

## ACTON'S WATER MANAGEMENT AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Consensus of 1979

The Acton members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow support:

- an aggressive and comprehensive program designed to provide Acton with a supply of good quality water sufficient to meet the present and future needs through:
  1. Comprehensive identification and protection of the Town's water resources.
  2. Periodic assessment of future needs.
  3. Cooperation with neighboring towns to assist with the protection of our water supplies and to locate and protect possible additional resources.
  4. An official, continuous campaign of education and promotion of water conservation with incentives designed to secure maximum cooperation of all water users.
  5. Education of the public regarding toