's rural New England character.

Lyme residents appreciate their sense of community, but value the privacy that a rural landscape provides. They are willing travel longer distances to employment and forego easy access to retail businesses and services in order to enjoy the peace and quiet of Lyme. Town services will remain limited in size and only in areas where such uses already exist. Hamburg Cove will still provide a refuge to boaters, but only at the current level.

Lyme will not attempt to become frozen in time, but will adjust to the demands and opportunities of modern life. As new technologies create the possibilities of new lifestyles, Lyme will adjust its regulations and requirements to allow people to work at home or to live in non-traditional family households. Change will occur as a result of our changing society, but in a way that preserves Lyme's quality of life and natural resources.

Goals

The principal goals of future conservation and development are to maintain the long-standing tradition of Lyme's rural atmosphere, open space, and farmland while preserving its low crime rate, fiscal responsibility, and low-density of development. These goals will be supported by the following efforts:

- Continue to protect and preserve the Town's natural resources, rural landscape, and farmland.
- Foster as appropriate the economic viability of small farms.
- Encourage volunteer participation in community activities and educate residents about existing support systems, while respecting their desire for privacy in a peaceful and serene atmosphere.
- Support limited government services and amenities at a fiscally responsible level.
- Encourage and educate any new developments in the selection of a scale and design which aligns with the rural landscape.
- Revisit programs which enlist community involvement to preserve Lyme's low crime rate.

CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As required by section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed this plan revision for consistency with the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2025 – 2030, adopted by the State Legislature in 2025. That plan identifies four guiding principles: **SUSTAINABLE, EQUITABLE and JUST, VIBRANT, and RESILIANT**, with five visions to set Connecticut’s future course. These visions define the overarching priorities for the 2025 – 2030 planning period.

The State’s five visions for Connecticut’s future include:

- Vision #1- A thriving Economy**
- Vision #2- Housing for current and future residents**
- Vision #3- Stewardship of Resources**
- Vision #4- Healthy people and places**
- Vision #5- Connected and Inclusive Communities**

A comparison between the State’s Plan of Conservation and Development and Lyme’s 2025 Plan shows complete consistency between the two plans. The State Plan is based on an overall philosophy of anti-sprawl, directing growth to those areas of Connecticut where infrastructure such as roads, public water and public sewers already exists, or where infrastructure can easily be expanded. The State’s Plan also recommends that extensive growth be avoided in sensitive environmental areas and areas where little infrastructure exists. Lyme’s Plan meets both criteria.

Vision #1

Although Lyme is almost completely a residential town, its zoning regulations encourage farming, farm markets, customary home enterprises, and work-from-home businesses that all contribute to a healthy, rural economy. Lyme has also adopted regulations for short-term rentals, to allow homeowners to supplement their incomes and non-residents to enjoy Lyme’s natural beauty and resources.

Vision #2

Lyme is primarily a town of single-family houses. The Town has supported the establishment of some affordable housing units and has adopted zoning regulations that allow the use of accessory apartments (ADUs) to address the need for additional housing types and choices. Lyme is also exploring methods of providing financial assistance to residents who wish to remain in their homes and community as they age.

Vision #3

This vision best describes Lyme’s philosophy and goals for a small rural town. The consistency of responses from the Town-wide surveys of 2001, 2014, and 2025 clearly demonstrate the importance of open space, forests, wetlands, flora and fauna, and cultural and historic

resources to Lyme's residents. Elected and appointed officials have consistently run local government with these goals uppermost in mind.

Vision #4

The Town has ensured the integrity of environmental assets such as ground water and air quality (critical to the health and safety of its residents) by protecting the community's natural environment and resources through the preservation of open space, retention of forests and farmland, and allowing for only limited development.

Vision #5

Lyme continues to promote and support a strong volunteer ethic in all parts of its government and Town services. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to participate. This volunteer spirit creates strong community bonds among residents and visitors.

Lyme is also a member of the **Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG)**. Lyme's POCD is consistent with the RiverCOG's POCD because Lyme's policy of preservation and conservation embodies the policies of the RiverCOG and many of its towns.

CONSISTENCY WITH COASTAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND GOALS

Its frontage on the Connecticut River Estuary makes Lyme a coastal municipality. Under the Connecticut General Statutes, such municipalities must assure that their Plans of Conservation and Development follow the goals and policies of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. While Lyme has not prepared a specific plan for the Town's coastal area, the 2001 plan, its 2015 revision, and the 2025 plan are consistent with the Coastal Management Act. The comprehensive goal of the Act is:

"To ensure that the development, preservation or use of the land and water resources of the coastal area proceeds in a manner consistent with the rights of private property owners and the capability of the land and water resources to support development, preservation or use without significantly disrupting either the natural environment or sound economic growth."

(CGS Section 22a-92 (a) (1) (revised)

This Plan has been prepared with reasonable consideration for the restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, as required under Section 8-23A of the Connecticut General Statutes. As required by statute, before approval is granted, Lyme's land use commissions and the Gateway Commission review any proposed development projects in the coastal area for their impact on coastal resources in order to ensure that any adverse impacts have been minimized. When appropriate, the Coastal Site Plan Review is used as a tool for coastal resource protection and for giving priority to water-dependent uses.

Lyme's shore area consists of wooded upland hills dropping steeply to significant and extensive areas of tidal and freshwater wetlands, recognized nationally and internationally for their wildlife value. In some areas, including Joshua Rock, the riverbank rises dramatically in cliff-like fashion. Whalebone Cove and Hamburg Cove are relatively pristine estuarine embayments. However, the spread of Phragmites (a non-native invasive plant species), and more recently Hydrilla, Water Chestnut, Curly Leaved Pondweed, Eurasian Watermilfoil and Fanwort has become cause for concern. Other noteworthy features include Selden Creek (behind Selden Neck) and Eustacia Island (off the Deep River shore). Mapped coastal resources for Lyme include tidal wetlands, freshwater wetlands, estuarine embayments and flood hazard areas along the Connecticut River. The flood hazard areas are limited to the marshes and the bottoms of steep hillsides.

Lyme's goal for its coastal area is to preserve and protect the unique natural resources along the Connecticut River. At the head of Hamburg Cove, Lyme Planning & Zoning has designated a small waterfront business district. When opportunities arise, the Town has sought and will continue to seek passive public access to the riverfront at Ely's Ferry Road and Brockway Ferry Rd. Public access at both locations is limited by the lack of adequate parking areas. However, the Town continues to seek additional land for open space as it becomes available in these locations and others on the Connecticut River and its coves.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Protecting the Rural Landscape

2025 Survey respondents overwhelmingly cited preservation of the town's rural atmosphere as their primary reason for choosing to live and volunteer here, thus making it the **most critical issue** facing the town. When asked to comment on the town's future, many residents wrote eloquently about the town's natural beauty and rural setting. Lyme has retained its rural ambiance due to both its geographical distance from urban areas and by consistently planning with a priority on development that does not stress the land enough to require public infrastructure. This effort has been well-established for decades, but additional measures should be considered.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to review local land use regulations and ordinances to assure that all available and appropriate land use tools are in place.
2. Continue to encourage preservation and protection of open fields and meadows to prevent the loss of open views and vistas, to control invasive species, and to maintain habitat diversity. Include mowing requirements, stewardship plans for preserved Open Space land.
3. Maintain a list of historic buildings and sites to use as a reference when reviewing development proposals in order to ensure that new development is sensitive to cultural resources. Develop an educational program which increases public awareness of historic locations.
4. When reviewing development plans, emphasize preservation of cultural features including stone walls, sight trees, pastures, open fields, scenic views and vistas, and sites with archaeological interest.
5. Inform residents about prohibited activities in sensitive areas such as wetlands, steep banks to waterways, and other regulated areas.

Protecting Farms and Farmland

The protection of rural landscapes and the protection of farms and farmland are closely linked in responses to the 2025 survey. As stated earlier, respondents overwhelmingly named preservation of the town's rural character as the most critical issue facing the town in 2025. Most identify farms and farmland as one of the two most important components of Lyme's rural character and identity.

Recommendation:

Formulate and employ farmland and small farm protection policies to 1) assist with safeguarding Lyme's agricultural heritage and 2) ensure a future for sustainable local food production.

Open Space

Lyme's most prominent natural resources are recognized internationally, nationally, and on State and regional levels. The people of Lyme almost unanimously support the permanent protection of natural resources and community character through the creation of permanent Open Space.

While Lyme has been active in pursuit of permanent Open Space, a continued effort is necessary to ensure that important land will be protected in the future.

Recommendations:

- 1) Preserve large, connected tracts of undeveloped and open land to maintain the town's rural character, protect public health and safety, and retain wildlife habitat. Continue to support the development of a town wide Greenway plan and, over time, seek to preserve parcels located within the proposed greenways.
- 2) Preserve a variety of habitat types to support a healthy biodiversity of plant and animal life. Manage preserved land to support and maintain a broad diversity of natural resource areas.
- 3) Continue to fund the reserve account for the Town purchase of land for Open Space. Such opportunity funds can allow the Town to option land, pay for surveys and appraisals, and enable quick action when an appropriate property becomes available.
- 4) Continue to support an active Town Open Space Committee which works cooperatively with the Lyme Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Lower Connecticut Gateway Commission, the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and other land preservation organizations to secure ownership or development rights for parcels identified for protection.
- 5) Utilize all available tools for preservation, including open space tax abatement programs and grants.

Residential Development

All future planning must take into account the fact that Lyme residents cherish the town's rural atmosphere above all other qualities. Many Connecticut towns have been drastically altered due to uncontrolled growth and poor planning.

Recommendations:

- 1) Review zoning criteria for accessory residential uses, including accessory apartments, home occupations and family criteria, to ensure that such criteria do not unnecessarily restrict how people live and work at home. Allow a broad range of home occupations consistent with the rural character of the community.
- 2) Continue town efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing, including rental considerations for less affluent residents. Continue to provide financial and regulatory support for the work of the Affordable Housing Commission.
- 3) Recommend that the Affordable Housing Commission formulate a plan to convert existing homes into qualified affordable housing. This approach is generally more cost-effective than

building new from scratch. It will not require developing unspoiled natural land for affordable housing.

- 4) Review zoning barriers and offer incentives to encourage residents to provide privately held affordable accessory dwelling units (ADU'S). Promote ADU's as a cost-effective approach to affordable housing with a proven track record in Lyme.
- 5) Continue to support and enforce the standards of the Connecticut River Gateway Commission with respect to the location of new residential development to minimize visual impact. Review development proposals to prevent hilltop development to assure that new home sites preserve natural views and vistas. Such standards should also include lighting considerations so that hilltop development does not result in significant light pollution.
- 6) Continue to support efforts to limit the removal of mature tree growth and vegetation solely for the purpose of gaining views in the Connecticut River Valley. Educate developers and the public about the value of maintaining tree cover while selectively trimming to allow for views.
- 7) Consider creating a design handbook to guide architects and other designers toward designs which are compatible with the town's character. The handbook could also include examples of what should be avoided.
- 8) Adopt guidelines to promote awareness of dark sky initiatives and practices.

Economic Development

Conventional economic development programs have several public objectives, including tax base enhancement, job creation, and availability of services. Respondents to the 2025 survey – and all previous surveys – placed a very low priority on additional commercial and industrial development. The purpose of such development in Lyme would be to provide a very limited selection of services to residents. A significant number of respondents said they were willing to sacrifice convenient access to services in order to live in a rural environment. There was only neutral support for encouraging local storefronts for tradespeople, service providers, and farm stores.

Recommendations:

1. Areas presently zoned for commercial use are adequate to accommodate the community's requirements for the foreseeable future.
2. The zoned waterfront business area is adequate to accommodate the community's requirements for the foreseeable future. The waterfront business district should be reserved for marinas, boatyards and other water dependent uses.
3. Concentrate all commercial activities in locations currently zoned for commercial use. Discourage residential development in commercially zoned areas to assure that commercially zoned property remains available for potential future commercial development.

4. Review zoning standards and site plan requirements for commercial developers to assure that any new development or reuse of existing development sites will be well designed both functionally and aesthetically.
5. Consider regulations that support local tradespeople, certain essential service providers and farm stores.

Infrastructure – Guiding future services and development

The people of Lyme are generally satisfied with the level of services they currently receive from their local government. The survey results generally indicated Lyme's ongoing lack of support for most additional services and commercial activities. A slight edge above the neutral weighted average was expressed for additional Local tradespeople and service providers, farm stores and hiking related activities. When asked what Improvements in transportation and roadways should be prioritized, people indicated a concern for controlling speeding and pedestrian and /or bicycle safety. The level of road maintenance was considered by most to be about right. The most popular method of receiving Town communications was email. Also included in this section was a question asking if the ability to remain in your home and community as you age was important to you. The vast majority of responses reading this question as a high or highest priority, with very few neutral or lower priority indicating a strong desire to age in place.

Recommendations:

- 1) Continue to protect public health and safety by permitting development only in those areas shown to be capable of supporting on site sewer and water supply systems. Continue an aggressive sewer avoidance program, including regular inspections and maintenance of septic systems and required pumping.
- 2) Continue to provide strict enforcement of codes and regulations and provide adequate staffing for review and enforcement of development regulations.
- 3) Consider the need for adequate water sources for Fire Protection in reviewing all development proposals. Identify a suitable source of water for firefighting purposes for each new subdivision.
- 4) Limit future road construction improvements to reduce the impact on the natural and visual environment. Continue a limited road maintenance and improvement program to assure safe and adequate access for all residents, school buses and emergency vehicles, but avoid major road widening and realignment, which would change the character of local roads.
- 5) Where feasible, study, designate and provide signage for bicycle routes.
- 6) Review and revise Town road and drainage standards to include techniques for traffic calming. Use best management practices for drainage design. Incorporate provisions for reduction of non-point source water pollution for storm water runoff.
- 7) Consider access by emergency vehicles in the review and approval of new subdivisions.
- 8) Consider town policies that assist seniors with the ability to stay in their homes.
- 9) A Town-wide database with emails specifically for Lyme citizens would enhance outreach, volunteerism, and information about services. This would help enhance existing communication avenues.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Results of the 2025 Questionnaire

1. Survey methodology
2. Survey questions, data sets, comments from respondents, and observations

Appendix B – Stakeholder Groups

1. List of Groups
2. Stakeholder Interviews

Appendix C – Footnotes

Appendix D – List of Maps

Appendix A

1. Survey Methodology

The development of the 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) began in March 2023 by writing a draft outline of procedures. Three key objectives were to

- 1) develop an updated survey of issues,
- 2) achieve much greater community response to the survey than in 2015, and
- 3) publish a report by the end of the year 2025.

For the initial effort, a large team was appointed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. (Survey-writing team members are listed in the Acknowledgements.) The team met for the first time in April 2023. It first developed a list of community stakeholder groups and reached out to them. The groups were alerted to the development of a new POCD, its purpose, and the need for community involvement. Many of these groups agreed to an interview to discuss their concerns and issues. A list of stakeholder groups, along with their interview summaries, appears in Appendix B. The interviews helped illuminate the issues that became survey questions. All stakeholder groups were asked to help publicize the survey and encourage their members to complete it. This was very helpful in producing the high response rate achieved on the 2025 Survey.

The *Survey-writing* team met every month for over a year to work on three survey-related tasks. Tasks 1 and 2 involved considerable discussion and compromises among the entire team. Task 3 focused on implementation and was relegated to several trained team members to complete.

Task 1: Determine the target population for the survey. The group decided the survey would target individuals, not households as in prior surveys. The following three groups were included, along with the source of their names and contact information. Duplication in the concatenated file was eliminated.

- Individuals who owned property in Lyme, regardless of whether they currently lived in Lyme. The current list of Lyme property owners was the source of names and addresses.
- Individuals 18+ years old who were permanent residents in Lyme, whether property owners or not. Source of names and addresses was the current list of registered voters in Lyme.
- Active volunteers of the Lyme Volunteer Fire Department and the Lyme Volunteer Ambulance Association who were currently responding to calls, but lived outside of Lyme. The leadership of the two organizations provided the names and addresses for these volunteers.

Task 2: Determine the content and exact wording of questions and instructions in the survey. To facilitate trend analysis, the survey used some questions that were included exactly as they appeared in the 2015 POCD Survey. New or revised questions were added to address additional important issues or to improve the clarity of previous questions. Descriptive information was added to introduce some questions to help respondents better understand the topic. These topics included the current structure of emergency services, a dark skies initiative, farming terms, and affordable housing. The resulting 2025 Survey had 6 sections with 43 questions.

Task 3: The team decided on the process of fielding the survey, with several team members working on its implementation. An online survey (using Survey Monkey), and a paper questionnaire were made available. Approximately 94% of respondents used the online version, and 6% used the paper version. A notification postcard was sent to each address of property owners and/or residents. It explained the purpose of the survey, the availability of online and paper versions, how to access the survey with a unique individual access code, and the deadline for completion. An initial postcard was mailed out with a survey completion date of November 15, 2024. A second postcard sent in early January 2025 extended the survey deadline to January 31st. To be included in the final tabulation, a response had to be submitted online via Survey Monkey, or a paper version had to be mailed to Town Hall or delivered to a locked box there. Both versions had to have a valid individual access code. Out of 866 responses, 704 met the above criteria and were tabulated, more than double the “just under 300” responses tabulated in 2015.

A *Report-writing* team of four people was established in February 2025 to analyze the survey data and draft the 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development. They decided to publish the 2025 Plan as an online document available through the Town website. Live links between the Summary section would connect readers with complete data sets in an Appendix. The team met at least twice a week for seven months to examine the survey data and write sections of the Report. Scrupulous measures were used to assure objectivity and confidentiality of data retrieval and review.

The draft Report was provided to the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission in September 2025 for their review and comments. The Plan was subsequently provided to the Board of Selectpersons and to the RiverCOG for a 65-day review period. Notice of a 40-day public review period was posted in *The New London Day*, a newspaper of public record. On October 6th, the Plan was placed on the Town website for the public review period, and discussed at a formal public meeting on November 14th. After the public review period ended, the Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission voted to adopt the Plan, to take effect on December 14, 2025.

The 2025 Plan was subsequently filed with the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (River COG) and the Secretary of State’s Office of Policy, as directed by State Statute 8-23.

2. Survey Results

TOWN OF LYME CONNECTICUT

THIS SURVEY WILL IMPACT THE FUTURE OF LYME

The State of Connecticut, in Section 8-23 of the General Statutes, requires each town to prepare and adopt a *Plan of Conservation and Development* every ten years. Our most recent Plan was published in 2015. The Plan is a discussion and statement of policies, goals, priorities, and standards for the physical and economic development of our Town. It promotes the general welfare and prosperity of our people, and it guides change where feasible and prudent.

The Town began work on the *2025 Plan of Conservation and Development* by talking with key non-profit organizations and businesses throughout Lyme. Together we have formulated a survey to solicit the opinions of individuals who live, own property, or volunteer for emergency services in Lyme.

The survey starts with a few questions about you as a respondent, followed by topics about what you value in Lyme and your opinions about the need for services including emergency services. The survey also asks about land, farms, open space, and the need for affordable housing. Many future directions, development, and services in the Town will be guided by the information that you and other stakeholders provide.

This survey is intended for individuals 18 years or older who are living in Lyme and registered to vote here, or who own property in Lyme, or who are active volunteers for the Town's emergency services. If this applies to you....

Please fill out this survey and return it.

*While your individual answers and opinions will remain confidential,
the collective opinions of all respondents will become
the guideposts for our future.*

**This is Your Town,
Your Voice,
Your Responsibility.**

Section One – About You

Question 1: Do you currently live in Lyme?

| | | Responses |
|--------------|-----|------------|
| YES | 95% | 665 |
| NO | 5% | 36 |
| Total | | 701 |

Question 2: If Yes, how many years have you lived here?

| Years in Lyme | 2000 | 2015 | 2025 | |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------------|
| | | | | Responses |
| Less than 3 years | 15% | 7% | 7% | 47 |
| 3 – 9 years | 25% | 17% | 22% | 148 |
| 10 – 25 years | 30% | 34% | 28% | 187 |
| More than 25 years | 30% | 42% | 43% | 291 |
| Total | | | | 673 |

Question 3: Your age – please circle your age group.

| Your Age Group | 2001 | 2014 | 2025 |
|------------------------|------|------|------------|
| 18-22 years | 5% | 5% | 1% |
| 23-35 years | 7% | 6% | 4% |
| 36-45 years | 14% | 5% | 7% |
| 46-64 years | 36% | 35% | 30% |
| 65 or older | 21% | 38% | 57% |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | | | 696 |

Question 4: Other household members: please indicate the number of individuals living in your household in the following age groups (exclude yourself).

| Age Group | Total Number | Responses |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|
| 0-4 years old | 29 | 67 |
| 5-17 years old | 112 | 110 |
| 18-22 years old | 68 | 100 |
| 23-35 years old | 73 | 104 |
| 36-45 years old | 53 | 91 |
| 46-64 years old | 391 | 246 |
| 65 years and above | 340 | 333 |
| TOTAL | | 603 |

Question 5: Where was the last place you lived before you came to Lyme?

| Last Place You Lived | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|------------|
| | % | Responses |
| Within Connecticut | 58% | 407 |
| Outside Connecticut | 33% | 232 |
| I have lived only in Lyme | 6% | 39 |
| I do not currently live in Lyme | 3% | 19 |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | | 697 |

Question 6: Do you:

| | % | Responses |
|---|-----|------------|
| Live in a family-owned residence in Lyme? | 91% | 634 |
| Rent your residence in Lyme? | 1% | 9 |
| Own property in Lyme, but reside elsewhere (non-resident property owner)? | 6% | 43 |
| I am an active volunteer for Town emergency services, but do not currently live in Lyme or own property here. | <1% | 1 |
| Other (please specify) | 2% | 13 |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | | 700 |

Other – please specify:

Part time residents.

Lyme is not my primary residence. It is a part-time home.

Both own and rent.

Both rent the cottage we live in and own a house we do not live in.

Town part time employee.

I am an active volunteer in Lyme. I live here now, but a year ago I had to live out of town for a year.

Also live in NYC and FL (4 months each).

Currently rent elsewhere in CT.

I have my house for nearly 50 years but am not here all the time.

I live in New York but have owned a house in Lyme for 58 years, 2 of my sons live here. 2 grandchildren are in Lyme public schools.

Question 7: If currently employed, do you:

| | 2000 | 2014 | 2025 | Responses |
|---|------------|------------|------|------------|
| Work in Lyme, primarily outside your home? | 7% | 10% | 12% | 43 |
| Work in Lyme, primarily “work at home?” | 17% | 27% | 35% | 125 |
| Work as a live-in caregiver for an adult in Lyme? | | | <1% | 1 |
| Work outside of Lyme. Please specify employment location? | 76% | 63% | 53% | 190 |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | 281 | 152 | | 359 |

Please specify employment location:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Within Connecticut: | Newington 1 | Realtor in CT working in towns all along the shoreline and river | NJ, MA, and home |
| Branford 2 | New London 8 | | Out of state 1 |
| Bristol 1 | Niantic 2 | | Overseas 1 |
| Chester 5 | North Stonington 1 | In and outside of Lyme | 2 |
| Chicago IL 1 | Noank | Travel the shoreline | |
| Clinton 1 | Norwich 9 | Various locations | |
| Deep River 1 | Old Lyme 14 | Outside Connecticut: | Providence 1 |
| East Haddam 5 | Old Saybrook 11 | Amherst, MA 1 | Staten Island 1 |
| East Lyme 5 | Stonington 1 | Annapolis MD 1 | Tarrytown, NY 2 |
| Essex 13 | Wallingford 1 | Arizona 1 | USA 1 |
| Farmington 2 | Waterford 3 | Boston MA 1 | Washington DC 3 |
| Glastonbury 1 | Westbrook 4 | Brooklyn, NY and various locations in CT state (independent contractor) | West Point, PA 1 |
| Groton 8 | West Hartford 1 | Cambridge MA 1 | Westerly RI 1 |
| Hartford 9 | In the State 5 | California 1 | |
| Higganum 1 | Multiple towns – freelance 2 | Chicago 1 | |
| Middletown 5 | I am in sales and work out of offices in SE CT – territory involves Lyme | Maine 2 | Self-employed |
| Milford 1 | | Minnesota 1 | microscope repairman covering five states |
| Mystic 2 | | New York City 16 | |
| New Britain 2 | | | |
| New Haven 9 | | | |

Question 8: If not currently employed, are you:

| | % | Responses |
|------------------------------------|-----|------------|
| Retired | 87% | 324 |
| In school or in a training program | 2% | 9 |
| Other (please specify) | 10% | 39 |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | | 372 |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Other – please specify: | Working part-time, spouse is working full time | Writers |
| Semi-retired or working part-time 9 | Between employment | Professor emeritus at two universities – still writing, publishing |
| Self-employed 5 | Volunteer Gilead Community Services Middletown, CT | Work from home for outside company |
| Homemaker and/or caring for relatives in home 8 | Chief of Lyme Ambulance | |
| Disabled 4 | Farm in Lyme | |

Question 9: Are you currently actively involved in volunteer activities? Please indicate all that apply.

| | % | Responses |
|---|-----|------------|
| Yes, with organizations, Boards or Commissions within Lyme. | 30% | 207 |
| Yes, with organizations outside of Lyme. | 27% | 190 |
| No | 48% | 331 |
| Other – please specify | 6% | 43 |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | | 696 |

Other – please specify:

Sometimes church activities, helping friends and family

United Way

Lyme Farmer's Market

Sat on non-profit boards for 11 years – time limits up; using time to do other things now

PART-TIME VOLUNTERISM

Ducks Unlimited

Active responder / Lyme Ambulance

LYSB, the school, Boy Scouts

President of Lyme Ambulance Association

Lyme Artisans Guild

I have been quite involved but quit due to the culture of the organizations and the lack of appreciation for people's time and effort.

Member of Trustees here at First Congregational Church / OL

Returning long term resident, will volunteer once moved in

Help at local church

Scouting, Veterans Affairs

Volunteer Steward with the LLCT and the Grassy Hill Cemetery

Former Volunteer

Also board member in Old Lyme

Occasionally involved in volunteer activities

Community radio, WCNI New London CT

Local Wildlife Rehabilitation permitted through DEEP

Lyme Land Trust

Summer resident only

Democratic committee

Lyme Land Trust

Lyme Land Conservation Trust

I donate my services and skills but not much with organizations

Friends of Whalebone Cove

Light duty, serving as a volunteer archivist at the Lyme Public Library

Republican Town Committee

Was for many years but have stepped back from volunteering

School

Lyme Land Trust, Hadlyme Public Hall

Occasionally I volunteer, but I'm often in CA so I'm not dependable

First Congregational Church of Old Lyme

Have been in politics & Organizations but now too old

Section Two – Planning Future Services and Development

Question 10: How important are each of the following factors in your choice of **living** or **volunteering** in Lyme? Please indicate the importance of each factor using this scale:

| Factor | Unimportant | Somewhat unimportant | Neutral | Important | Extremely important | TOTAL | Weighted average |
|--|-------------|----------------------|---------|-----------|---------------------|-------|------------------|
| Rural atmosphere | 1% | 5% | 4% | 28% | 63% | 696 | 4.46 |
| Low crime | 2% | 3% | 6% | 25% | 64% | 695 | 4.46 |
| Open space & farms | 2% | 3% | 4% | 30% | 61% | 697 | 4.43 |
| Low-density population | 2% | 5% | 7% | 31% | 56% | 694 | 4.35 |
| Access to water and natural resources | 2% | 3% | 7% | 34% | 54% | 695 | 4.33 |
| Property tax rate | 1% | 4% | 14% | 35% | 46% | 690 | 4.2 |
| Recreation, including access to trials | 4% | 6% | 12% | 35% | 43% | 693 | 4.05 |
| Library | 8% | 8% | 19% | 41% | 24% | 687 | 3.66 |
| Walkability of local roads | 10% | 7% | 19% | 36% | 28% | 692 | 3.65 |
| Schools | 13% | 7% | 21% | 28% | 32% | 689 | 3.6 |
| Level of Town services | 8% | 11% | 29% | 38% | 14% | 691 | 3.41 |
| Access to farmers' markets | 10% | 9% | 31% | 33% | 16% | 692 | 3.35 |
| Living near family | 20.99% | 10.20% | 20.85% | 27.84% | 20.12% | 686 | 3.16 |
| Housing availability | 21% | 10% | 32% | 24% | 14% | 683 | 2.99 |
| Living near employment | 41% | 7% | 23% | 20% | 10% | 652 | 2.52 |

Summary:

- This question generated some of the most enthusiastic responses in the entire survey.
- The highest rated factor for choosing to live in Lyme was a tie between **Lyme's Rural Atmosphere** and **Lyme's Low Crime Rate**. These were the two most valued factors reported in the entire survey for any question.
- The second most important factor was **Open Space and Farms**.
- All but two other factors fell in the Neutral to Important and the Important to Extremely important ranges.

Observations: The highest priority factors were quite similar to previous surveys, confirming that Lyme residents consistently place their highest values on **Rural Atmosphere/Low Crime**, **Open Space and Farms**, and **Low-Density Population**. The two lowest rated factors in this question were Housing Availability followed by Living Near Employment.

Question 11: Do you want additional services or commercial activities in Lyme? For each option, please indicate what you would like to see:

| | Don't want | A limited need | Currently the right amount, or no opinion | This would improve our town | This should be a priority. | TOTAL | Weighted Average |
|---|------------|----------------|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------|------------------|
| Small food market | 22.13% | 15.09% | 27.73% | 28.74% | 6.32% | 696 | 2.82 |
| Farm stores | 10.90% | 15.84% | 33.14% | 32.85% | 7.27% | 688 | 3.10 |
| Cafes, coffee houses or restaurants | 28.74% | 14.37% | 17.53% | 31.75% | 7.61% | 696 | 2.75 |
| Medical offices | 41.70% | 16.59% | 26.70% | 12.99% | 2.02% | 693 | 2.17 |
| Other professional offices | 46.57% | 17.66% | 28.18% | 6.42% | 1.17% | 685 | 1.98 |
| Small business services | 31.98% | 20.49% | 32.27% | 13.23% | 2.03% | 688 | 2.33 |
| Local trades-people and service providers | 11.94% | 11.22% | 33.53% | 33.53% | 9.78% | 695 | 3.18 |

Summary:

- Local tradespeople and service providers (3.18) and farm stores (3.10) were the only two categories exceeding the weighted average of 3 as a neutral priority, indicating Lyme's continued lack of support for most additional services and commercial activities.
- Lowest priority was given to medical and other professional offices.
- The 2001 and 2014 survey questions referred to specific trades and commercial activities such as food, clothing, furniture, hardware, pharmacy, automotive, banking/financial, personal services and restaurants.
- In both the 2001 and 2014 surveys, over 75% of respondents thought industrial or light industrial development should be discouraged or strongly discouraged.

Comments

Cafes, coffee houses or restaurants - currently we have none. So maybe 2 or 3

[rated "This should be a priority."] better transportation: car/van services if elderly need it
Cafés – outside residential zones with adequate parking.

Keep businesses in established zoned areas.

Eliminate large businesses ie: Subaru; Lyme Public Hall provides a gathering house; a coffee house would allow people to meet.

No further developments such as Reynolds' new showroom. Farm based coffee or restaurant - no chains, no major development. But farm to table would be good.

local vegetable farmer's markets

I don't see a need to expand the commercial activities in Lyme, and have no issue traveling to the services I need.

We need a local Lyme Business directory to identify key service providers in Lyme/Old Lyme

Grant money to foster Lyme's vibrant Artist scene

KEEP LYME RURAL, THAT IS WHY WE ARE HERE

We have farm markets and other services are adequate.

Small home businesses that should be supported.

No to Dollar Generals or Fast Food Restaurants!

To attract younger residents to Lyme, we need more housing and commercial activities that would support that.

Monitoring Exit 70 traffic and who enters the town

The town needs a center where folks can grab a quick bite or catch up for coffee that isn't on a main highway. I would suggest the grange or a property near by that can cause this socail interaction between folks.

pub/brewery

Appeal of Lyme has been lack of commerce. True for decades.

Lyme is close enough to other towns small businesses to accommodate the community.

coffee shop

It would be lovely to have all these things, but because of the small population and somewhat remote location, probably not economically feasible

A hardware store or general store.

We like Lyme the way it is, this is why we live here!

This town needs to improve its maintenance crew.

They offer zero help!

restore Jane's market would be bonus...

retail

Hadlyme Corner market serves the local community.

by medical offices that could also include visiting nursing or Dr services

open to anyone trying something new, welcome the opportunity

Please keep town as is. No expansion. No development. Possibly "Jane's store resurrected, but we don't need ANY commercial offerings; that's what makes town unique and special.

Services/restaurants/shopping all nearby in neighboring towns

doesn't seem right that only the Reynolds have a big business in town and small businesses are so restricted

specialty food stores, like a bakery, fishmonger,

A local coffee house for community gathering would be great.

If there were a restaurant, it should be privately owned and not a chain.

No changes. The town is fine the way it is!

a local mailbox; some activities for teens

all kinds of food producers, such as local farms, improve our quality of life

There is no need to change the characteristics of Lyme, CT. No need to add more commercially zoned areas. Rural neighborhoods should remain rural and quiet with no allowances for commercial or small service businesses operating in rural properties.

Does farm store mean a place to buy goods from local farmers? If so, then I think this is a top priority. If it means farm supply stores, then I'd rank this much lower

local people doing business like we always have from our properties

Cafe/coffee house would be great, don't need restaurants, plenty around

Keep Lyme the way it is!

Sorry that Reynolds is where it is. Would be disappointed to see Walmart at Hadlyme 4corners.

I'm hoping whomever bought the 4-corners property (where the antique store was) will create a lovely restaurant /gathering place for the Lyme community.

Reduced commercial eg. car sales (out of place in Lyme)

Don't want chain stores and restaurants

Question 12: Should the Town prioritize improvements in the following areas of transportation and roadways, with the understanding that additional tax funding would be needed for these improvements? For each, please indicate on a scale:

| | Lowest priority | Low priority | Current priority is about right | Higher priority needed | Highest priority for improvement needed | Total Responses | Weighted average |
|--|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Maintain Town roadways | 2.88% | 2.45% | 75.36% | 13.54% | 5.76% | 694 | 3.43 |
| Improve Town roads to accommodate existing and future traffic | 11.38% | 11.24% | 62.39% | 11.10% | 3.89% | 694 | 2.98 |
| Public transportation (more effective utilization of the River Valley Transit bus service) | 22.40% | 19.65% | 35.55% | 19.65% | 2.75% | 692 | 1.99 |
| Bicycle and pedestrian safety | 8.38% | 8.09% | 33.53% | 32.37% | 17.63% | 692 | 3.43 |
| Speed enforcement on roads | 7.91% | 6.19% | 41.01% | 26.19% | 18.71% | 695 | 3.42 |
| Parking around public buildings | 19.28% | 11.59% | 63.48% | 4.35% | 1.30% | 690 | 2.23 |
| Parking in Hamburg Village area | 23.76% | 14.87% | 52.19% | 8.16% | 1.02% | 686 | 2.48 |

SUMMARY:

- Maintaining town roadways and bicycle/pedestrian safety are of equal priority. The majority of respondents feel the current priority level of roadway maintenance is appropriate.
- However, pedestrian and bicycle safety could benefit from improvement. Previous POCD surveys in 2001 and 2014 reflected the common problem of speeding, as well as people's interest in pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways. The 2025 survey also stated that additional tax funding would be necessary for safety improvements.

- Lowest priority was given for parking and transit; however, better communication of options already in place would be beneficial.

Comments

[particular emphasis on "Speed enforcement on roads."]

Automobile safety re: bicycle riders: if you improve/enlarge, this will bring more cars.

Parking might be a priority if we had something that felt like a village.

156 traffic lights at Bill Hill Road and other?

Roads not safe for bikes and no room to allow them

Should think carefully about roads. More roads = more people - especially commuters

Hamburg village doesn't have anything that needs additional parking

There's nothing in "Hamburg Village" that requires more parking.\

tree clearing to improve sight lines

The grange should become a focal point. Small restaurant/cafe, market, open three 4 nights a week. Like farmer & the fish N. Salem NY

We don't need any of these things especially speed enforcement

While folks love trees, the roads/trees that are not maintained by Eversource are becoming way overgrown and need to be maintained back from the roadway. It will just take one large storm as we have seen in the past that will cause the inability to pass roadways and given the age of this population, folks maybe harmed due to the tree management

Enforce regs especially wetlands

Town roadways often need more mowing. If vegetation is impinging the lane, drivers tend to drive in the middle of the road more often.

Need police presents on our roads Speed is way out of control to many accidents

none, would rather maintain lower taxes

As a bicyclist I avoid Rt 156 at all costs

Bike paths on major roads

Pick up litter on side of road

Where is Hamburg village? Parking for what?

Stormwater management on the Roads requires systemic upgrades

Speeding on our road is out of control - Elyapolis Raceway

Work with ConnDOT on pedestrian safety, possibly sidewalks, speed cameras or traffic quieting measures, through Hamburg Village area.

Drivers need to slow down. Police and radar needed mow the roadsides

speeding is an extreme concern...speed bumps should be considered

If additional establishments can be obtained for Hamburg Village, parking availability should be a priority

If not included in roadway work, then tree trimming along roads and power lines needs to be a priority

Trimming vegetation back from the edge of roads

Joshuatown is not a safe road for bikers, not enough room for two cars as it is.

senior transportation

The dirt road, ie Keeny St could be paved. It is on one end. Shoulder of 156 widened to accommodate bikes

Invasive elimination on land/ water: EX; Japanese barberry, Trapa, etc.

town should proactively ban private helicopter use

We have beautiful roadways for walking and biking, but it is currently unsafe to do so due to speeding drivers and narrow roadways. The Town crew does a nice job of maintaining all the roads!

Would be great to have more car service - Lyft, Uber taxi

parking in Hamburg village important if a coffee house, hardware store or small market were located there. Lyme currently has no community center--town hall, library and school separated from church, fairgrounds, Public Hall. Lyme needs a community center.

If the market was open we would need more parking

No changes. The town is fine the way it is!

Can we please turn "Jane's store" into a little coffee shop?

someway of enforcing that drivers stay on correct side of road. To often I come around a corner and a car coming in the opposite direction is on my side of the road. Speeding is a problem.

The parking Hamburg is more of a long term issue, but the Town should be planning for it. Obtaining the Fairgrounds should be a high priority if the Grange should ever decide to part with it.

Currently too much light pollution around Subaru Dealership.

for more than 20 years I have been satisfied with the current level of roadway maintnenace

A paved bike trail for recreational riding

I wish that General Store next to Reynolds could become a cafe'. Then we'd need more parking in Hamburg!

speed enforcement especially on Grassy Hill

Big threat to Lyme & environment is high traffic on Rt 156

There would be a need for increased public transportation if we had public housing.

Speed enforcement as long as it doesn't mean starting a police department in town

Question 13: Should the Town prioritize improvements in the following areas of **recreational facilities or access to recreation**, with the understanding that additional tax funding would be needed for these improvements? For each, please indicate on a scale:

| | Lowest Priority | Low Priority is about right | Current priority is about right | Higher priority is needed | Highest priority for improvement needed | Total responses | Weighted average |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Hiking, walking, nature trails | 5.60% | 3.16% | 67.96% | 13.65% | 9.63% | 696 | 3.19 |
| Public access to water for fishing or boating | 10.82% | 8.95% | 58.87% | 16.45% | 4.91% | 693 | 2.95 |
| Swimming areas | 15.79% | 12.87% | 52.34% | 16.67% | 2.34% | 684 | 2.77 |
| Playgrounds and outdoor recreation areas | 18.85% | 14.68% | 53.24% | 11.22% | 2.01% | 695 | 2.63 |
| Ball fields | 22.71% | 17.18% | 54.44% | 4.80% | 0.87% | 687 | 2.44 |
| Addition of a recreation or community center | 30.40% | 21.90% | 35.16% | 10.37% | 2.16% | 694 | 2.32 |
| Pickleball courts | 41.35% | 20.38% | 26.10% | 9.68% | 2.49% | 682 | 2.12 |

Summary:

- Respondents continue to support the hiking and walking trail opportunities which the Town of Lyme and Lyme Land Trust both provide. All other responses to this question were below the neutral level, indicating a low level of interest in funding those improvements. The lowest were ballfields and the addition of a recreation center.
- Comments regarding some of the few swimming/boating opportunities included concerns for overuse of areas such as the Swimming Hole or Ely's Ferry. However, greater than 50% of the responses indicated that the current priority is about right.

Comments

Highest priority - Continue to pursue CT River access
[commented for all facilities] "don't use"

My hope is that the fairgrounds will always be available for recreation.

Lyme does NOT need any more gentrification.

Bike lanes are highest priority

The town should maintain it's focus on supporting the Lyme Land Trust priorities.

Library functions as community center

Dog park that volunteers can maintain

Additional daycare or before/after school childcare needed in Lyme. Not a commute to old Lyme or a monopoly with only one option for before and after care with the schools

As community has a high % of >65yrs some priority for a Community center or developing the Lyme / Hadlyme Halls for this purpose?

Multi use outdoor space. Madison has beautiful parks along the water and ball fields and rec areas all together building community

Non-motorized boating access would be very helpful. More communication from the town about what is going on, issues we might be facing, challenges. Now, understand what is happening requires looking at minutes and people who are not here full time, cannot attend many of the town committees. Consider having more meetings on mondays or Fridays to meet needs of part time residents.

DO NOT ALLOW PERMITS FOR ANY TYPE OF HUNTING AT ANY TIME

Ice skating at Hamburg fair grounds in the winter, if temps are right

More places to swim would be nice but nothing else is needed

Lyme is a outdoors person haven, it one of the reasons I moved here. I think maintaining while give a place for families to go is important for the future of this town and its attractability.

Skating rink

Disc golf course --- mountain bike trails

I don't know that use of more ballfields or playgrounds would be worth the expense. Definitely not pickleball courts.

Improve Selden Road waterfront access for use by kayaks and other small craft.

Part of Roger's Lake is in town of Lyme and town residents should have access to the lake through at least Haines Park if not the small association in Lyme on the lake.

we live in the country, we do not need recreational areas as much

there should be a shoulder on Joshuatown road, it is dangerous for bicycles and walkers

a structure at library/lyme school for an eating/drinking gathering place for ages.

There are sufficient open space properties with plenty of trails for the current level of usage. A recreation center would be very useful but this should be explored in partnership with Old Lyme and East Lyme. Something regional would be valuable addition to our amenities.

Perhaps instead of building a new recreation center, use the Grange or Public Hall for such activities

The Grange and amphitheater should be upgraded. More bands in the summer will attract fun and revenue. The income from bands will protect the Hamburg Fair. This is an amazing opportunity, and just a small amount of improvements could turn the venue into a revenue generator, protecting land, walking trails, and quality of life here. There is no free lunch in life, as someone has to pay, so why not generate income for the town and grange.

Love our trails but we have more than adequate amount

Access to salt water swimming (agreement with Old Lyme?)

The tennis courts near library could be modified cheaply to make for 4 pickle ball courts w lines and movable nets

large community swimming pool is needed

With old Lyme, buy old Lyme marina for shared public access

It would be lovely to have a large safe, fenced dog park in town. We have a lot of preserved open space, perhaps one field could be devoted to a dog park and playground area and still contain educative native plantings etc.?

Deemphasize mechanized off-roading facilities; emphasize bike paths

create a community center where fairgrounds are

I think we have a nice balance of access to water, trails and playgrounds. Isn't there already a pickleball set up at Lyme School? And a playground, and a ball field?

Not sure about the need for sports fields but if schools need them I support it

No changes. The town is fine the way it is!

We don't need to attract any extra attention to our small, private oasis's- it's a shame Uncas Pond was recognized on the State website - it's constantly packed with disrespectful and unwanted guests who trash the place.

A place for families to gather when school is in session and the school playgrounds should be a medium to long term priority, particularly since that would be helpful attracting younger residents.

Need to mindful of fire hazard of preserved lands.

plenty of recreational facilities exist in adjacent towns for my two teenagers

Pretty biking paths, please constant maintenance of walking/hiking trails.

The town is perfect the way it is! We have so much access to water for swimming fishing boating along with miles of hiking trails no additional resources are needed. Just maintain what we currently have.

What's a pickleball?

We have two town halls that should be supported by the town along with the Land Trust, why would we ever build another.

Because I don't have children here, I don't know what the perceived needs are of our local families.

Part of the senior center could be used as a community center

Currently, I feel that we have enough hiking trails, or too many. I am concerned that with so many hiking trails we are encroaching on wildlife and their need for a space without humans.

Community Access to Hamburg Cove

Would be very nice to be able to use Old Lyme beaches.

It's wonderful that we have access to so many trails.

Expanded hunting areas, Swimming hole behind school improvement

Question 14: Lyme currently has a recycling center in Hamburg and another on Brush Hill Road. Should the Town prioritize improvements in recycling access, with the understanding that additional tax funding would be needed for these improvements? For each, please indicate on a scale:

| | Lowest Priority | Low priority | Current priority is about right | Higher priority needed | Highest priority for improvement needed | Total Responses | Weighted average |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Add recycling for food waste. | 28.24% | 15.72% | 32.46% | 19.36% | 4.22% | 687 | 2.56 |
| Extend hours for recycling center on Hamburg Road. | 11.69% | 11.54% | 49.35% | 20.63% | 6.78% | 693 | 2.59 |
| Extend hours for transfer station on Brush Hill Road. | 11.92% | 10.90% | 60.76% | 13.95% | 2.47% | 688 | 2.84 |
| Add services at the transfer station. | 17.87% | 12.46% | 54.05% | 12.31% | 3.30% | 666 | 2.71 |

Summary:

- Respondents offered an array of comments regarding the two recycling sites in Lyme. Over 50% favored the current hours provided.
- Overall, Lyme's townspeople considered changes to the current recycling centers a low priority.
- Adding recycling for food waste was a low and lowest priority initiative for 43.96% of respondents.
- The question of adding services to the station included suggestions such as an additional textile drop off or a "swap shop" initiative.

Comments

We recycle our own food waste composting, others may not

[commented for all improvements]: don't use Jansky
Combine services at Brush Hill location.

Bin for clothes, fabrics, linens no longer of any use to wear or use

A new friendly face is needed at the transfer station.

Can we add Household Chemicals, Batteries and Paint to Brush Hill ?

The fact that farms here collect food waste should be better advertised and a system set up to facilitate that collection.

What services do you mean to add at the transfer station? Unclear...

WHAT SERVICES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT AT THE TRANSFER STATION?

What services would be added at Transfer Station?

Add Swap Shop at Transfer Station

Create a Swap shop at the Transfer Station

Allow garbage disposal for a price

Reuse/swap shed at transfer facility is needed for household items that could be used and have value to others. See facility in Stonington.

Jansky takes care of recycling so we don't need the town of Lyme in addition with additional costs

Like what? Not sure

Add a community swap building so people can leave good things that they just don't want

Go back to how it was before the compactor was added

please be open when stated, need better coverage for days off

recycling is pretty much of a myth

I think there needs to be more public times where we can bring waste to the transfer station for electronics and batteries.

Composting at the dump

Have a pay dumpster for overflow household garbage during weekdays

Return to sorted recycling. Cardboard and paper should be separated from others.

I have recycling included in Jansky service, so less recycling is fine

We compost at home

There should be a shed for people to leave and reclaim goods rather than trashing the

Consider whether it is practical to have one or more automated deposit container redemption machines at the recycling center

Transfer station attendant consistently rude.

Jansky currently picks up recycling bi-weekly. The town only needs to offer the dump for large items.

Don't make more work for Ernie.

more paint can disposal

Long Table Farm food composting is a valuable recent addition.

What services would be added to transfer station

the town could potentially save money and provide more access to transfer station by partnering with old Lyme- this would allow for additional days for both towns and not require either town to add staff

"Trading post" at recycling center or transfer station for household items in good condition

Place to donate usable items for free for town residents

Transfer station: Swap Shack

(<https://www.middletownct.gov/950/Swap-Shack>)

should have curbside pick up with taxes paid currently like all other towns

Pick up recycling

Lyme should have curbside pickup for ALL recycling, and not just for the easy stuff!

this is my view but i don't know if the community needs more access.

add bins for HHW, etc.

actually don't know enough about the issue

I'd like to able to recycle oil + other automotive fluids at fire station again

Go back to separating recycling. Stop single stream recycling.

Ability to recycle a larger variety of household goods/plastics/clothing/footwear, etc.

We should have an option for garbage disposal other than pickup by Janskys

It would be nice to have a section for items that can be used by others.

I love the addition of textile recycling! Food waste recycling would be fantastic.

No changes. The town is fine the way it is!

food waste should be composted at home. it's easier and more energy efficient than bringing it to a recycling center

Sunday hours at Brush Hill would be huge

Changing the Hamburg Recycling "System" was an abomination. Please bring it back to what it once was.

RE above question: such as...?

lower cost for tires and bulky waste

I really like that we have Food Scrap Drop Off. We should invest more in that.

Suggestion: to keep the same amount of hours but varied opening and closing times to accommodate the needs of residents who work and cannot access the recycling places during the current hrs.

provide for recycling of usable materials

Hazardous waste collection

Should have a place like other town to leave useable items "put and take" Lyme transfer station is not friendly I would rather pay Jansky

MAKE COMPOST FROM LEAVES/GRASS, Sell it and chipped wood products!

Question 15 How should the Town Prioritize improvements in communications with residents?
Please indicate your priority for each area on a scale:

| | Lowest priority | Low priority | Current priority is about right | Higher priority needed | Highest priority for improvement needed | Total | Weighted Average |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|---|-------|------------------|
| Communication about issues before Town boards and commissions. | 2.32% | 0.87% | 64.20% | 26.81% | 5.80% | 690 | 3.33 |
| Routine communication and assistance to homebound residents | 2.71% | 4.07% | 66.06% | 23.83% | 3.32% | 663 | 3.21 |
| Road conditions | 2.77% | 2.77% | 70.45% | 19.94% | 4.08% | 687 | 3.20 |
| Community activities | 3.52% | 5.14% | 66.96% | 21.15% | 3.23% | 681 | 3.15 |
| Communication to new residents about services and volunteer opportunities | 3.96% | 4.70% | 55.07% | 30.40% | 5.87% | 681 | 3.30 |
| Communication to new residents on land use and building regulations | 3.37% | 3.23% | 50.59% | 31.82% | 11.00% | 682 | 3.44 |

Summary:

- Respondents clearly indicated that communication is important to them. "Communication to new residents on land use and building regulations" received the Higher and Highest priority (3.44) needed, while "Issues before Town boards and commissions" ranked a close second.
- Additional services and volunteering opportunities often overlap with community activities in Lyme. In addition, communicating the availability of services in our Towns local area may enhance our homebound residents' quality of life. Lowest priority was given to community activities followed by road conditions, although both were above the neutral level.

Comments:

Any development in Lyme should be considered of "public interest" and all efforts made to ensure that the community know rather than "find out" about planning requests and proposals - Private, Public, and Non Profit.

This ? Is difficult to answer. Perhaps the town should list what they do and then ask for the service to be evaluated. I am not homebound or a new resident how can I answer these questions.

Most elderly are not Tech smart but potentially have the resources to help. Need more traditional communication

I also think a designated posting in the library, schools, town hall, post office etc about what is happening would be helpful as people see these things. Even using something like the library does in putting up a sign on 156 about what is happening at the town hall or others things (important votes etc). Currently, it takes so much active effort to navigate the current website and find committee dates and times. Please always offer zoom options and many residents are not in town full time.

If there were an 'opt in/opt out' communication service you could sign up for on the town website that kept residents abreast of updates, it would be ideal and helpful.

Should offer additional events such as the Winter Solstice Bonfire

i don't know what comm go to new residents. newsletter would be nice

No changes needed

An engagement platform is needed for the digital age and mobile phone ready. See
<https://envisionnorwich360.com/en/>

More frequent selectmen's letters

a town hall newsletter paper or email

More info in Town communications, ambulance and Fire event activities

Making homeowners aware of wetland regulations. Every year my neighbors have a service fertilize their lawn directly on roaring brook contamination stream and Whale Bone.

Make it easier to sign up for automated emails with land use agencies' meeting agendas. (2) There has been a lot of clear cutting of trees around Hamburg Cove and the Eightmile River watershed that may be exacerbated by inaccurate information being given to new residents by real estate agents and landscapers, who may not be residents but do business in town and should have communications directed to them.

There is extremely poor communication in our town. The former once a year newsletter is now nonexistent. The First Selectman has a responsibility to communicate with our residents.

other than a few mailers and the website, there are few communications with residents. That must improve.

It was hard to answer this question. I got the notice about this survey but I do not routinely get information from the town. I am interested in hearing more about the Boards, commissions and other activities.

I can't comment on communication with new residents because I don't know the current status of such comm.

we need public alert communication for emergencies. and I have no idea about the town's communication to homebound residents.

we need public alert communication for emergencies. and I have no idea about the town's communication to homebound residents.

We signed up for email communications but rarely receive anything.

Realtors and landscapers need to understand the wetlands rules. They should be fined if they don't communicate to land owners our town's wetland laws.

No changes. The town is fine the way it is!

Communication in all areas could be improved.

for more than 20 years, Lyme town government communication to residents has been fully adequate for those who wish to pay attention.

I have no knowledge of current communication to homebound residents so am not clear how to answer.

I think we should do our best to not allow houses over 7000 square feet. Also enforcing current easement restrictions and protecting our ridge lines and shorelines with responsible clearing.

It would be good if we could streamline the permitting process. It would be good if we could pay our taxes online. It would be good if we could pay for more hours in the office of the permitting people, and maybe some educational activities?

Honestly, I find everyone at the Town Hall to be incredibly helpful. And, I know volunteer opportunities and events are in the magazine.

question #2 I am not sure what current communication and assistance looks like? Especially if

homebound residents do not have access to technology.

I have no idea what the present communication to homebound people is, but it ought to be high on the list.

More email communication. Right now I am caretaking an ill family member but would like to volunteer more in the future when I can.

AUTO SPEED CONTROL ON #156

NO TO LOW INCOME HOUSING

Question 16: What is your preferred method of receiving Town communications?

| Choices: | % |
|------------------------|------------|
| Email | 54.92% |
| U.S. Postal Service | 15.26% |
| Digital newsletter | 12.84% |
| Town website | 9.84% |
| Facebook | 3.00% |
| Other (please specify) | 4.14% |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | 701 |

Summary:

- The most popular method of receiving Town communications was E-mail at 54.92%
- The distant second most favorable option was U.S. Postal Service at 15.26%
- The least favorable option was Facebook at 3.00%
- Several comments suggested using multiple options together

Conclusion: The town is well served by using email for communication. Perhaps a Town of Lyme database with emails specifically for the people of Lyme would enhance future outreach.

Comments

Email, Town Website, US Postal service. See additional comments last page

US Postal service and phone call

Facebook and Town website

[selected both Email and U.S.Postal Service]

EITHER US POSTAL SERVICE OR E-MAIL

Town website and Facebook

BOTH website and Email

Everyone has differing preferences on this, Its really nice having all the options available for since its on the individual to seek information.

email AND town website both should coordinate

Text

All of the above plus the meeting agenda and minutes program that Old Lyme uses.

And email

Texts for very important alerts (road closures, severe weather, threats to community)

Postal service

Combination of direct & indirect: email/mail and website

We use all the above.

where's the first select person's newsletter? where is the first select person???

USPS and Town Website.

Newsletters, FB, Lyneline AND email

Text message

Text message

text

text messaging for emergency issues (road closures, etc) and social media (FB, IG) for other info

All of the above to accommodate all residents.

LymeLine does a nice job of hitting important events/topics

text messaging for town emergencies

A combination of email and town website.

And, email would be necessary for emergent/urgent situations.

None. We're adults we can figure it out

Question 17: Is the ability to remain in your home and community as you age important to you?

| Responses | | |
|-------------------------|--------|------------|
| Lowest priority | 1.72% | 12 |
| Low priority | 1.43% | 10 |
| Neutral | 8.73% | 61 |
| High priority | 41.63% | 291 |
| Highest priority | 46.49% | 325 |
| | | 699 |

Summary:

- The vast majority of respondents rated the ability to remain in their home and community as they age as a High or Highest priority (88.12%)
- Only 1.72% of respondents considered this a Lowest priority.
- The weighted average for this question was 4.3, making it a High priority for almost 90% of respondents.

Recommendation: Town boards and commission should consider policies to assist seniors in their ability to remain in their homes.

Section Three – Emergency Services

Lyme has a volunteer fire company and a separate volunteer ambulance/EMS service. Currently, the Lyme Fire Company is supported by the Town budget and donations, whereas Lyme Ambulance's operations and equipment purchases are supported solely by private contributions.

Question 18: Has anyone in your household used these services in the last five years? Please respond for each service:

| ANSWER CHOICES | YES | NO | DON'T REMEMBER | TOTAL RESPONSES |
|--|--------|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| a. Lyme Ambulance and EMS attended and transported to a medical facility. | 25.40% | 74.03% | 0.58% | 693 |
| b. Lyme Ambulance and EMS attended but did not transport to a medical facility. | 6.23% | 92.86% | 0.91% | 658 |
| c. Attended one or more classes offered by Lyme Ambulance. | 20.47% | 78.93% | 0.59% | 674 |
| d. Lyme Fire Company responded to your home and handled an emergency. | 11.62% | 87.18% | 1.19% | 671 |
| e. Lyme Fire Company responded to your home, but no emergency existed, or it had already been handled. | 11.86% | 86.94% | 1.20% | 666 |

SUMMARY:

- Close to 32% of survey respondents have been attended by Lyme Ambulance members within the last five years, with 25.4% being transported to a medical facility.
- Over 20% of respondents have attended a class offered by Lyme Ambulance.
- Over 23% of respondents have received a response from Lyme Fire Co. within the last five years, with almost half those responses for emergencies.

Should the Town of Lyme continue with volunteer fire and ambulance services, or should we transition to a different type of service?

Questions 19: Select one option for the Lyme Fire Company:

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|---|--------------------|
| a. Maintain the existing 24/7/365 volunteer service, with taxpayer funding of facilities and equipment. | 78.41% |
| b. Transition to a 24/7/365 fire service with a taxpayer-funded paid staff. | 12.31% |
| c. Transition to a multi-town service, understanding there would be increased response time and cost. | 1.74% |
| d. Other – please specify: see Comments below. | 7.54% |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | 100% 690 |

SUMMARY

- A large majority of townspeople (78%) are satisfied with Lyme Fire Company's existing arrangement of volunteer service with taxpayer funding of facilities and equipment.
- A minority of 12% think the staff should be paid.
- Less than 2% thought that Lyme should transfer to a multi-town service.
- Several comments mentioned the increasing difficulty of finding volunteers (see below).
- Most comments said there was not enough information provided to make that decision.

COMMENTS

Hybrid paid/volunteer--

WOULD MAINTAIN EXISTING UNLESS THE FIREMAN FEEL THE EQUIPMENT IS INADEQUATE

I understand Lyme gets some state \$ for fire company but nothing for ambulance service. I don't know why.

I don't have enough info / qualifications to respond. This is something I'd need to hear more about before answering.

Investigate options for hybrid services-

More info needed. I would like attract more persons who can fill these rolls.

Not sure what's best under the circumstances. I'd be inclined to rely on the judgment of existing leaders of the Fire Company re: balance among cost, response times and overall quality of service.

Answering this question requires more information - ie is it getting harder to find volunteers for

ambulance and fire? Is that a problem and does it affect response time? If volunteers are getting harder to find, can we have a hybrid model?

No familiarity with services and demand-

We are happy to support whatever direction the current fire department feels is necessary.

We've used Lyme Ambulance plus 5 years ago. Service was great...don't change it.

a combination of paid and volunteer – Town hires employees that are able to respond during daytime hours

Combination of volunteer and paid staff-

Don't have enough info to comment-

I am not qualified to answer this question-

Combination of PAID Firefighters & volunteer Firefighters

I don't feel like I have enough information to have an informed opinion. I'd like to hear from staff and other residents their reasoning for/against these different options

more information needed- why have paid staff if only part time need

Not multi-town. If the volunteers determine the need for paid staff, then do so.

A multi-town service would probably increase response time. Perhaps add a few paid responders.

Some towns have a limited number of taxpayer-funded positions (chief, deputy chief) while remaining primarily a volunteer service.

Volunteer or paid — whichever provides consistent reliable service

Combination of 1 & 2--

Is the existing system working well? Unsure of best options all should be studied

If Lyme has ample volunteers, stay with volunteers. If short on volunteers, go with other alternative.

I don't feel qualified to make a proposal but from my experience, the current situation seems to be working well. Is it too much of a burden on volunteers?

Maintain volunteer as much as possible but possibly have paid during day

Not enough info to judge. Probably stay the same.

I support volunteer but could also support paid services at a higher cost if there is a demonstrated increase in services or if we are unable to maintain sufficient volunteer staffing- I want to support the position of our fire professionals

We prefer to have local service but need more info to weigh in about volunteer vs paid staff. My sense is that there should be some compensation for the important work they do, but I don't what that looks like (full-time, per diem, etc.?)

Fire dept is great! But I don't think we can rely on volunteers forever, so Transition with taxpayer-funded paid staff

Combine all 3 options--

Possible combination of paid staff for day shift and volunteers for the rest?

could it be part volunteer, part tax-payer paid staff?

Very important to improve fire protection going forward!

Maintain existing volunteer service if feasible. If not, explore the noted additional options with community input

I don't know if we are fully staffed with volunteers - I choose volunteer unless it becomes necessary to fund multi town or staffed

Hybrid volunteer and ATC professionals - a combination of volunteer and paid staff for shifts difficult to get volunteers to cover

If we don't find a way to get more people capable and willing to volunteer in Town, this will have to change

I would need to know much more info. about these options (pros and cons) before offering an opinion. maintain existing service but would consider one half time paid position.

Both are extraordinary!

Existing volunteer service, WITH affordable housing and tax credit.

Some pay even small would possibly encourage more staff, other towns do that, I think Lyme is wealthy enough to do something like Haddam, it's a lot of work, my husband was on the ambulance for a few years, it might encourage young people especially if interested in medicine to receive a small stipend for calls.

I would be happy with either of the first two options.

Should the Town of Lyme continue with volunteer fire and ambulance services, or should we transition to a different type of service?

Question 20: Select one option for the **Lyme Ambulance Association:**

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|--|---------------|
| a. Maintain the existing volunteer 24/7/365 ambulance/EMS service with no taxpayer funding of equipment and materials. | 49.93% |
| b. Transition to a volunteer 24/7/365 ambulance/EMS service with taxpayer funding of facilities and equipment. | 39.51% |
| c. Transition to a multi-town ambulance/EMS service, understanding there would be increased response time and cost. | 2.46% |
| d. Other – please specify: (see COMMENTS below). | 8.10% |
| TOTAL RESPONSES | 691 |

SUMMARY

- Almost 90% of survey respondents want to retain Lyme Ambulance service with its local volunteer corps.
- Almost half the respondents are satisfied with equipment and materials being funded by private donations.
- Almost 40% of respondents see the need to transfer to taxpayer funding of facilities and equipment. In the stakeholder interview, Ambulance leaders stated that this will become necessary within the next two to three years.
- Many comments indicated that the respondent did not have enough information to make a decision.
- 8.1% of respondents commented on topics ranging from lack of sufficient information to answer the question to alternatives to the two models of emergency EMS service mentioned in the question.

COMMENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| [Marked "Yes" for both options a. and b.] | Not enough info/knowledge to respond appropriately. |
| If hard to fill volunteer members, and equipment is outdated, then need to change system. We have had great service from the team, with wonderful volunteers. | Investigate options for hybrid services |
| Maintain the existing volunteer 24/7/365 ambulance/EMS service WITH taxpayer funding of equipment and materials. | When I have had to call an ambulance for a person in Lyme and the call came from a Lyme land line. The 911 operator asked several questions to determine what level of service was needed. A paramedic, EMT, closest ambulance. |
| More training. More timely responses. | more info needed, I would like attract more persons who can fill these rolls. |

Never should the state of Connecticut be involved in any funding

Same comment as above regarding Fire Company.

See above. A bit more information is needed... how much of an improvement in response time? Are our outcomes worse than our peers because of our higher response time? Etc.

Prefer volunteer but will support paid if needed for staffing

No familiarity with services and demand

Do what old Lyme does and have a hybrid volunteer and paid mix of staffing during moments there aren't enough volunteers

Bill insurance companies for services

I am not qualified to answer this question

i don't feel like i have enough information to have an informed opinion. I'd like to hear from staff and other residents their reasoning for/against these different options

Again, not multitown , but paid staff if current volunteers find it necessary

Should consider some paid staff

Taxpayer funding of facilities would be helpful. And perhaps some paid staff. The volunteers are sometimes stretched thin. I have clients that won't live in Lyme because of the amount of time it would take them to be transported to an emergency facility.

Look into availability of supplemental coverage by private non-profit or for-profit ambulance service

Taxpayer funding if volunteer funding is lacking

Combination of 1 & 2

Unsure of best option all should be studied

Same as above...Concerned there are not enough volunteers and need to pay for EMS staff?

Is the current situation overwhelmed? I don't have enough information to make a recommendation. I think this should be the subject of a town meeting to educate the citizens. We donate to the fine Ambulance Association and have responded with higher donations during times of equipment needs but have no idea as to whether there is a shortfall in money or people. Another example of need for enhanced communication from the town.

Full time paid

Volunteer as much as possible. Paid during day, volunteer nights

Facility yes, not sure about equipment

I support volunteer but could also support paid services at a higher cost if there is a demonstrated increase in services or if we are unable to maintain sufficient volunteer staffing- I want to support the position of our medical professionals

Same as fire service response

Volunteer is fine, but they need better training in town roads to improve response time and time for transport to a facility. Both took LONGER routes so took WAY too long.

Maintain existing volunteer service if feasible. If not, explore the noted additional options with community input

Present system seems to work, but future needs may justify town funding

I think Lyme Fire and Ambulance should combine. Half of the fire department is already EMS and EMT trained. They are usually first on the scene anyway.

Same as regarding volunteer fire- volunteer unless this becomes untenable

Hybrid volunteer and professional service

a combination of volunteer and paid staff for shifts difficult to get volunteers to cover

How about an hourly paid crew?

If we don't find a way to get more people capable and willing to volunteer in Town, this will have to change

I would need to know much more info. about these options (pros and cons) before offering an opinion.

Provide some Town funding similar to what is done for Lyme Fire

Would adjust to the needs and wants of the Ambulance Assoc itself. If they need more money than us donors can afford then the town could help support.

I support the volunteer fire & ambulance services but don't know enough about staff/funding adequacy/deficiency to have an informed opinion.

I would like to see a study on response time. when my neighbor needed an ambulance, three arrived in seconds of each other. Also, important would be in

the Middlesex ambulance comes first, then I assume you have to go to Middlesex?

I assume Lyme will take you where you would like to go?

responders should be paid by the call; taxpayer funded

Existing volunteer service, WITH affordable housing and tax credit.

I would be happy with either of the first two options

Section Four – Land, Farms, and Open Space

Question 21: Do you feel that there are any specific natural resource areas in town that should be protected?

| Answer Choices | 2001 | 2014 | 2025 |
|----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 91% (378) | 77% (207) | 84% (576) |
| No | 3% (14) | 4% (11) | 8% (52) |
| No Opinion | 6% (24) | 19% (50) | 8% (57) |
| Total | 416 | 268 | 685 |

Summary:

- A significant majority (84%) of respondents feel that there are specific natural resource areas in town that should be protected. This result is consistent with 2000 and somewhat lower than in 2014.
- There were significantly more “No Opinion” in 2014 than in either 2000 or in 2025. In 2015 there were a higher percentage answered NO to this question than in the last two surveys.

Conclusion: Lyme consistently puts a high value on protecting specific natural resource areas in town.

Question 22: If Yes to the above question, please indicate how important you feel each of the following natural resource areas are to you:

| | 2001 | | 2014 | | 2025 | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------|---------------|
| | More Important | Less Important | More Important | Less Important | More Important | Less Important | No Opinion | Total reports |
| Rivers and coves | 87% | 13% | 89% | 11% | 93% | 2% | 5% | 607 |
| Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed | 75% | 25% | 81% | 19% | 90% | 5% | 5% | 607 |
| Wetlands (inland and tidal) | 73% | 27% | 80% | 20% | 86% | 9% | 5% | 605 |
| Stream beds | 66% | 34% | 76% | 24% | 83% | 10% | 7% | 597 |
| Woodlands and fields | 69% | 31% | 76% | 24% | 81% | 12% | 7% | 600 |
| Farmland | 66% | 34% | 75% | 25% | 77% | 15% | 8% | 604 |
| Exposed ledges and ridges | 65% | 35% | 62% | 38% | 61% | 27% | 11% | 597 |

Summary:

- All natural resource areas had significantly more respondents identifying them as “More important” rather than “Less important.”
- All natural resource areas, except for “Exposed ledges and ridges” had a greater percentage of respondents identifying them as “More important” in 2025 than in 2001 and 2014.

- *Rivers and Coves and Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed* were the highest rated in the past three surveys, with over 90% rating them as “More important” in 2025.
- *Exposed Ledges and Ridges* were rated as “More important” by 61% of respondents in 2025. This area rated lowest in all three surveys. In 2025, 11% of respondents had “No opinion” about this resource area. This was a higher percentage of “No opinion” answers than for other resource areas. (There was not a “No opinion” option on the 2001 and 2014 surveys.)

Question 23: Do you know of any specific locations in Lyme that ought to be preserved but are not currently protected? Please specify: [Answered: 165; Skipped: 539]

The locations mentioned three or more times were Candlewood Ledge, Hamburg Cove, parcels that extend wildlife corridors or protect unusual species, Hamburg Fairgrounds and surrounding area, areas bordering rivers and wetlands, Uncas Lake area, Whalebone Cove, Beaver Brook watershed, and areas around Joshuatown Road connecting to the Mount Archer trail.

Sixty-one respondents answered No to new specific location, while 18 said they did not know.

Comments:

| | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|
| No | 61 | Seldon Cove area | 2 | Parcel's over 50 acres | 1 |
| Don't know | 18 | Maintain current level of open space and add more if opportunity arises | 2 | 8-mile river watershed | 1 |
| Candlewood Ledge | 9 | Riparian habitat | 2 | Lyme swimming hole | 1 |
| Hamburg cove (land around) | 5 | Stark properties on Beaver Brook | 2 | Light pollution near Reynolds | 1 |
| Parcels that extend wildlife corridors or protect unusual species | 5 | Czikowsky property | 2 | Enforcement of regs and agricultural easements | 1 |
| Hamburg fairgrounds and surround | 4 | Selden Field | 1 | Rogers Lake clogged with lily pads | 1 |
| Areas bordering rivers and wetlands | 4 | Near school and library | 1 | Streams and brooks into lakes and ponds | 1 |
| Uncas Lake area | 3 | Brockway Ferry | 1 | Field at corner of Elys Ferry and Cove Rd | 1 |
| Whalebone Cove | 3 | Near Fire Station | 1 | Joshua rock | 1 |
| Beaver Brook watershed | 3 | Cedar Pond Brook | 1 | Bill Hill area | 1 |
| Areas around Joshuatown Rd that connect to Mt Archer trail | 3 | Area around Joshuatown Rd up to Selden Trail Preserve | 1 | Grassy Hill from Ave B to Beaver Brook Rd | 1 |
| Water access points | 2 | Area on Falls Brook marsh between recycling center and Wolfswinkel/Jeffe property | 1 | Mcintosh Pond | 1 |
| Motorized boats/jetskis and pollution in waterways | 2 | Sterling City | 1 | 20 acre parcel along Roaring Brook | 1 |
| Ely's Ferry | 2 | Ridges | 1 | Gungy Rd area | 1 |
| There is too much strict conservation and not enough appropriate land use | 1 | Old barn on Lord Hill | 1 | Speirs property on east side of Lord Hill on Hamburg Rd | |
| Stop cutting trees/foliage along Rt 156 | 1 | Mazer property on Gungy | 1 | St Louis owned meadow on west side of Hamburg Rd | 1 |
| Rt 156 | 1 | Woodland between sones ranch and Grassy Hill Rd | 1 | Invite slide shows | 1 |
| All the trees my neighbor cut down at 98 Brush Hill Rd | 1 | Lee Rhodes property on Tiffany Hill | 1 | All of Lyme | 1 |
| Cattle on Tiffany farm away from pond | 1 | Tiffany | 1 | Griswold property on 156 | 1 |
| Zoning of 2 acres | 1 | As much as possible | 1 | Tim Mellon's place | 1 |
| Behind my house | 1 | Land at intersection of 156 and 82 owned by Toni Honiss | 1 | Quite a few | 1 |
| Keep all fields mowed | 1 | Bridget Brodkin property off Joshuatown RD | 1 | Take chain link fence down at Hamburg fairgrounds | 1 |

Question 24: Does the Town of Lyme have enough open space, or does it need to acquire more?

| | 2001 | 2014 | 2025 |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| The Town has enough open space. | 5% | 36% | 50% |
| The Town needs more open space. | 95% | 64% | 35% |
| No Opinion | - | - | 14% |
| Total | 461 | 264 | 685 |

SUMMARY: On the 2025 Survey, 50% of respondents stated that the Town of Lyme has enough open space, and 35% of respondents stated that the Town of Lyme needed more open space.

Question 25: Please indicate how important each of the following Open Space categories is to you:

| | 2001 | | | 2014 | | | 2025 | | |
|--|----------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|-----------|---------------|
| | Most Important | Important | Not Important | Most Important | Important | Not Important | Most Important | Important | Not Important |
| Protection of the aquifer and groundwater recharge areas | 71% | 27% | 2% | 64% | 34% | 2% | 60% | 38% | 2% |
| Protection of the Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed | 70% | 28% | 2% | 67% | 31% | 2% | 56% | 41% | 3% |
| Protection of wetlands (inland and tidal) | 69% | 29% | 2% | 65% | 33% | 2% | 54% | 42% | 4% |
| Protection of wildlife | 71% | 26% | 3% | 65% | 32% | 3% | 53% | 44% | 4% |
| Protection of Large unfragmented tracts of land | 62% | 33% | 5% | 61% | 35% | 4% | 46% | 43% | 11% |
| Passive recreation (walking, trails, nature preserves) | 54% | 39% | 7% | 55% | 40% | 5% | 44% | 50% | 6% |
| Protection of views from roads and other public access areas | - | - | - | - | - | - | 33% | 51% | 16% |
| Protection of ridges and hilltops | 57% | 36% | 7% | 47% | 45% | 8% | 31% | 50% | 19% |
| Providing greater river and cove access | 34% | 31% | 35% | 33% | 36% | 31% | 28% | 44% | 28% |
| Active recreation (ball fields, biking, tennis, pools) | 11% | 35% | 54% | 11% | 37% | 52% | 6% | 41% | 52% |

SUMMARY:

The four most important Open Space categories in all three POCD surveys over the past 25 years:

- protection of the aquifer and groundwater recharge areas;
- protection of the Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed; and
- protection of wetlands (inland and tidal); and protection of wildlife.

The two least important Open Space categories in all three POCD surveys over the past 25 years:

- active recreation; and
- providing greater river and cove access.

Question 26: Do you think the Town of Lyme should use taxpayer money to buy and maintain open space in town?

| | 2001 | 2014 | 2025 |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 72% | 63% | 53% |
| No | 21% | 28% | 32% |
| No Opinion | 7% | 9% | 15% |
| Total | 419 | 276 | 692 |

SUMMARY: In the 2025 Survey, there was less support for spending taxpayer money to buy and maintain open space than in previous surveys.

Question 27: How much of a property tax increase would you be willing to support for the purpose of open space acquisition and maintenance? Please choose one option.

| Property Tax Increase | 2000 | 2015 | Property Tax Increase | 2025 |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 0 – 1% | 20% | 17% | 0% | 38% |
| 1-3% | 32% | 42% | 1% | 18% |
| 3–5% | 24% | 23% | 2% | 22% |
| 5- 10% | 15% | 13% | 5% | 14% |
| >10% | 9% | 5% | 10% | 6% |
| | | | >10% | 2% |
| TOTAL | 296 | 144 | | 683 |

SUMMARY:

- Sixty-two percent reported they would support a 1% to 10% or more tax increase for open space acquisition and maintenance.
- Thirty-eight percent reported they would support 0% increase in property tax to purchase and maintain open space.

Question 28: Current zoning regulations in Lyme allows for minimum lot sizes of one (1), two (2), and three (3) acres, except for certain special permits. What is your opinion of these minimum lot sizes? Please indicate one choice:

| LOT SIZES | % |
|--|------------|
| I strongly believe minimum lot size requirements should be larger. | 14% |
| I somewhat believe minimum lot size requirements should be larger. | 11% |
| I am satisfied with current lot size requirements. | 61% |
| I believe smaller lot sizes should be allowed. | |
| I strongly believe smaller lot sizes should be allowed. | 4% |
| Total Respondents | 697 |

SUMMARY: The majority (61%) of respondents are satisfied with current lot size requirements. There was some support for larger lot sizes (25% strongly or somewhat supportive) while there was very little (4%) support for smaller lot sizes.

Question 29: Considering recent more frequent and stronger storm events, what priority should the Town place on the following resources to better plan for these events?

| RESOURCES THAT MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY STRONGER STORMS | Lowest Priority | Low Priority | Current Priority is About Right | Higher Priority | Highest Priority | Weighted Average |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Roads and Bridges | 1.7% | 2.2% | 58.8% | 22.9% | 14.4% | 3.46 (689) |
| Building and Maintaining Buffer Zones | 4.4% | 5.7% | 55.4% | 23.1% | 11.5% | 3.31 (681) |
| Floodplains | 3.0% | 4.6% | 63.3% | 20.3% | 8.9% | 3.28 (675) |
| Tidal Wetlands | 3.1% | 4.9% | 64.0% | 19.4% | 8.7% | 3.26 (681) |
| Inland and Forested Wetlands | 3.7% | 6.5% | 68.3% | 14.2% | 7.3% | 3.15 (681) |

SUMMARY:

- Respondents did not differentiate very much between the five resource areas, with weighted averages ranging from 3.46 to 3.15.
- Roads and bridges were given High or Higher priority more often than other resources.
- No resource area was rated a Low and Lowest priority by more than 10% of respondents.

Question 30: What priority should the Town place on aiding private and non-governmental organizations' efforts to control invasive species and curb the loss of native species?

| PRIORITIES TO CONTROL INVASIVE SPECIES | |
|--|------------|
| Highest Priority | 14.5% |
| Higher Priority Needed | 39.8% |
| Current Priority is About Right | 39.1% |
| Low Priority | 3.9% |
| Lowest Priority | 2.7% |
| Total Responses | 696 |

SUMMARY:

- There was strong support for aiding private and non-governmental organizations' efforts to control invasive species and curb the loss of native species. Over 54% of respondents stated that Higher or Highest priority is needed.
- Under 7% indicated that this should be a Low or Lowest priority.

Question 31: Dark-sky initiatives seek to restore the nighttime environment and protect communities and wildlife from light pollution. When we over-light, we can negatively affect our environment, including migratory birds, pollinators, and mammals, including humans. Natural darkness at night should be protected worldwide as essential for people and nature. How important is it for the Town to support "Dark Skies" through each of the following actions?

| SUPPORT FOR POTENTIAL DARK SKIES ACTIONS | Lowest Priority | Low Priority | Current Priority is About Right | Higher Priority | Highest Priority | Weighted Average |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Limit the amount and type of outdoor lighting on public buildings and infrastructure. | 4.6% | 5.3% | 34.9% | 25.8% | 29.4% | 3.70 (694) |
| Encourage private property owners to limit the amount and type of outdoor lighting. | 6.2% | 5.9% | 28.9% | 31.7% | 27.3% | 3.68 (695) |
| Limit amount and type of outdoor lighting through regulation. | 14.2% | 12.6% | 32.5% | 20.7% | 20.0% | 3.20 (690) |

SUMMARY:

- The two initiatives with the most support were:
 - 1) Limiting the amount and type of outdoor lighting on public buildings and infrastructure (55% with High or Highest priority);
 - 2) Encouraging private property owners to limit the amount and type of outdoor lighting (59% with High or Highest priority).
- Limitations through regulation were less supported than the other two initiatives, receiving 27% for Low or Lowest priority for this initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Lyme should begin to educate residents, especially new residents, about the importance of “dark skies” with resource information for appropriate lighting changes.
- Lyme should provide specifications regarding outdoor lighting for public buildings and infrastructure. The Town should inspect existing lighting on public buildings and make the necessary changes to meet these specifications.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission should continue evaluating building and remodeling permit applications to incorporate “Dark Skies” lighting restrictions.

Question 32: How important to you are Lyme's small farms? Please provide one answer.

| Importance of Small Farms | Percentages |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Extremely Important | 47.1% |
| Important | 36.8% |
| Neutral / No Opinion | 7.4% |
| Somewhat Important | 7.3% |
| Not Important | 1.4% |
| Total responses | 699 |

SUMMARY:

- 84% of respondents stated that Lyme's small farms were Important or Extremely Important. Only 1.4% stated that they were not important.
- The 2025 Survey results are comparable with the 2014 results. Lyme residents continue to place significant importance on small farms in Lyme.

Farming Terms

Please refer to this list of terms when answering Question 33:

- **CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture)** – a way to buy local food directly from a farmer while sharing the risk. The consumer purchases a “share” and becomes a farm “member.” The farmer delivers a box of food regularly throughout the growing season.
- **Farm stand** – a small seasonal or movable structure or area for the display and sale of local agricultural commodities on a farm.
- **Farm market** – retail sales of locally grown or produced agricultural commodities, handmade crafts, baked goods, plants, etc.
- **High tunnel** – a tunnel structure typically made of steel and covered in polyethylene in which the interior heats up through solar radiation. Used by farmers to warm the soil and plants to extend the growing season. These may be large and visible from the road.
- **Small-scale agricultural processing** – the preparation or processing of agricultural products largely produced on a Lyme farm for wholesale or retail sales. This could include washing, packaging, making jams or cheeses, etc.
- **Agritourism** – a commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm for the purposes of enjoyment or education.

Question 33: To be economically viable, small farms need to *add value* to their production through extended growing periods and/or producing other products and services. How important is it that Lyme allow the following value-added activities on small farms?

| | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Neutral/ No Opinion | Important | Extremely Important | Total Responses | Weighted Average |
|---|---------------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Having a farm stand on site to sell products grown or processed on the farm. | 2.8% | 9.4% | 9.5% | 49.1% | 29.2% | 684 | 3.93 |
| Having a farm market on a farm to sell locally grown or produced agricultural commodities, handmade crafts, baked goods, plants, etc. | 5.0% | 8.3% | 11.8% | 46.3% | 28.7% | 698 | 3.86 |
| Processing and selling value-added products harvested locally, such as jams, cheese, maple syrup, honey, etc. | 6.0% | 9.6% | 20.9% | 43.9% | 19.6% | 695 | 3.61 |
| Selling CSAs. | 9.7% | 7.6% | 24.1% | 35.7% | 22.9% | 642 | 3.55 |
| Allowing customers to consume farm products on site, such as an ice cream stand, wine-tasting, etc. | 13.0% | 8.5% | 22.5% | 35.5% | 20.6% | 695 | 3.42 |
| Agritourism activities such as school day trips, pick-your-own, pumpkin patches and corn mazes, etc. | 16.2% | 11.0% | 26.6% | 34.5% | 11.7% | 692 | 3.15 |
| Use of "high tunnels." | 17.3% | 6.7% | 38.6% | 24.4% | 13.0% | 676 | 3.09 |

SUMMARY:

- All activities averaged as Neutral/No Opinion or higher. None had a negative weighted average.
- The activities rated highest were “Having a farm stand” (78% rated Important or Extremely important) and allowing a farm market 75% rated Important or Extremely Important)
- Respondents were less enthusiastic about the Use of high tunnels (17% rated Not important), Agritourism (16% rated as Not important) and Allowing consumption on-site (13% rated as Not important).

Section Five – Affordable Housing

What is Affordable Housing? Please use the following information when answering questions 34 – 41 below.

- “Affordable Housing” must cost 30% or less of household income for those households earning less than 80% of New London County’s median income. In 2021, a family of four making less than \$79,000 a year, or an individual making less than \$55,950 a year, could qualify for affordable housing.
- In counting affordable housing units, the State includes only protected units reserved for lower-income residents through long-term deed restrictions or through governmental assistance programs.
- “Affordable Housing” is **not** “public housing.”
- Affordable housing comes in many shapes and sizes, and in a variety of architectural styles to blend in with the surrounding community.

Question 34: How would you prioritize future Affordable Housing units for the following groups?

| | Lowest priority | Low priority | Current priority is about right | Higher priority needed | Highest priority | Total Responses | Weighted average |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Volunteer firefighters and EMTs | 5.56% | 4.68% | 29.09% | 38.89% | 21.78% | 684 | 3.67 |
| Young people and young families | 9.20% | 5.99% | 32.12% | 36.35% | 16.35% | 685 | 3.45 |
| Senior citizens | 8.43% | 5.09% | 37.21% | 34.30% | 14.97% | 688 | 3.42 |
| Teachers | 8.59% | 8.30% | 33.33% | 34.50% | 15.28% | 687 | 3.4 |
| Town employees | 8.35% | 7.76% | 41.00% | 31.04% | 11.86% | 683 | 3.3 |
| Service workers | 9.40% | 6.75% | 41.26% | 32.45% | 10.13% | 681 | 3.27 |
| Other (please specify) | | | | | | 39 | |

SUMMARY:

- Respondents rated all groups from Current priority is about right to Higher priority is needed.
- Lower or Lowest priority rankings for all groups were under 17%.
- Many “Other” comments clustered around these topics:
 - a. Prioritizing all people in need, not certain groups
 - b. Opposing any Affordable Housing
 - c. Favoring encouraging diversity in our population

COMMENTS

Higher priority - Disabled

[for all groups] ? What is the current priority, and what is the needs?

Mixed scenarios

See additional comment on last page

ALL THE GROUPS ARE IN NEED

| | |
|---|--|
| Reserved units not desirable - allow secondary dwellings | zoning for additional year-round rental only structures on existing tracts of land of a certain size (2 acres? 5 acres?) |
| It is really all of the above as we are losing our sense of community. I don't want to be the Florida of the North | Veterans |
| Veterans - Higher Priority needed | Veterans |
| People from more diverse backgrounds | Medical Services Providers, Certified Nurses Aides |
| I suggest you consider using/leasing the many second homes in Town that owners do not use and remain empty throughout the year. | Just don't all put them all in Roger's Lake |
| Racial/Ethnic diversity | Shouldn't we prioritize by need, not career or age? |
| Racial/Ethnic diversity - Highest priority | I don't feel this topic is characterized accurately by this question based on what these projects have turned out to be in other towns. |
| i have no idea about the current priority so hard to answer here | It's hard to find a home that costs less than \$500,000, and even harder to find a rental that is less than \$1500. |
| Affordable housing should be available to anyone who meets the criteria. | The town cannot discriminate which group of individuals will get the housing. How is this question valid? Affordable housing contradicts and is a threat to Lyme's current characteristics and charm. |
| we need to find room for these people in what has become an very overpriced real estate market for the average person | No changes. The town is fine the way it is! |
| Need to be thinking about the future here for future families | affordable housing is a back-door subsidy for organizations that don't want to pay their workers a living wage. having said this, maybe the Town should award more stipends to its vol. firefighters and EMTs. that would be a start. The Town of Lyme should not be in the landlord business. |
| I believe the town of Lyme does not have to required access to services needed for those without a car. I believe we would be wise to help build affordable walkable units for elderly and low income people on the abandoned lot across from the big Y, in the plaza that includes the hideaway. | Affordable housing should have a window of time...10 yrs and then move on and allow new people |
| we need people of all ages --- not just a bunch of senior citizens | Young people are so important to a community. With an aging population, Lyme needs to support younger residents. |
| Lyme is too small and rural a town to support affordable housing. | i support ADU's for affordable housing |
| Focus on attracting more diversity. | |

Question 35: The cost of land in Lyme makes it very expensive to provide new affordable housing as single-family homes. Recognizing that fact, which kinds of housing would you prefer to see in Lyme for those who qualify for affordable housing? Please select your responses from this scale.

| | Lowest Priority | Low Priority | Neutral | High Priority | Highest Priority | Total | Weighted |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------|---------------|------------------|-------|----------|
| Single family Houses | 12.93% | 10.83% | 34.59% | 31.73% | 9.92% | 665 | 3.15 |
| Accessory Apartments on Existing Lots | 21.93% | 8.15% | 25.63% | 29.33% | 14.96% | 675 | 3.07 |
| Small clusters of Affordable Cottages | 26.96% | 8.74% | 20.59% | 32.30% | 11.41% | 675 | 2.92 |
| Mixed scenarios | 24.85% | 6.63% | 33.89% | 24.10% | 10.54% | 664 | 2.89 |
| Owner occupied Duplexes on Conforming lots | 28.10% | 12.11% | 30.04% | 24.36% | 5.38% | 669 | 2.67 |
| Small groupings With a max of Four dwelling Units | 35.69% | 10.99% | 23.95% | 22.59% | 6.78% | 664 | 2.54 |

Summary:

- Despite being presented as a very expensive option, the top choice for affordable housing options was single family homes, which follows the results stated in previous POCD surveys.
- The second pick for affordable housing was accessory apartments on existing house lots which also follows strong support from previous POCD surveys.
- Both top affordable housing options were close to the neutral-weighted average.
- All other options were below the neutral weighted average, indicating lower interest in these options, second lowest being owner occupied duplexes on conforming lots and least desirable option being small groupings with a maximum of four connected dwelling units.

Conclusion: Given that respondents' support for affordable housing types was generally neutral or lower, the most-favored option was single family houses, followed by accessory dwelling units, which are allowable under current regulations.

Question 36 Are you currently renting housing to an individual or family who qualifies for Affordable Housing as defined above?

| | Responses | |
|-----|-----------|-----|
| Yes | 4.18% | 29 |
| No | 95.82% | 665 |

Summary: This question was new to the 2025 Survey. Responses reflected that 29 property owners rent to an individual or a family who qualify for Affordable housing.

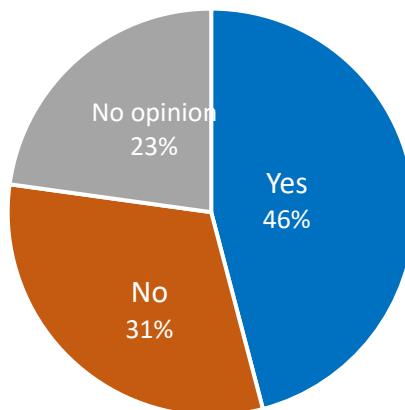
Question 37 Should the Town provide tax incentives to property owners who rent existing housing to individuals or families who qualify for Affordable Housing?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|----------------|------------|
| Yes | 45.91% |
| No | 31.28% |
| No opinion | 22.81% |
| TOTAL | 697 |

Summary:

- Slightly less than half of respondents approved of providing tax incentives to property owners who rent to individuals or families who qualify for Affordable Housing.
- Just under a third of the respondents disagreed with this approach.
- Just under a quarter of respondents didn't offer an opinion.
- Respondents' comments reflected that possibly more information was needed to generate additional opinions.

Should the Town provide tax incentives to property owners who rent existing housing to individuals or families who qualify for Affordable Housing?



Question 38 There are existing, less expensive single-family properties in Lyme which could be privately purchased and improved or converted to multi-family dwelling units, and then sold or rented as State-qualified Affordable Housing, for less than the cost of building new single or multi-family dwellings. Do you support this approach to Affordable Housing?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly oppose | 19.42% |
| Oppose | 10.07% |
| Neutral/no opinion | 20.58% |
| Support | 35.68% |
| Strongly support | 14.24% |
| TOTAL | 695 |

Summary:

- Just under 50% either Support or Strongly support this approach to affordable housing.
- Over 29% either Oppose or Strongly oppose this approach.
- Under 21% offered no opinion.
- The weighted average for this option is 3.15, making it slightly above neutral and on a par with respondents' top affordable housing choice of single-family houses.

Question 39 The Town is currently exploring a taxpayer-funded housing rehabilitation program to provide micro-loans for important safety and quality improvements to existing housing units occupied by low and moderate-income households. Such improvements might include things like fixing a leaky roof, replacing a furnace, septic and well repairs, or making the unit handicapped accessible. Would you support a program like this?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|------------------------|------------|
| Strongly oppose | 14.35% |
| Oppose | 11.91% |
| Neutral /No Opinion | 19.51% |
| Support | 39.17% |
| Strongly support | 15.06% |
| TOTAL Responses | 697 |

Summary:

- 54.23% of respondents support or strongly support this approach.
- 19.51% offered no opinion.
- 26.26% oppose or strongly oppose this approach.

Question 40 How should we fund Affordable Housing acquisition? Funding it solely with Town money will give the Town more control in allocating the units to qualified local residents, but at a significant cost to taxpayers. Using grants and State or federal funding will provide no control in selection of qualified residents, but at a reduced cost to taxpayers. Which funding mechanisms would you support?

| | Strongly oppose | Oppose | Neutral / No Opinion | Support | Strongly support | Weighted Average |
|---|-----------------|--------|----------------------|---------|------------------------|------------------|
| Private fundraising | 8.58% | 5.18% | 24.56% | 42.90% | 18.79% | 3.58% |
| Use of grants and/or state or federal funding | 21.36% | 12.46% | 21.22% | 29.97% | 14.99% | 3.05% |
| Town funds | 20.65% | 14.71% | 23.33% | 32.84% | 8.47% | 2.94% |
| | | | | | Total responses | 689 |

Summary:

- Private Fundraising received a weighted average of 3.58, with 61.69% in favor and 13.76% opposed.
- The second-ranked choice was Use of grants and/or State or federal funding, receiving a weighted average of 3.05, and 44.96% in favor and 33.82% opposed.
- Using Town funds was the least favored option, with a weighted average of 2.94. Respondents were 41.31% in favor and 35.36% opposed.

Conclusion: Respondents preferred private fundraising for affordable housing acquisition in order to keep taxes low and retain local control.

Question 41 Would you support the expenditure of Town funds in support of affordable housing initiatives?

| | 2000 | 2014 | 2025 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 31% | 29% | 47.91% |
| No | 61% | 60.50% | 36.08% |
| No Opinion | 8% | 10.50% | 16.05% |
| Total responses | 413 | 276 | 693 |

Summary:

- Slightly less than half of respondents indicated they would the expenditure of town funds in support of affordable housing initiatives (47.91%). This percentage increased almost 19% from 2014.
- Over a third of respondents did not support the expenditure of town funds in support of affordable housing (36.08%).
- No opinion responses (16.02%) increased by 6% from 2014.

Question 42 Would you support a property tax increase for the purpose of providing affordable housing opportunities?

| Answers | % | Responses |
|---|--------|------------|
| Yes, I would support a property tax increase of 1%. | 25.87% | 179 |
| Yes, I would support a property tax increase of 2% to 5%. | 21.82% | 151 |
| Yes, I would support a property tax increase of more than 5%. | 4.05% | 28 |
| No, I would not support a property tax increase. | 48.27% | 334 |
| TOTAL Responses | | 692 |

Summary:

- 51.74% of respondents supported some level of property tax increase for affordable housing.
- 48.27% of respondents would not support a property tax increase.
- 47.69% of respondents supported a property tax increase of 1% to 5%.
- 4.05% of respondents supported a property tax increase of more than 5%.

Section Six – Any Other Thoughts?

The last survey question was open-ended. Online respondents had an unrestricted opportunity to comment. Paper survey respondents were given an entire blank page. Comments are shown below in the order in which they were received. Derogatory comments about specific individuals or residential addresses have been deleted. Solid lines separate each comment.

Question 43: This survey has asked you about a variety of topics. Thank you for taking your time to provide input on issues that affect the future conservation and development of Lyme. Do you have any additional comments or questions?

The town of Lyme should not be in the Real Estate Business or Property Rehab Business. The government does nothing well.

The town government should minimize its size and scope of intrusion into people's lives. Just because there is a perceived need does not mean the town has to fill the void.

The town should minimize town officials and cost that should be their #1 priority not expanding the infrastructure and tax burden.

Bear in mind the reason why Lyme can stay largely rural is because of the services provided in surrounding towns.

I think many who grew up here cannot afford to live here in their adult life.

Let's not become a trendy recreation town for only the wealthy, such as Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, The Hamptons Long Island, etc for only the rich.

We are fortunate to be in uninherited paid off house, a home that is slowly being fixed up. Our household is low income and do not want to be taxed out of town.

Our neighbors are good not snooty where everything must be just so

For Affordable Housing can we do a combo of town and federal funding? Then the town would have some say on who lives where. Make combo applications for town and Fed so both can check out types of people moving in, check incomes, criminal records etc

Having lived here 62 years and husband 83 all of his life, have seen many changes. People were more friendly and neighborly – used to bake to welcome new family and now they don't want to know you – could hear my husband's only car come past Jane's at midnight now traffic never stops – river had traffic all year with tankers - now nothing in winter - shad season was magic with all the lighted nets and they'd pull them in when tanker would come - everyone used the swimming hole now most go to Beach Club – Used to have concerts end of Joshuatown Road - library has had a few - nice old library had movies on outside wall - only have cable and no VCR movies at new library have been nice - make a lot of use of library even more since senior center has been closed - lots of children's activities but would be nice if more for town senior during day - as we age not fond of night and dark - miss the horse pull at fair but fair now has a lot of children activities which is nice and they recently had a bonfire and marshmallows. Happy to see they still have Dr Bills 4th parade - as most people go to town we lost the local gas pumps - it would be nice to still have some of us seniors stay local - used to have lots of local stores besides Janes and Cove - was nice for boaters to walk to and Sissons and Cyzkowski and others were nice as people stayed in town - were lots of farms now we are more of a bedroom and people go out of town - many people have lived here for generations and made this town and when the new come with fancy homes we shouldn't forget us modest old timers - farming didn't make us rich - love land but can't afford all the trust and preserves. Would be nice if I had a social person who called and checked on seniors once in a while.

This survey should have closely modeled previous surveys to preserve the consistency of the data. This survey blatantly encourages responses to "appear" to support Affordable Housing. The chair of the POCD Committee was also chair of the Affordable Housing Committee, a clear conflict of interest. The most promising approach to effecting positive change in Affordable Housing by encouraging Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH's) wasn't properly addressed. Funding Affordable is NOT a state requirement, while this questionnaire leads one to believe Lyme must fund Affordable Housing initiatives. Many of these questions were not worded as approved in the combined P&Z and POCD subcommittee meeting. Who this responsible for this???

1) People move to Lyme from large cities and often ask for improved both government and private services, wider roads, etc
I think rather than changing Lyme's culture of quiet, rural, minimum government, we should maintain all as these qualities are what make Lyme so special.

2) Rather than increasing government services, increase volunteer outreach. It may take more aggressive means to publicize the need for volunteers. Let's work with the library, public hall, schools etc to get people motivated to help support the town.
Example - Essex schools have a community service requirement for graduation. That is a wonderful approach to instilling community spirit and responsibility in the next generation.

3) Perhaps some town meetings on how to get involved in different volunteer organizations? Maybe coordinate a volunteer expo with the 250th celebration.
Maybe get a representative from all the volunteer organizations in town to brainstorm how to get more people involved.

Lyme residents need a place IN LYME where they could retire.
Lyme needs to enforce the airB&B regulations which are in place.

"Survey way too long & some questions/topic obtuse."

In my opinion the affordable housing program is a failure. They have become retirement homes for people with two or more incomes. Furthermore some of the people have never done a damned thing for the town of Lyme. Lyme should apply a second home luxury tax to help pay for affordable house & education like Vermont.

We desperately need a better way to control speed, particularly on 156. I am passed at least once a week in NO PASSING ZONES because so many people disregard speed limits and traffic laws because they know there is no enforcement. The WORST offenders, in my own experience, are locals who drive expensive cars and erroneously believe they are above the law. Arrogance is not a good look for Lyme.

Bicycles should NOT be allowed in the curves on 156. There is no way to get around them in curves without stopping and risking MY safety to avoid hitting them. In general I find bicycles exceptionally dismissive of stop signs and light -- they have a responsibility to operate their "vehicles" safely and need to be held accountable when they act irresponsibly. Please do away with the Tour de Lyme too, and provide more acceptable places for bicycles. I don't know what the solution is beyond widening roads but in the summer it's out of control on our main roads. (Better manners of bicyclists would go a long way until a solution is found.)

People who are not DIRECTLY contributing as a volunteer in Lyme should NOT be allowed to occupy affordable housing. It is being abused by ex-spouses who basically "squat" when the person who does the volunteering (that allowed them access to affordable housing) moves out.

Lyme is no longer a "quaint" little town -- it's stuffed with wealthy people who don't value a house as a home -- just an investment. It hurts the small town feel.

Affordable housing should be controlled to avoid future purchase of said property for "improvement" and resale.

Jobs and public transportation in Lyme are very limited. I feel there are other towns much more suited for this.

There are far too many liabilities that will come with affordable housing.

Next you'll want a police force, a community center, community parking lots and traffic lights.

We are not required to take the state's money and I don't support it.

I am not opposed to affordable housing but would need specifics in order to support it. (near schools, work, opportunities, shopping, qualifiers)

we have a regional senior center and a regional school system-----why not regional affordable housing?
How will this survey be interpreted, recorded and how will it be received by residents?

Congratulations on this thoughtful and useful survey

Consider selling licenses for active recreation areas

Invite presentations for protection of wildlife, protection of wetlands, providing greater river and cove access and protection of ridges and hilltops

Requests updated information (since 2022)

For fire and ambulance: let's hope we can be flexible in expediting it; working with existing groups; individuals; volunteers and professionals.

Enforcement should be provided, delivered consistently and kindly.

Why did I believe every question/opinion I read prior to filling out this form, are driven by numbers 34 through 42?

1) road safety in Lyme is awful. Encourage more exercise

2) monitor the company that lays the road yellow center lines. Often these are not in the center of a road. The drivers too often "cut corners" worsening road safety for approaching cars in the most dangerous places. I don't see such poor workmanship on the state roads that pass through Lyme

3) remove the no parking signs on the sterling city road at the church end. 7 such signs in about 75 yards is not necessary

Just to reiterate, Lyme is a small paradise which because of the current increase in population and decline (maybe) of the nearby cities is in danger of losing its rural characteristics. This is a difficult survey to answer - but maybe more difficult for the town to analyze.

Hope you can make sense of this contribution

Nature is an essential underpinning of human health and well-being. Lyme's open space, with its conservation corridors, is a precious but highly vulnerable asset. We are a largely privately-funded conservation and sportsperson's paradise for all residents of southeast CT. Bulldozing Lyme on any scale only degrades, and never improves, this purpose.

A suggestion: Periodically advise landowners of the link between the invasives choking Lyme's woods and our eponymous tick-borne disease, as well as related impacts to human health.

Lyme's forests can't be restored unless the deer population is reduced to about five per square mile.

Try a few modest incentives, for starters. In some places, landowners receive a lower property tax assessment if they use forestry practices that protect natural resources. Farmers have so-called depredation permits, which allow them to kill deer year-round on their land; give property owners who qualify for the forestland assessments the same out-of-season rights. If hunting is not possible, fences protecting fragile forests should count toward the lower property taxes.

Thank you for extending the deadline to allow even those of us who wait until 11.57 on 1/31 to have our say. Thanks for all your hard work - I look forward to seeing the results.

Funding for volunteers in EMS and fire to be able to afford housing

Would like to town to stop buying open space that could be purchased by young families

Again, it's time Lyme begins to address the accident waiting to happen at Uncas Lake. Lyme officials need to work w/ the state to urge and ensure safe and sanitary conditions: 1. Better signage re fires and cars not allowed past the parking lot. 2. A locked gate (that police, fire, and ambulance workers can open if needed) to prevent cars from driving to the lake (one dirt path where kids are running around while cars are driving is frightening). 3. bathrooms that are accessible for those in wheelchairs and walkers like at other sites such as DEP by the Baldwin bridge 4. regular visits by state police to ensure these minimal rules are being followed. Lyme cannot continue to look away and say not our problem. It's in Lyme and serves Lyme. Please work w the state to make safety and sanitary conditions a priority.

Consider greater encouragement of retiree involvement in Town or volunteer roles.

Thanks for planning for the town's future!

Events such as the July 4th parade, Hamburg Fair, and Tour de Lyme should be promoted and protected where necessary.

No questions regarding the school budget, we didnt have a vote on pre-k, full day etc. they should have to pay something for this. I have never used the school system here & as a senior we should have a property tax break like other surrounding states.

Some questions cant be answered properly as there are no details.

I answered many questions "no opinion" r/t the "devil is in the details". Many well-intentioned programs/ideas have outcomes we may not want.

Take a look at other States where providing taxpayer supported low income housing has been a complete disaster for the community and crime has increased exponentially, property values have plummeted, the beauty of the community has been ruined, and low income properties look like the slums in cities like Mexico City.

Too many of these questions require much more information and or knowledge to answer confidently. There are so many details about affordable housing that need to be explained before answering some of these questions. Locations/ cost differences / people involved all should be taken into account, usually on a case by case manner.

Thank you for taking the time for putting this together and helping up improve our town.

I thought that I had beach access in Lyme when I moved here and was disappointed to find out that we didn't. I would love to see a park for kids to play and fenced in dog area where there could just be a few picnic tables and volunteers could help maintain the area. The town could state that they area not responsible for animal behavior. It would be lovely to have a Commons area were there is weekly music in the summer with possibly a food truck and the local wine business. I love this town and want a reason to not have to go to other towns for family entertainment.

Feel very strongly that real estate/ automobile/ etc taxes should NOT be raised. They are challengingly high as they stand now.

Not every town should provide the same lifestyle and services. Diversity in these areas is beneficial. Strive to keep Lyme's rural character and low levels of town services and town regulations.

The town of Lyme is a desirable place to live because what Lyme is today growth and development will tarnish the charming characteristics of what make Lyme, "Lyme". This includes affordable housing, commercial development, and permitting small service business operating in rural areas. It is imperative to keep Lyme as it has been. Lyme is unique. There is no need to change the atmosphere and try to make Lyme more like East Lyme/Old Lyme

Using the postal service for town news is awful. We rarely get the post cards. I even check the pamphlets for hidden mail.

Would be interested in the startup of a sportsmen's/game club in town.

leave lyme as it is with less government

Make the results of this monkey survey transparent to all taxpayers

Reynolds is a convenience, and an important taxpayer, but it is also a blight on what should be the center of the town. One possible improvement: The store could be rehabilitated and reopened, though parking is limited. The four corners in Hadlyme, where the old antique store is for sale, could be developed for both affordable housing and a walkable commercial area. The town is extremely limited for walkability along the roads. Sidewalks in some areas would be a significant improvement.

Please maintain the beautiful and serene landscape of Lyme!

In the town survey of 2015, a majority of respondents were opposed to the widening of roads and the addition of guardrails to the small country roads of Lyme. Not only was the road in front of our house on Mitchell Hill Road unnecessarily widened, a 400-foot-long steel guardrail, suitable for a 60-mpm highway, was implanted across the entire frontage of our property. Clearly, it significantly detracts from the rural character that was so important to the townspeople who answered the survey. In addition, the beautiful, natural view in front of our home has been forever "industrialized."

The problem on the road seemed to be that a curve along it was a potential problem. Then a nearby tree gave out and its root system damaged a small segment of the roadway. We certainly agreed that this area need to be fixed.

The planning for this situation went on for two years, crossing the administrations of two selectmen. Everyone agreed that this stretch needed to be mended. What we and many of our neighbors did not understand was why the "solution" necessitated the widening of an additional 300 or so feet of the road and an addition of a steel guardrail, and the weeks of work that closed off the road. We were given little opportunity for input on this project, and when we were, our opinions were given short shrift.

Not only is this long barrier unsightly and inappropriate across from someone's house, but it may be more dangerous than what was there before. There is no longer any shoulder, another thing that was important in the previous survey. If a car were to veer and hit the barrier, it would be damaged or worse. And if a car were to veer when we get our mail, it could be dangerous. One can hardly imagine if this type of guardrail were placed throughout Lyme.

I suggest that a Road Improvement Committee be formed, which would include Selectmen, and also a number of other Lyme residents. This committee would review, evaluate, and participate in decisions on future road improvements of a similar magnitude. As it stands now, one person – as we were constantly told – is responsible for these decisions. If this type of barrier is actually state mandated, then a council of small towns could meet with the CT DOT and come up with a solution that will preserve the rural landscape of Connecticut.

Unfortunately, it's too late for us, and our 25-mpm country road.

I don't think townspeople should be treated the way we and other people on Mitchell Hill Road were for two years. We had nowhere to turn. It was as if we suddenly didn't matter to anyone. It was devastating and made us wonder if we were wrong about living in Lyme. I don't know how many of you are reading this, but I hope it's more than one person. You may want to take a drive on Mitchell Hill Road and imagine how you would feel if this had been done outside of your home.

1. the affordable housing issue is very complex and requires a carefully balanced approach but if we get the resources to provide housing, the services required (eg transport, schools, water, sewage etc) need to be taken into account
2. The Volunteer model we currently have is frankly outdated and difficult to sustain. Affordable housing does not answer that problem as most people in that income bracket will be working 2-3 jobs anyway. Selective, targeted provision of housing related to the community needs is what is required within the laws, statutes and programs in place that help support this. Other communities have solved this issue and we should learn from them.

Keep Lyme Green, More people out on the trails the better.

Lyme is a rural community and should stay that way. Thank you

Encourage/allow more restaurants and shops to be built

I would have loved to have lived in NYC near my job, but it was unfordable to me so I found a place that I could afford to commute from that was affordable to purchase. Please keep this in mind when coming to conclusions about where people should live.

I think we need to do a better job creating community in Lyme. More communication to townspeople, such as an electronic newsletter with summary of committee outcomes, discussions, immediate volunteer needs etc and other events. I also think we need to do a better job treating residents with respect. The culture of the town leadership at this moment works against making people feel like they are part of a community. Many of us dread having to go and do business with the leadership. Linda is a shining light in an office where you generally do not feel that the leadership is representing you or respecting you. There should be an annual volunteer appreciation day and every organization that uses volunteers should get a training session or guide for how to value and respect the volunteers. Many people I know have dropped out of volunteering because they felt dismissed. Standardizing volunteer training and appreciation, including newsletter recognition and more would be very important. The volunteer fair will not be successful if groups are not trained how to clearly define roles and responsibilities, show appreciation and recognize the value that volunteers bring.

I have lived in Lyme my whole life. I have watched farms grow smaller and some disappear. Vineyards, organic farms, farmers markets, nature preserves, volunteer fire and ambulance services are what make Lyme a wonderful place to live. I understand the need for some affordable / senior housing. If one needs a shopping center or business office, there are plenty located a few miles down the road in the surrounding towns.

As the town population ages, establishing services to replace volunteers will be critical. We would prefer that affordable housing goes first to first responders and town volunteers.

Thank you for all of the work you do for our wonderful town; I love Lyme and wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

We should explore supporting seniors to divide a larger home so some of it can be rented out to younger people or young families. While not foolproof, many potential synergies exist with this model.

With understanding and respect for hunters of all types, the seasonal hunting in Lyme is unexpectedly intrusive. The so-called benefits (population control and permit fees) do not justify:

- 1) The "sport" killing of animals
- 2) The safety risk to the public; both in and outside of designated hunting areas
- 3) The restricted public access to public land OR
- 4) The violation of property owners rights to "quiet enjoyment"

Please take a poll or include the question in the next election ballot.

Thank you.

This is a great opportunity for residents to voice their opinions on future growth and development in our town. We love rural Lyme and moved here because we like that it's a "quiet corner" of CT. We don't want to see lots of change. CT offers a huge variety of towns more/less urban to choose from. Our prior hometown in CT is a shadow of its former rural self because it allowed rapid, unchallenged growth over the 25 years we lived there. Thank you for your time preparing this survey.

I love Lyme because it is a town that protects, embraces and maintains its beauty and small town charm. A town that recognizes that it is special and works hard to protect why. A town that uses zoning to block development beyond single family homes and agricultural use. A town that protects more land and water every year. The most unspoiled, naturally beautiful town in Connecticut, filled with residents who appreciate these gifts and are willing to fight to keep them, and who will fight to keep out those who want to change or develop Lyme.

some questions did not have enough information for good answer.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it!

I want Lyme to continue as it is!!!

Very thoughtful survey. Congratulations and thanks.

Municipal bulletin boards should be available on multiple online platforms, or else go back to relying on snail mail and/or local newspapers and websites. No one should be forced to use a particular online platform in order to keep abreast of local matters.

I was disappointed that the survey, while extremely comprehensive in many ways and obviously the product of much hard work, does not address issues of community. For example, there are no questions about the role of the library, Lyme public hall, and other gathering places in the future development of the town. Such facilities play a huge role in the communal health of a town and I feel that an opportunity has been lost to discuss ways of outreach.

The Town should ask Reynolds Subaru to significantly reduce their lighting at night.

Can the town consider putting solar panels on Brush Hill Road Transfer Station property to provide affordable solar power to Lyme residents or discuss a membership fee to enable less expensive electricity?

I support a maximum size for single residence buildings. The P&Z should have a right to review and reject residences larger than 4000 square feet to insure they do not impact the scenic and rural quality of Lyme and do not affect the environmental integrity of the site.

I support a maximum size for single residence buildings. The P&Z should have a right to review and reject residences larger than 4000 square feet to insure they do not impact the scenic and rural quality of Lyme and do not affect the environmental integrity of the site.

This survey required a lot of thought, but I did not have enough information to answer many of the questions with confidence.

Children of Lyme residents need opportunity to stay in Lyme via starter housing-they are the future volunteers. Older residents need single floor mid to high price housing as they downsize. Right now they are forced to leave Lyme when they downsize. Many have been volunteers etc. and would like to stay in Lyme as they get older.

Love living in Lyme. Wish we had access to a sound-front beach.

Recent tree trimming has been overly aggressive with no thought for use of felled timber. Strongly feel affordable housing initiatives should be on land already developed, not on undeveloped land.

Thanks to the folks who took the time to put together this survey.

We should have beach access to Rogers Lake from Old Lyme. Either by purchasing a seasonal pass or just being a resident of Lyme.

- Enforce slower speeds in 156 and back roads, speed bumps like Newtown ct ?
- Turn Grange into a small business area. Done with taste and high quality. There should be some commerce here.
- General store - mercantile with restaurant and coffee and small groceries.Ex bartletts Farm Nantucket
- Protect the river and cleans ups on the side of the road

Keep up the good work. Thank You.

Affordable housing is best incentivized through regulations being eased to encourage our existing housing stock into more dwelling units in an existing house. We dont need more development just better use of the real estate we have.

Thank you for doing this. One idea to consider for affordable housing is to allow existing homeowners to add accessory dwelling units on their properties. Parts of California that are struggling with affordable housing are doing this (Ex Berkeley). Here's an article on the topic:

<https://www.berkeleyside.org/2024/05/21/adus-in-berkeley-may-soon-be-sold-as-condos-under-newly-adopted-state-policy>

I am anti-development. I want to prioritize open space, and preservation of legacy demographics, I do not support any programs to increase commercial development, low income housing or population increase of any kind.

The town roads need to be cleared of debris and mowed at least once a year. Joshuatown rd has become a hazard for local drivers.

Keep the town small, no apartments or chain-business developments.

Yes. Our roads and roadsides need more maintenance by the town crew. Mostly shoulder mowing and the proper equipment to do it. What we have now isn't working and presents hazards on curves

Thank you, and continue preserving Lyme

We have enough open space and there is no need to take more land away from the open market. I feel we should encourage younger families to make Lyme their home as it helps with volunteers, there are too many "second" homes in Lyme and these people add very little to the community (for the most part).

Lyme's location isn't particularly amenable to low-income families because of travel distance to jobs -- people need to spend too much on gas to get to work to make minimum-wage jobs practical.

As a newer resident of Lyme and likely one of the younger folks to move here, I want to start by saying how much I appreciate this town. It's truly the most welcoming community I've ever experienced. Living here feels like stepping back in time 30 years—in the best way possible—with its sense of neighborliness and charm.

That said, I've been reflecting on ways we can ensure Lyme remains vibrant and sustainable for years to come. One idea is to invest in a small local market or provide incentives to encourage one to open. With an aging population, it's important to create resources and spaces that support both current residents and attract younger families. While the local events we have are wonderful, building on that could make Lyme even more attractive as a long-term home.

I'd also like to bring up the issue of vegetation management. Many roads not maintained by Eversource are lined with overgrown or dead trees, which could create significant problems during storms. Given the age of the population and the potential for emergencies, addressing these hazards should be a priority. Furthermore, as fire threats grow in the region, a thinning of the surrounding forest could help reduce risks while promoting healthier growth.

Lyme is a truly special place, and I hope these ideas can help ensure it remains that way for generations to come. Thank you for considering my thoughts—I'm so grateful to call this town home.

This survey makes assumptions I do not agree with. Not everyone is on board with these assumptions. This made it difficult to answer questions intelligently or honestly. Not a good survey.

I do not like the choices provided to answer some of these questions. "Somewhat important" implies some importance, but is listed below neutral/no opinion. That does not make sense. Why were there so many questions about affordable housing/dark sky/farming, but only one regarding any new business (cafe, restaurant, gas station) in town? Your bias is showing.

Open easy-to-build on fields that are not currently conserved are good for both agriculture and affordable housing - affordable housing should have priority when suitable land is on or close to major roads.

The overly massive Subaru dealership is an eye sore and should be avoided in the future

Need of more parking areas to get to the water access/beach with picnic areas

I feel that keeping the 50' road frontage regulation is extremely important. Otherwise you are opening the door for future development of previously inaccessible properties.

There were no questions about the needs for law enforcement in Lyme. Our position is that Lyme should increase the police resources.

Resident State Trooper? Response time may improve??

We don't want tax payer funds used to expand or widen existing roads, you ruined the rural atmosphere on Mitchell Hill Rd. Lyme is great as is, leave it alone!!

Good to see many of the topics covered actually discussed.

The town need to look at affordable housing with inclusivity in mind. There's not many Lyme residents who qualify. Let's bring in some refugees.

Explore a 1 or 2% fee charged a closing on property sale.

Perhaps this happened and I wasn't aware of it, but it would have been helpful to have a town meeting where folks who were more informed about these issues were present and could speak to the different

perspectives (representatives from Lyme Conservation, local farms and businesses, residents, etc) before disseminating the survey

I am a strong opponent to having a small police force or presence in the town. We have little to no crime but our roads ways are not safe. I live on a road that is 25 mph and last year alone we had 5 major accidents on it one that did major property damage to my property. RT 156 is out of control with the speeds hitting over 60 mph in area there was 2 or 3 deaths on the road last year. If the town wants to increase revenue this is a good way to do this. More and more people are going to get hurt or killed. We need to stop the speed.

As worthwhile as all these ideas are, tax payers can't support increases to all the projects. Small increases for a single project either affordable housing, or paid emergency personnel or open spaces and maintenance could be considered but not all of the above.

With the increase in number and severity of storms, flooding has been an issue and a concern in low lying areas. Dams should be inspected and considered removing if appropriate to prevent dam failure and flooding. And any other flood mitigating improvements should be considered.

Lyme is a beautiful town. People don't move here for town services, just to enjoy open space, quiet and lower taxes.

Good luck

Lyme is unique in CT in its ability to protect and conserve land. We should celebrate this as it provides benefits like clean air and water, wildlife in abundance and climate mitigation through unfragmented blocks of forestland

Thank you for all the work that went into creating and executing this survey.

I answered this survey with the understanding that providing affordable house is a mandate, and not something that is optional.

I would love to see the fairground to become the town green.

Because of our significant investment in the natural environment and beauty of Lyme, I believe we should also support businesses that could enhance and profit from these assets. Such as a lodge or small scale hospitality home for those seeking to come enjoy our trails and waters through passive recreation. Plus, we need Jane's store back at the center of our world. We need a store in Hamburg.

I would prefer affordable housing to be first offered to people who work in services for the town or have some connections to the town. What has made this town so unique and special is the stewardship it has always had by its townspeople. Do we really want to change its character? Hard questions for the future

Thx for doing this

We use the library frequently and find it an important community resource.

The strength of Lyme is its rural character, lots of preserved land with no subdivisions. Volunteers keep the taxes low. Lyme is very special and should be preserved.

Keep us green!

We love Lyme and how it's being managed. Thank you for everything!

Continue to keep the small-town feel.

Thank you for taking the initiative to have this survey

Serious concerns that new housing and commercial develops will severely and permanently damage Lyme's unique character. Lyme is rural not suburban, and Lyme's aesthetic character is what brings people here.

Limit short term rentals such as Airbnb.

Having lived here almost 50 years, I think the town and residents have done a good job maintaining the rural character of the town but we need to do more to provide affordable housing.

Prioritize town residents for moorings

The lighting at the Subaru dealership is insane, hard to believe it doesn't have an effect on wildlife and the neighbors in that area. The security of their property should be procured in some other way.

This survey will by definition be extremely skewed towards what senior citizens want because the town is extremely skewed towards the senior citizen population. I am a first responder, and I can tell you that Lyme needs to rearrange its priorities to attract a younger population so that you can actually have some first responders because older folks are not able to volunteer, there is no housing, there is no character to this town, nothing to do. There is PLENTY of open space, quit with the open space initiatives!

One issue that comes to my mind is that of hunting on public land and land trust properties. It is extremely unfair that having hunters in the woods during the beautiful FALL season is frightening and unfair to those of us would walk in the woods. The # of days hunting is allowed should be REDUCED.

Lyme is a treasure and we should do our best to maintain the integrity of our community.

Do not change the character our town.

Nice Job

The highest priority should be affordable housing. Currently the cheapest house on the market is \$585,000, with other properties listed from \$1.5 million to \$15 million. Most of our children can't afford to live here.

- With regard to the Town providing a loan for the repair and maintenance of a property, or the purchase of a low income home, I oppose this approach because our Town is not a bank, nor should it be or become one. "Shoemaker, stick to thy last."
- If possible, please make future surveys less time consuming.
- Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time to make this survey happen.

The quality of life in Lyme is among the highest in the country and our tax burden among the lowest in the state. It would be a disaster if we were to allow this to change in order to cater to commercial interests.

I choose to live in Lyme because I like it the way it is: quiet, rural, low taxes, relatively well educated, affluent community. I do not want it to become Hartford, Bridgeport, Greenwich or even Old Saybrook.

Buy a solar powered speed radar (with camera) and post it on our street in front of our house - and issue tickets!

I would like to see the commercial land in Lyme better developed to provide services that Lyme residents actually use and would benefit from such as small shops or cafes. It seems that the zoning regulations make it difficult to allow this, but have no problem with most of the commercial space in Lyme being occupied by a car dealership.

Keep it small that's how Lyme got to be the way it is. Don't over think this survey, bureaucracy never solved any problems.

Lyme does not have the infrastructure in place to do much.

Many of these questions are difficult to answer with Survey Monkey. I did my best. There are nuances to the questions and answers and more information needed on many. Thanks for trying.

Established POCD should be honored and abided by and not altered to benefit one family at the expense of another family. Furthermore, the POCD should NOT be used as a tool to unethically manipulate our established planning and zoning regulations.

I pay extremely high property taxes already. I am not interested in paying additional fees. I am for affordable housing, for local families, as long as it is done properly.

Looking forward to hearing/seeing the results.

Thanks for listening. We love Lyme!

We want access to Roger's Lake. Continued maintenance and access to trails and preserves. Farmers should decide what they need to thrive. Lyme Maintenance under Lars does a terrific job and are much appreciated. Our roads are currently well maintained. We oppose new building in town for commercial use and were unaware lots could be under 2 acres in size. Lyme should require a 2 or 3 acre minimum in the future. Affordable housing can be achieved through current buildings on properties throughout town. Carriage houses, garage apartments, converted barns and other existing structures.

Conflicted on the amount of open space preservation. On one hand very supportive. Preserving land in Lyme is a benefit to not just Lyme residents but the State as well. On the other hand, it limits availability for housing. Perhaps affordable housing on smaller lots in "village-like" locations so less land is consumed is a path (?).

Lyme is a fabulous place to live as is!

It seems to me that affordable living units are very prevalent within small distances from Lyme and as such I am at a loss to see the purpose of expanding the availability of such units away from an ADU concept.

This town is where I have been raised for most of my life. It is a quiet and wonderful place to live where I have made memories and friends and hope to continue to do so. I live in fear of it becoming a home for car dealerships and large businesses, which frankly has already happened. Parking lots and pollution are not what makes Lyme special. The farmers market at Tiffany Farms, the sense of community and care for our neighbors this is what makes this town a place of pride for me. A town as small and close knit as this should not be beholden to dynastic families such as the Reynolds and their off shoots. The amount of parked Subarus is appalling and is a toxic example of what can happen to small towns if we are not careful. The main "strip" of our town is practically a neon sign advertising the Reynolds' stranglehold on this town. There is simply no reason for our potentially wonderful town center to be a monument to their hubris. The belief that they are "a part of the town's DNA" is frankly ridiculous when we see what has come from this genetic makeup. Never would I believe Lyme, Connecticut to be a strip mall paradise, but without proper care and attention we could find our beautiful town just another unwalkable commercial nightmare. I know I am not alone in feeling this way and wish to express how passionate and committed I am to the protection of this wonderful town.

we should take advantage of government grants and funds. although they will impose rules, private funding will also impose rules. Red tape is red tape.

pay for new initiatives by cutting waste and nice to have expenses. Town spends and assumes increased tax is the only way to go.

I don't remember being asked about the spend for the Hamburg road recycle building spend

-We need better communication, specifically a First Selectman's Newsletter. We should consider hiring a Town Manager who can readily address needs.

-Our town needs to ensure that all town employees are civil. There is no room for hostility as exhibited by some in the town maintenance department.

-What are we doing to attract young families?

-There is too much emphasis on acquiring open spaces at the expense of affordable housing.

-It is important to adequately support our library so we do not lose talent.

Some thoughts:

1. The town has over 50% open space; use some of that land for affordable housing.
2. We need to have younger families in town; focus on ways to attract and retain young families, e.g., programs at the library; day care for families and employees, etc.
3. Better communication from the town officials. Where is the first select-person's newsletter?

4. There is a focus on volunteerism, yet at what cost? The town recruits volunteers but what's the incentive other than "low taxes" and "altruism"? This approach is not successful as there are too many vacancies on town boards and commissions and important work is not being done effectively.

I really feel strongly about creating shoulders on the roads for bicycles and walkers. It is pretty bad now.

The Reynolds Subaru dealership being the only commercial space in Lyme is very disappointing. It does not create the small-town atmosphere that everything else in town does and the hold that the family has on the town is unacceptable. We should expand our commercial spaces to include local businesses run by families, not a single family who does not appear to have the best interest of the town in mind, but instead their own interests.

We would love a sidewalk on Mount Archer.

we need more ways to work together in person. Communities fail when relationships cease to exist.

How can we preserve our love of nature and privacy and still engage as neighbors and town members?

I'd like to see more opportunities for younger people to live and work in Lyme to keep it a vibrant, growing community. I worry that it will become another Darien or Greenwich--unaffordable for anyone but the super wealthy. I believe that volunteers who perform such services as firefighting and ambulance should be able to live here. I'm discouraged by the clear cutting that's been down around many of the large houses around Hamburg Cove. This doesn't help preserve the rural character of Lyme.

In general I thought the questions were very thoughtful and well laid out. They revealed to me that I want more information from the town about these subjects and the Boards' deliberations. Lyme is a good place to live and we need to improve its accessibility to a broader demographic without sacrificing our values and quality of life. Rather than more land in open space, I would support carving off parcels to build affordable housing. I support some small multi-family dwellings as well as single homes. I think we should work through Habitat for Humanity, given their existing structure and successes. I would be willing to volunteer for their activities in addition to the money that I already donate to that organization. We have to find a way through this eternal debate on NIMBY.

I would like the Town of Lyme to regulate corporations, private equity firms, hedge funds and like enterprises from purchasing homes in Lyme for tax or income purposes.

I would like to see the Town of Lyme sanction homeowners who clear-cut large swaths of forest that expose their extremely large dwellings.

PRESERVE LYME'S RURAL NATURE AND APPEAL

We have enough open space, which is wonderful, but we need other things more at this time. We should improve the town grange and the opportunity to add vitality and revenue with more bands in the amphitheater and we should support affordable housing, it is a national crisis. Those of us who are more financially fortunate need to help local workers have good homes locally, so we all win together in this lovely town.

I would favor more open space with a portion reserved for affordable housing. I favor farms being able to do more but not if it means polluting our water.

Safety in all areas (both manmade and natural environments) of our infrastructure is important.

Residents should continue to feel safe in their home and all around town, as best we can make it.

Not being a full time resident some of these questions were difficult to answer. Mostly I'd like to see Lyme retain its current character.

I would support a property tax increase of 5% for both land purchase and affordable housing. I wish you had used the same options in both of those questions.

The town should do everything it can to attain the winning formula of low taxes and small government.

Less is more when it comes to a rural paradise, such as Lyme... don't screw this up with any significant changes.

The property in Hamburg Cove which used to be a store is an eyesore. Who owns it and could it be used to support local farms/businesses or something else—similar to the store at the four corners in East Haddam. How could the town help move that forward?

Thank you for both a comprehensive and a far-seeing survey.

It would be nice to have a more cohesive & active town center/meeting place, perhaps centered around a small market/coffee shop near Hamburg cove or Tiffany farm.

We like living in Lyme, and find just about right.

First of all, thank you for asking for our input on these important questions. The exquisite beauty - all the land kept as open space, the trails, the old-world charm - is a huge part of this remarkable, visionary place. Now, as national parks will be open for drilling, it is essential to preserve this more than ever. We can find ways to be more inclusive while preserving the essence and exquisite beauty of what we have.

Lyme needs to immediately address the issue of affordable housing in a strongly proactive and thoughtfully considered fashion. (No 4-bed, 2-bath, 1 kitchen dormitory-style housing please!!!) With forethought, the state requirement for affordable units in each CT town can proceed without necessarily changing the special character that Lyme offers all of its residents. (See Weston, MA for an example of attractive multi-family affordable housing.) Delays in addressing the states affordable housing mandate may result in developers being able to bypass town zoning regulations to build whatever they want, as long as affordable housing requirements are incorporated. I doubt anyone living in Lyme would be happy if that were to happen.

We are, for the moment, a democracy. Selection of 1st selectman has been undemocratic at least twice. Stop it.

Aesthetics on public projects and around public property should be a higher priority.

Invasive should be a high priority but the money this requires statewide and nationally suggests fundraising is needed.

Lyme is a beautiful and still a totally rural area. It is geographically unique and its natural resources should be preserved and protected. We do not need to allow commercialization to compromise the "Little Eden" that is our town.

End the racist, classist, and anti-family practices in Lyme. The very composition of this survey reveals that underlying ideology. Shame on all of you who uphold it.

I strongly oppose government mandated affordable housing in Lyme, even if this position results in a loss of state/federal funding for the town and a property tax increase.

Give taxpayers something for all the money they pay. Like curbside trash pick-up, a swimming hole with amenities, access to water, and or affordable housing, will make a stronger community at end of the day.

This survey was rife with typographical errors and misspellings.

The amount of Open Space, Land Trust and Nature Conservancy, etc. land taken off the market impacts the cost of land for housing. Taking more off the market will only increase the cost of housing and living in Lyme and make it even more unaffordable for our volunteers and children.

Strongly favor some additional non-automotive, non-marine commercial development in Hamburg.

I FEEL INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ADU'S IN TOWN IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE. MANY SENIOR CITIZENS WOULD BE ABLE TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES THIS WAY.

There's an area initiative to reduce noise pollution. We are blessed to live in an idyllic setting, and there are times when landscapers (ie leaf blower brigade) ruins it. Essex is starting an effort to try to incentivize the use of electric mowers and blowers. Quieter. I think Lyme should investigate as this is the future. Towns in NY and CA are ahead on this issue.

see <https://sustainableessex.com>

Better for environment and health and Quality of Life!

I commend you for covering so many issues.

Please keep Lyme undeveloped with low taxes for the Residents. Limited government is critical for survival into the future.

The administration is doing a great job in town!

Thank you for your efforts which go far to make Lyme the wonderful town it is.

Perhaps the question is not, "should it be done?" but "how well will it be done?"

I strongly urge the town to pro-actively restrict private helicopter use and heliports. In particular helicopter landings should be prohibited withing 1000 feet of historic buildings and public recreational sites and nature trails and coves.

I am concerned about 6am gunfire at Whalebone Cove and wonder about legality of rapid fire shooting when it is still dark.

The wetlands commission should be directed to manage responsible development NOT to automatically & illegally reject all applications, such that only people able to commit considerable money & time ever get approval. It's a misuse of power & keeps desirable residents & taxpayers from building in Lyme.

Thank you to the committee members who worked on the survey for the Town!

I would like affordable housing and improvements to existing structures be available to workers and Emergency Volunteers of the Town of Lyme, with some restrictions for transfer of the properties.

Thanks for giving us the opportunity for adding our input to ideas about Lyme's future. We want to keep Lyme as rural and beautiful as it is, while allowing people of all income levels to live here.

We need a dog park where dogs can play off leash and people can socialize as well.

Lyme needs many more miles of safe walking and safe biking roads. 156 is a death trap as are many other roads. I can only think of a few safe walking roads - including Sterling City, Cove Rd, and the lower stretch of Ely's Ferry Rd. At the very least the town should flatten the earth banks on one side of a given road so that walking and biking can be done without having to jump out of the way of cars and trucks.

How this has never been done in the last two hundred years is inexplicable. Please get it done now.

Maintain rural nature of Lyme.

Affordable housing is dead

Lyme needs a community center like the Senior Center, but aimed at creating a greater sense of community for all residents through meetings and activities that foster a sense of belonging to a very special place called Lyme. The fairgrounds would make a great site.

I love this Town and I don't want to see it slowly eroded and altered by State agendas and mandates.

This survey could have been called "The State wants us to change your town and we're going along. Tell us why this is good."

I'm a little disappointed by this apparent acquiescence.

Hi, my biggest concern is that the area of Hamburg. Reynolds should not be allowed to expand anymore. I'm sure they have their eye on the fairgrounds. My hope is that the Grange/fairgrounds will be preserved for extended agricultural use. A farm to table restaurant maybe with an on-site store selling local syrup and wine? No more cars!!!! My other concern is the preservation of wetlands. Too many new homeowners are cutting all the way down to the water. The landscapers who they hire should be informed of our wetland laws, and if they participate in clear cutting—they and the homeowners should be fined. As for open space, we have plenty. There needs to be some space left for wildlife to live undisturbed. As wonderful as our Lyme land trust trails are—they do impact wildlife negatively. There needs to be a balance.

I am of very limited financial resources. It is by the generosity of the late Charles Dow Jr. that I live here. I am very honored to be living here and take great pride by maintaining this property.

The question regarding affordable housing paired with the statement about state-qualified for affordable housing puts two different issues in one box. True affordable housing is offered at a price point where the monthly mortgage or rent is about one-third of a person's income. One can be a

purchase of an affordable home without being state-approved. The homes are affordable when builders utilize grants and donations to build. Old Saybrook and Stonington have done this. Habitat for humanity does it all the time. Please don't confuse the public by mixing language that refers to subsidized housing with affordable. Thanks for the opportunity for this survey.

The Town of Lyme is a desirable place to live because what Lyme is today. Growth and development will tarnish the charming characteristics of what makes Lyme, "Lyme". This includes affordable housing, commercial development, and permitting small services operating in rural areas. It is imperative to keep Lyme as it has been. Lyme is unique. There is no need to change the atmosphere and try to make Lyme an East Lyme or Old Lyme.

Lyme is a wonderful place to live. The biggest thing I'd like to see is more protection for local wildlife, unspoiled natural areas, bodies of water and local trees, flowers and all local nature.

The quality of life here in Lyme has been first-rate for my 45 years here!

No changes. The town is fine the way it is!

We're all very fortunate to live in such a great town. Thanks for asking for input and your efforts to keep Lyme a beautiful place to live.

We love living in Lyme. We Love its rural, open space and farmland. We are grateful to all the volunteers service members and hope that these can continue, or be enhanced with appropriate town funding.

On the affordable housing issue, I did not strongly support multi-residence structures or use of state or federal funds. My answer would be different for senior housing.

I view the changing makeup of the Town to a older and wealthier population as the greatest threat to the future of the Town. We need to analyze the best way to get younger, working and middle class families into Town and implement a plan to do that.

A number of new members on Boards and Commissions do not appear to understand their roles and responsibilities. The Town should implement an education program to educate new members on this issue. Town party committees should only appoint members who are qualified and committed to putting the time and effort in to properly perform their responsibilities.

I love Lyme the way it is that's why we moved here. If we wanted city we would live in New London...

Continue strong support for the library and its outreach programs.

Overall, the town of Lyme has prioritized a rural landscape over direct human needs. One need to look no further than the town's website to notice there are very few human beings in the photos. There are some benefits to this approach in that Lyme attracts the same type of person to live here, and it is picturesque -- but I am starting to see a serious lack of balance in town priorities. Things like "dark skies", "land preservation" and "plant management" are elite, wealthy people concerns. Most things that Lyme has prioritized are aligned with wealthy people values, such as privacy, beautiful views, and aesthetically pleasing farming. While I appreciate the long hours that P&Z committee members put into this survey, and the many priorities it needed to balance in creating the questions, it is a mere reflection of the town's long-standing priority to keep Lyme for the wealthy.

I am more heartened by Lyme's do-it-yourself approach, which is evident in keeping services at a low level (like recycling), or at a minimum cost level (like volunteer EMS and Fire). P&Z also has a zoning approach which is bottoms-up and allows some degree of human creativity (like agriculture, home enterprises, and hospitality) which I appreciate. However, it is a fragile balance which seems to be tilting. (Partly this is due to the outsized influence of the Land Trust).

Lyme's volunteer spirit IS our human connection right now. Since Lyme doesn't cultivate human connection through local small businesses in town, and we have gathering spaces only through the incredible hard work of a few individuals, and our elections are not contested, our town is starting to atrophy.

I'd like to see the Town move away from prioritizing planets, stars, picturesque farms, and undesirable weeds towards the human endeavors of creativity, commerce, and hard work. The balance needs to swing back to human beings and what the human spirit needs (beyond having our maids, gardeners, and handymen live in town).

I don't have concrete suggestions to bring priorities back into balance, I am working on that (the Sustainable Committee work isn't really it because that's a top-down State program designed to make Lyme conform to a State agenda - complete with "points!" - which is not human-centered except in the most indirect way). Thank you.

The development over the last decade of the Reynolds dealership and accessory lots is inconsistent with Lyme. Lighting, sprawl, increased traffic -- this could have been avoided with a different approach that could have achieved the same goals, while preserving and even enhancing the historic Hamburg Cove district. Can it be rolled back?

Please leave Lyme as it is.

Thank you to the Lyme employees and volunteers who put this survey together. I am extremely thankful to live in this Town and community. Please allow me to reiterate what i feel is the importance of the Town empowering small businesses, especially local food producers and farms, to thrive. It's good for townspeople and the earth!

we should take a hard look at viable ways to provide affordable housing

Thank you to those who organized this survey about very important issues. I appreciate the time, effort, and thought you put into it. Although I understand the purpose is to introduce subjects to residents to get a read on POV, several questions assumed a level of knowledge and information that the majority of residents do not have, which made answering some questions very challenging. For example, it's difficult to offer an opinion about how to fund affordable housing without knowing much more about the ramifications of each option. This is why some of my answers are "neutral." Once I have more facts and details, I will offer an option, but I don't feel qualified to do so now. I'm not sure how you can supply more info. in a survey like this, but one suggestion is to provide a list of additional resources where respondents can learn more about some of the topics.

Again, thank you for doing all this important planning and thinking!

The biggest challenge Lyme faces is agreeing on a viable plan for creating units of affordable housing. If we don't do this soon, the State will impose some plan of its own, which will ruin the rural character of our town. Even though we cannot possibly create enough affordable units to satisfy the State's goal of 10%, we must start somewhere, and we must be able to demonstrate that we are making progress towards that goal. "Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing" by itself cannot possibly meet the need, and maintaining that it is sufficient will only delay getting started on the real answers. It's time to bite the bullet and face the problem head-on. Otherwise, we will soon have to pay for professional emergency responders to answer our calls from other towns. When that happens, our property taxes and home insurance rates will skyrocket.

I feel very strongly about Dark Skies and light pollution, and would love to know more about how to get involved.

I am truly embarrassed and angry that "commercial" Lyme is little more than used and new car lots, warehouses, and derelict buildings all owned by one family.

No affordable housing in clusters. use what we have on properties. use ADU's

I love the towns rural feel and access to neighboring amenities. I'd love to see it remain as is. Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

I think there should be restrictions on the size of new homes both according to lot size and if the home is visible from the roads.

Raising funds for affordable housing could come from real estate transfer taxes.

The town currently provides a very limited suite of services for my household. I am satisfied with that arrangement. I will move to a different town than Lyme if I want or need more services.

Growing up in the west, and having seen communities where I lived destroyed by Wildfires, more appropriate forest management to mitigate fire risk should be on this survey and be of EXTREMELY HIGH PRIORITY. Lyme forests are a fire disaster waiting to happen. If you want open space, you need to manage it appropriately for fire risk. ZERO HAS BEEN DONE in terms of controlled burns, etc.

Some of the questions were difficult to answer without more information, such as how much would a project cost.

Perhaps there should have been a choice to answer "not sure."

Open Space hunting program has been very important to me. I hope we can continue to support and promote access to open space for hunting. Thank you!

Need to focus more on warming climate issues. Need to provide more housing that younger folks can rent/buy.

I am much appreciative of all the town employees and their care for the town. Hopefully, with their knowledge and experience they can offer good ideas for Lyme's future! Thanks!

This is a phenomenal town, well run, with 1/2 of it preserved as open space. This makes residents happy.

We DO need to solve the affordable housing problem. More diversity in town will be better for everyone.

The "Survey" was primarily geared to create support of Town Funded \$\$\$ Affordable Housing. The Town can NOT afford either the Development Costs, nor the long term Admin Costs of such a risky endeavor given the unique skills required.

I would support a property tax increase of 1% to fund affordable housing if the town prioritized EMT and Fire Dept. volunteers as tenants for the housing.

Preserve more open space. Do not use taxpayer funds to purchase affordable housing - allow ADU's and provide tax incentives to those who rent to people who qualify for affordable housing. The Town of Lyme should not be a landlord and crowding out private purchases of real estate.

Town should prioritize preservation of Open Space and should not be using taxpayer money to purchase affordable housing - Town of Lyme should not be a landlord.

keep Lyme as it is

Due to a lack of understanding of the details about many of the subjects covered in this survey, feel quite unqualified to render opinions on these matters.

For example, I support compliance with affordable housing requirements but do not feel I know enough about the options to provide guidance to town leadership as to strategic priorities.

As regards open space, Lyme is fortunate to have a great deal of it for walking though public access to water (eg Hamburg Cove) is limited as are safe roads for biking.

Community building is extremely important to encourage support of the various volunteer positions currently available in Lyme i.e. fire dept., ambulance, library, town boards, etc. Making Lyme more affordable could assist with this.

town funds should not be used to purchase affordable housing. the town of Lyme should not be a landlord.

The Town of Lyme should not be a landlord and should not spend taxpayer funds to acquire properties for affordable housing.

I realize you can't stop the clock on progress, but Lyme is special, and we should do as much as we can to both preserve and protect our natural resources AND ensure there's both affordable housing for families and a way for seniors to stay in town.

I very much appreciate the limited retail and commercial development, but one well stocked general store would be nice. It would need to be in an older building and blend in.

Resident for 4-5 months/year

I would like to see a town wide ban on rodenticides, herbicides and pesticides. Several towns in Massachusetts have done this and the impact to wildlife is significant.

I will not support any initiatives that raise my taxes. I strongly oppose any initiatives that support farming at any scale without public input. I strongly oppose any initiatives that support affordable housing.

Just a thought... Perhaps residents can be encouraged to leave a portion of their estates to the town (exempt from inheritance tax?) through the town website or social media with instructions on how to do so. Perhaps the proper forms could be provided. If everyone left even just 1% of their assets to the town in their wills, it might amount to a sizeable sum. People could be given the option to state how their money should be directed.

A THANK YOU to all involved in developing the Survey

The town needs to acquire more waterfront access with parking.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our opinion on these matters.

I think we need to have an open mind to in-law buildings and not be so concerned with what they look like as far as not looking like a house. The shape of the structure should not matter

Speeding & high traffic thru town on Rt 156 is already changing the Hamburg environment & restricting our activities. Lyme needs to focus on this now for potential solutions & obtain the State's support to enact.

Lyme is a beautiful town and wonderful to live in. Keep it that way.

In the 32 years I have lived in Lyme I can say that my children were very well educated and the town government has done an excellent job providing the services needed by its residents. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you!

Don't build anything, allow people to build outbuildings, or to rent existing or subdivided existing structures to shelter low-income people with a tax incentive. But if we get fined by the state, refuse to pay it and sue the state for relief.

Keep Lyme the way we all like it. We choose to live here for what it is, not for gentrification.

Question the building of homes close to the road?

There should be a resident state trooper in town.

I just don't know enough about the various issues presented to be able to offer a valid opinion. I will try to learn more about these issues going forward.

Lyme needs to control growth to retain its rural character. over thirty years there have been many changes but so far Lyme has done a decent job of maintaining its character.

Problem with affordable housing in Lyme is folks who need to access affordable housing are also often in need of public transportation to facilitate access to work, food doctors etc. Lyme does not truly provide this. So it seems though affordable housing is a noble goal and a priority in general given the realities of our town is it truly something that will work long term. Perhaps it makes sense for senior citizens etc. but not sure for younger people

keep lyme what it is

that's why people come here for what it is !!

keep development out

I live in Lyme because of the rural beauty. Well except for Reynolds. Should there be new housing / commercial development and over the years living here-attempts have been made, I would fight it. That said the main roads and all the traffic, all the speeding that the town has never addressed is problematic. 156 is crazy with narrow shoulders and bikers and walkers. Getting your mail or pulling out of a driveway is taking your life in your hands. Speeding down Mt. Archer at 65 MPH is dangerous for all nearby residents. A whole parade of motorcyclists. The amount of trash left on local roads has increased. I don't see anything being done about any of this. More signs? Radar? Fines? I wrote the selectman before and got a rather patronizing reply and nothing was never done. I know my neighbors agree. The good news is I think the town road workers are great and address snow and weather-related road conditions and maintenance quickly. The bad news is EVERSOURCE-the outrageous cost and quality of service. With all the trees taken down on 156-did that improve the number of outages? No. I know there is limited "affordable" housing in this area unless you are grandfathered in-the whole picture makes this area a relatively expensive area to live in.

As much as I believe wetlands should be protected, I strongly believe dredging the Eight mile river should be considered. The flooding is increasing and the risk to the surrounding roads is becoming clear. Flooding is not likely to decrease anytime soon.

Love this town.

It is a travesty a car dealership was ever allowed to buy land and build in the location it is in. Such a beautiful location should be available to the public. Imagine a park in that location. Not having access to Hamburg Cove, barely being able to see it, is an issue.

Would love to see the fairgrounds used more. great opportunity to have music and events.

Farmers market should have food trucks and music, would be a huge draw for more people to come and hang out.

you cant keep raising taxes, we can barely afford to live here as it is. not everybody that lives here is rich. thank you.

I trust our elected officials to get the publics input on any questions and how to proceed on the topics covered in this survey as they arise.

Some of these questions are difficult to answer since there are so many variables. If zoning would change to allow larger residences to make accessory apartments some of this housing shortage would be addressed automatically.

- Need to protect the commercial property against chains, dollar generals, vape shops. Dunkin. It's the future. All surrounding towns are getting them.
- Reduce night time lighting it's become much too bright at night.
- Please mow the sides of the road more.
- Please try to reduce traffic on the secondary Rds.
- Mt archers a raceway now most are traveling through town.
- The same that will stop at Dunkin in Hadlyme to get their coffee.
- Keep the rural character. Less digital signage.
- Town should be required to get bids for goods and services from town business before going out of town.

Keep up the hard work and thank you.

Wonderful town and great leadership

It would be nice to have something in town besides a car dealership such as a restaurant or cafe by the water.

Am satisfied with the current rate of limited growth over the past several decades. Support the limited amount of less expensive housing for those who are long-time residents or local teachers or tradespeople. Our Town is not satisfactory for suburban living. Do not support extensive high density of affordable housing that will dramatically change the rural life that most of us enjoy. Further, the existing limited road pattern and rugged terrain could be insufficient to safely handle large growth in housing without substantial expenditures on infrastructure.

Do not raise my taxes so we can have affordable housing, and make it so I cannot afford to live in my home.

Appendix B – Stakeholder Groups

Lyme Stakeholder Groups, listed here in alphabetical order, were contacted either by letter or in person by members of the Survey-Writing Committee to solicit their input for questions on the 2025 Survey. This appendix contains an example of an outreach letter. Accounts of these contacts and interviews are marked with +.

Affordable Housing Commission +

Churches: 4 serving Lyme

Conservation Commission +

Grange/Hamburg Fair Committee

Hadlyme Ferry Historic District

Joshuatown Association +

Lyme Ambulance Association +

Lyme Fire Company +

Lyme Garden Club +

Lyme Land Trust +

Lyme Public Hall +

Lyme Public Library +

Lymes' Senior Center +

Municipal Agent for the Elderly/Social Services +

Open Space Commission

Parks and Recreation Commission

Region 18 Teachers Association (RETA)

Sanitarian, Ledge Light Health District +

Small Farm group +

Superintendent of Schools +

Sustainable Lyme Committee

SAMPLE LETTER TO A STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission

Subcommittee for the 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development

September 28, 2023

The Lymes' Senior Center
26 Town Woods Road
Old Lyme, CT 06371

Dear Lymes' Senior Center Board of Directors,

Every 10 years, Lyme rewrites its Plan of Conservation and Development, as required by State law. The last plan appeared in 2015, and it is time to start writing the 2025 plan. The first major step is to prepare a survey of all Lyme residents and property owners to determine what they value and want to preserve in Lyme, and also where they would like to see changes. In what areas have needs shifted over the last 10 years, and what should our priorities be in the next decade? As a stakeholder organization in Lyme, we need to hear what issues and priorities your members think should be addressed in the town-wide survey.

The values, principles and priorities expressed in the POCD will be used by Lyme's officials and commissions as a key reference in land use and fiscal decisions for the next ten years. To ensure its validity and relevance for our community, the Plan must express the values and priorities of a majority of Lyme's residents and stakeholders. We ask for your assistance.

We request that you:

1. Arrange for a member of our subcommittee to meet with your organization to explain the survey process and solicit input from your members.
2. Prepare a written summary of your organization's input and submit it to the POCD subcommittee.
3. Help publicize the importance of completing the survey to your members, friends and families. Does your organization have a newsletter? If so, we would be glad to help prepare a short article to include. Will you commit to helping to spread the word?

You may review the current 2015 POCD on the Town's website:

https://townlyme.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/PoCD_FINAL010516-Edited-005.pdf

We welcome the opportunity for further discussion.

Please contact the committee at:

zoning@TownLyme.org or phone 860-434-7733

Lyme Town Hall
480 Hamburg Road
Lyme, CT 06371

Sincerely,

The Subcommittee for the 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development

Carol House (*Chair*), William Firgelewski, Liz Frankel, Fritz Gahagan, Gavin Lodge, Mary Stone, David Tiffany, Jennifer Tiffany. Lannie Mossberg (*Secretary*)

Ex officio members: David Lahm (First Selectman), Bernie Gigliotti (P&Z Chair), Ross Byrne (Lyme Zoning Official).

Affordable Housing Commission

October 5, 2023

Carol House met with Commission during its monthly meeting. Members had these comments:

- The main focus of this Commission is bringing affordable housing to Lyme. They pointed out that first, it is the right thing to do, and second, it is the law.
- Their view is to have small clusters affordable units in a natural setting which will “fit” into the rural look and feel of Lyme. There will not be large apartment buildings next to the road.
- They believe that affordable housing will be beneficial for attracting and keeping our volunteer fire and ambulance workers, first-year teachers, and will help senior citizens in need of support.
- They caution that questions regarding affordable housing should make clear the types of housing clusters we are talking about, and the benefits to our town.
- Make sure people know that “affordable housing” is not “public housing.”
- They would also like questions about support for “naturally occurring affordable housing” in Lyme to help keep these smaller homes from being leveled for larger, more expensive homes.

The Commission does not have many resources to help with advertising, as they do not have a newsletter. They are willing to put an ad on their website and to help with volunteer activities for the POCD.

Conservation Commission

9/18/23

Interview with Commission by Fritz Gahagan and Ross Byrne

1. Resiliency

- There was a suggestion that planning for resiliency in the face of the impact from more frequent and stronger storm events and rising sea levels be incorporated into the Town POCD.
- Issues cited were infrastructure (roads and bridges), providing for tidal wetlands to expand inland (where possible) as sea levels or tidal levels rise and protecting flood plains from development or loss of their natural function of mitigating flooding from storm events.
- It was noted that protection of our forested watershed has helped in mitigating flooding from storm events.

2. Wetland Buffers

There was support for providing the strongest possible protection for wetland buffers, both for inland wetlands and stream watersheds.

3. Affordable Housing

- The need for affordable housing was strongly supported for the next POCD. Cited needs were for young people wishing to remain or move into Town, the elderly and to provide residents to participate in Town volunteer services.
- Planning for ways to retain and encourage normally occurring affordable housing was supported.
- There was support for implementing Town solutions for affordable housing, particularly if that would enable the Town to prioritize targeting affordable housing to our particular needs (volunteers and younger residents) and taking care of our own citizens.
- There was a request to ask counsel if and how that could be accomplished and to have the POCD survey examine if there is greater support for that among our residents even if it requires increased Town expenditures.

4. Open Space Protection

There were requests to have the survey examine whether the Town should have a target for future open space protection, either in the total amount of protected open space or in specific ecological or open space targets for what types of land should be protected.

5. Town Roads

- Avoid excess clearing along roadways

- Increase the potential for walkers and bikers. There is a concern for safety as both traffic levels and use of our roads by walkers and bicyclists has increased.

6. Public Access to Water

Lyme has little public access to the Connecticut River and its tributaries and should keep an open eye for any opportunity to acquire property that would provide access. There was discussion about whether that could and should be done in a way that primarily benefitted Town residents.

7. Invasive Species and Exotic Pests

There was a desire to examine whether there was support for the Town aiding private and/or NGO efforts to control invasive species and exotic pests as well as help deal with the impact of the loss of native species in whole swaths of our forests (Beech Leaf Disease).

8. Recycling

Recycling should be more accessible to Town residents. The current process does not work.

9. Broadband Access

The Town should work with the State and utilities to improve broadband access along Town Roads.

10. Dark Skies

- Our land use regulations should encourage limitation of outdoor lighting.
- Public infrastructure buildings and sites are the worst offenders. The Town and Regional School District #18 should pay more attention to this issue.

11. Education of Residents, particularly landowners

It is important for the Town to help educate residents and landowners about many of the issues facing the Town, particularly new residents as they enter the Town. The Town should explore ways to accomplish this.

12. The 2025 POCD Survey

It would be a good idea to have minors respond to the POCD questionnaire.

Joshuatown Association
Lyme Garden Club
Lyme Public Hall

Carol House spoke with the membership of the Lyme Garden Club and the Joshuatown Association. She also spoke with a member of the Board of Directors of the Lyme Public Hall. There was a general lack of recognition about the POCD and what it was. Only a few members remembered ever filling out a POCD-related survey ten years ago.

None of the organizations offered topics for the survey, but all three said they would help with advertising it to their constituencies.

Lyme Ambulance Association

Interview with Stephen Olstein, Chief of Operations and Board President
and Ariana Eaton, Deputy Chief of Operations and Board member
by Mary Stone and Jennifer Tiffany
November 28, 2023

Background facts:

- Lyme Ambulance responds to around 300 calls per year.
- 80% of these calls result in a trip to the emergency room.
- 20% of these calls come from outside the Town of Lyme.
- Staff members are always on call, 24/7/365.
- Lyme Ambulance is staffed entirely by volunteers, who undergo rigorous training, qualifications and certifications.
- The Town provides one bay in each firehouse, fuel for the ambulances, workers compensation coverage and a pension plan for those who qualify.
- Lyme Ambulance is a private, non-profit organization. Its yearly operating costs and capital budget for vehicles and equipment are funded by donations from community members, and recently, by billing insurance companies.

Q: Would you like to see a more identifiable area for Lyme Ambulance?

A: Steve: Absolutely. Identity impacts both donations and recruitment. Signage on the Hamburg building and visibility from the road are key to our identity in the community.

Q: What are the major issues facing your organization in the next ten years?

1. **Recruitment:** Ariana: "Our chief asset is our people." The major and most immediate challenge we have is recruitment. EMS is demanding – it's a calling. We're a town of 2,400, but we must staff as many positions as a town five times larger. Our people are very dedicated: currently, many of them take two or three shifts a week...we just need more of them.
2. **Identity:** A strong identity supports recruitment as well as fundraising. It is surprising that many residents are not aware that Lyme Ambulance is private, not a Town department or part of LFC, that it is supported fully by donations (and just recently the addition of insurance billing) and that it is staffed fully by volunteers. A third-party study of our organization confirmed that it is hard to establish that identity without signage.
3. **Housing for volunteers:** Several of our volunteers have difficulty living here because of the high cost of housing. They have to live out of town, which presents challenges in responding. The Town's Affordable Housing Commission addresses the big issue, but cannot solve problems for individuals and families who need housing now. Could the Town invest resources to develop different types of affordable housing solutions?

4. **Relationship with the Town:** Lyme Ambulance would be greatly helped if the Boards of Selectpeople and of Finance were to develop a uniform approach for Town resource allocation for Lyme Fire Company, Lyme Ambulance and Emergency Management.

Q: In the next few years do you anticipate major changes for Lyme EMS?

A: Yes, and they are approaching now:

1. **Hiring paid staff.** LAA is in a solid financial position. However, if and when EMS has no choice but to supplement its volunteers with paid staff, this will deplete our accounts rapidly. (The cost of filling just one shift is more than \$30,000/year – that's the salary only.) A full schedule has 14 shifts. Providing the necessary quarters for that staff is a large capital expense which would require Town support.
2. **Need for dedicated quarters.** Our staff members need a place to shower, eat and sleep while on shift. This was mentioned as part of the 5-year plan several years ago. It will soon become a necessity which requires planning and funding.

Q: What would happen if Lyme Ambulance were combined into a multi-town service?

A: It's an interesting concept, but not an easy answer. It would require the Town taking over the ambulance service with paid staff, which would cost the Town more than the current LAA service. Thus far, no one at the State or regional level has expressed an interest in coordinating such an effort.

Q: What are some barriers to providing service?

A: Some are physical, and some are behavioral:

1. The first and most important is getting enough volunteers.
2. Gated houses with no access are an obvious barrier.
3. Residents need to clearly mark their house numbers, and
4. Pull over if you see a flashing green or blue light behind you.
5. Radio and cell-phone "dead zones" can present issues.

Lyme Fire Company

Interview by Will Firgelewski and Carol House
October 3, 2023

Will Firgelewski and Carol House met with John Evans, Chief; Andre Yeomans, Captain, Hamburg Station; Sam Adams, Deputy Chief; and two young firefighters Archer Adams and Christopher Dow. Will is the Assistant Chief for Hamburg Station. We talked for about 45 minutes.

Lyme Fire leadership strongly voiced the need for affordable housing in order to continue to maintain a local volunteer force in the future.

They emphasized that affordable housing makes financial sense for Lyme:

- We currently get young volunteers while they are still in high school. We train them to be firefighters, and that training is extensive and expensive. When these volunteers graduate, they would like to stay in Lyme, continue to volunteer, and be able to live in town. If they cannot afford a place to live, they will move elsewhere. Each time that occurs, we have not only lost a volunteer, but also lost the time and expense of training that individual.
- Our volunteer force is aging, and we need to continually try to bring in young recruits. Again, we need to be able to keep these young recruits so that we are not continually starting over with training and not decreasing our volunteer force.
- Loss of volunteers will require the establishment of a “paid” force, which will be much more expensive than building some affordable housing.

The leadership thinks that individuals who volunteer for fire and ambulance in Lyme but live outside of town, should receive a POCD survey form.* They have a big stake in our future.

The Fire Station is willing and eager to help advertise the POCD and show up at Town meetings to vote for Affordable Housing.

*Eleven active responders who live in neighboring towns (6 for Fire, 5 for Ambulance) were given the opportunity to take the 2025 Survey.

Lyme Land Trust

August 28, 2023, with follow-up

Carol House met with Anthony Irving, President, and Kristina White, Executive Director, as part of a broader discussion of Affordable Housing. They took the POCD discussion to their Board, and White reported back on the board's discussion:

- They would like to see questions on open space from previous surveys repeated so we can see a 10-year change in attitude towards open space topics.
- They are interested in seeing new questions on both recycling and climate resiliency, and they would like to have input into the design of these new questions.
- They will help with advertising the survey to their large membership.

Lyme Public Library

Carol House and Mary Stone made a presentation about the Survey to the Board of Directors. The survey was publicized in three issues of the Library newsletter during 2024.

Lymes' Senior Center

September 28, October 16, 2023, and follow-up

It is important to note that the Senior Center has members from both Lyme and Old Lyme. A larger proportion of their membership comes from Old Lyme.

Carol House and Mary Stone met with Director Stephanie Gould on September 28, 2023. Later, Carol met with entire Board of Directors on October 16, 2023.

According to Director Gould, there are two major issues of concern that they would like the POCD survey to address:

- Affordable housing for seniors. She talked about the number of seniors who currently live in our area, many of whom would qualify for affordable housing. The only affordable senior living facility for Lyme residents is Lymewood in Old Lyme, and it has a very long waiting list.
- Transportation for seniors. Director Gould said that the 9-town dial-a-ride bus that services Shoreline towns is inadequate. It does not stop long enough for seniors to get out of the house and onto the bus. It stops briefly and then moves on. Seniors need transportation to stores and medical appointments.

They will help with advertising, but we will need to be clear that this is the Lyme POCD, as Old Lyme has already completed their POCD. Old Lyme did not ask the Senior Center for their input.

Discussion with the Board of Directors on October 16th at their monthly meeting:

- Carol explained the POCD and what we are asking from the Board. The Board chair indicated that they would discuss and give written comments following their November meeting.
- They will help with advertising.

**Kathy Tisdale,
Municipal Agent for the Elderly & Social Services**

Notes from a phone conversation with Jennifer Tiffany

October 11, 2023

Kathy believes that the Town of Lyme and the community do a very good job supporting their elderly. However, she or others have identified a few concerns over the years:

- Communication: it may be difficult to reach those who live on the outskirts of Lyme or in “dead zone” areas, especially those who are homebound. These forms of communication could be Medical Alert, cell phone reception, etc. Kathy mentioned that the “Dial 211 Assistance” feature is also not utilized to its potential, mainly due to a lack of education about this option.
- “The tax breaks in Lyme for the elderly are excellent,” Kathy reports.
- Wintertime poses challenges for heating assistance. SS benefits have gone up slightly but then the residents' criteria for assistance is adjusted, resulting in a lower distribution of funding.
- Because of Lyme's rural geography, some of our elderly residents cannot easily access food. “These people will not go to a food bank.” She mentioned that for a resident to receive Meals on Wheels, they must be homebound. Kathy finds working with the Lymes' Senior Center (the local distribution point for Meals on Wheels) helps immensely.
- Lastly, Kathy finds working with the Lyme Fire Company and the Lymes Youth Service Bureau is also beneficial to our community. Improving the collaboration between these services would be in Lyme's best interest, thereby enhancing the ability to “age in place.”
- The elderly or their families are not inclined to fill out surveys on the internet. Kathy is willing to hand deliver and assist those residents in participating in the 2025 Survey.

George Calkins,
Ledge Light Health District Sanitarian

Meeting with Ross Byrne and Carol House

September 26, 2023

Lyme Zoning Enforcement Officer Ross Byrne and Carol House met with George Caulkins on September 26, 2023. In their discussion, George explained the many areas of the Ledge Light Health District's involvement with Town planning, including environmental health, communicable disease prevention, preparedness activities, health education and community outreach, and land use. Although this broad area of involvement is interesting, we found that, with the exception of land use, these areas did not necessarily fit into the scope of the POCD. George said he felt qualified to talk only about land use, that being his area of expertise. He made the following observations and spoke about one major concern for Lyme's future:

- Based on what he has seen in the other towns in the District, George felt that, for its size, Lyme is more progressive in trying to attract younger people with programs and causes. These efforts are largely hamstrung by the high cost of housing in Lyme and the lack of affordable housing.
- Lyme is unique in that we have an affluent population and few services. No other town in the region is at all similar in that respect. This is likely to change in the future as our population grows, due largely to the influx of people from areas of the country where they are used to receiving services like a police department, paid fire department, Town trash pickup, etc.
- Lyme needs to embark on a 25-year plan to install sewers and municipal water systems in the denser areas of town like Hamburg Road, Cove Road, and areas of Rogers Lake.
- There are monies available to help defray the cost of these systems through grants. The Town will need an active water pollution control authority to tap into these.
- The Town needs to seek to acquire land in the denser areas mentioned above to accomplish this plan. It may need to explore the use of eminent domain to accomplish this.
- The Town needs to expand health care access in Lyme by creating conditions that would allow doctors to come and set up practice here.

Small Farms Stakeholder Group

Meeting with Jennifer Tiffany

October 2023

- Lyme's generational farmers appreciate history and independence. Fluctuations in the prices of their products have forced unwanted changes in the production of their family farms, impacting the traditional focus of their historical agricultural upbringing.
- Small farms cannot survive without the ability to sell directly to customers.
- Farmers' markets provide a place to purchase local food and provide a sense of community.
- To sustain their small farms in Lyme, farmers need access to modern technologies and business models.
- Local small farms need community support in order to be profitable and successful. Farmers need their community to embrace and the Town of Lyme to support farmland preservation and restoration.

Ian Neviaser,
Superintendent of Schools for Regional School District #18

Meeting with Fritz Gahagan and Mary Stone
for Lyme's Plan of Conservation and Development

September 14, 2023

At the meeting, Ian covered a broad range of issues, both positive and of concern.

Enrollment. Along with normal year-to-year fluctuations in enrollment, the District is experiencing a growth in enrollment in the early grades that Ian anticipates will continue over time. With enrollment at the High School coming to the end of a low period, the student population there will grow over time. Pre-K through 5th grade enrollment is up by 17 students this year. Most of this enrollment increase is occurring in Old Lyme.

With the passage of the recent referendum, the future completion of the Mile Creek School expansion will put the District in a good position to handle anticipated growth. The Middle School and High School are able to accommodate anticipated growth as younger students move up through the system. This does not take into consideration the possible construction of multiple housing units recently proposed in Old Lyme.

Facilities. The overall condition of the District's buildings is good, and the repairs, renovations and upgrades funded by the recent referendum will address known concerns and necessary improvements.

Available parking and the lack of room to expand at the Lyme Consolidated School are current concerns, with parking at the school being one of its biggest issues. When cars park on the School's playing field due to the lack of available parking, this creates a problem with field maintenance and condition. The building is also fully utilized with two sections per grade. This could pose a problem if there is an increase in student enrollment coming from the middle and north end of Lyme.

Staffing. The District is able to hire and retain good certified educational staff. The main causes for staff leaving the District tends to be when a teacher or other staff member:

- desires to move up in responsibility and there is no suitable position open in the District;
- is moving out of the area,
- or retirement.

- The quality and number of candidates for open positions has been excellent.
- There is a problem retaining instructional assistants. This is largely a cost issue in addition to the nature of the position, as it is often seen/used as a stepping stone to a full-time job and/or full-time teaching job.
- The District is beginning to encounter problems with hiring and retaining facilities and office staff, largely due to a compensation package that is not competitive with private industry and surrounding school systems.

Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Recreational Activities. Except for the Central Campus (the Middle and High School complex), the playing fields and outside grounds at each school are generally sufficient for the District's sports and other extra-curricular activities. However, the outdoor grounds, particularly at the Central Campus, are also used and in growing demand for other organized community activities such as baseball, soccer, tennis, etc. The new artificial turf field is in constant demand and the intensity of use on the grass playing fields is closely monitored to support the District's ability to keep them in good condition. At present, there is no area known to be available for expansion of these facilities.

Other issues.

1. The inability to maintain communication with school buses in northern Lyme is a safety issue. The District is looking at ways to remedy the problem, which may necessitate a repeating station or a VHF tower. There are other potential solutions that do not require infrastructure, but there may end up being a need for a repeating station.
2. Communications about the condition of roads has been an issue at times. This is not really a POCD issue and I have passed on the issue to the First Selectman.
3. There has been an issue with school buses and private roads in subdivisions, but this is not an issue in Lyme at this time.¹
4. The fact that Lyme does not have a resident State Trooper or Town constables was identified as a concern because of the long response time from State Police barracks in Westbrook. This was a factor in the recent request for an armed guard in each school.

Appendix C – Footnotes

- 1 *U.S. Census Bureau.* <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-total-cities-and-towns.html>
- 2 *Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments.* <https://www.rivercog.org/plans/rpocd/>

Appendix D – List of Maps

Accurate maps are essential to Town Planning. The Lyme 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development includes three maps, which have been updated through the years.

1) Base Map, showing property lines, inland wetlands and tidal wetlands.

Lyme has a complex network of inland and tidal wetlands which provide natural drainage for storm water runoff, valuable habitat for wildlife, and aesthetic diversity to our landscape. The map shows the general location and extent of both inland and tidal wetlands for illustrative purposes only. The specific location of wetlands for regulatory purposes must be delineated in the field.

The base map used today is the GIS map, which shows not only property lines and general wetlands, but also topography, aerial views, FEMA flood zones, zoning districts, open space, and other information in the form of layers and themes.

<https://lymect.mapgeo.io/datasets/properties?abuttersDistance=150&latlng=41.391424%2C-72.355173>

2) Zoning Map, showing zoning districts and floodplains.

The Zoning Map is an update of the initial 1964 Plan, revised to July 26, 1974, and reaffirmed in the 1990 Town Plan. Zoning districts are now shown on a property base map. The categories and densities established for the original zoning districts continue to be an appropriate guide for the town's future development. At present, zoning information and the Assessor's property information are being integrated into a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS) for easier retrieval and understanding, which will support implementation of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

This map also includes the location of areas subject to flooding from major storms, as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The floodplain area on this map is for illustrative purposes only. For a more specific delineation, the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) should be consulted.

Updated Map January 10, 2001, revised Map March 31, 2006

<https://townlyme.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ZoningMap11x17-2015.pdf>

3) Greenbelt Plan, indicating the location of existing open space.

The Greenbelt Plan shows existing protected open space and includes 1) land owned outright by preservation interests and 2) conservation easements which limit future development of land. Proposed linkages would create a network of protected open space, providing significant areas of contiguous habitat, protection for streams and rivers, and preservation of the rural character of Lyme.

[Preserves - Lyme Land Conservation Trust](#)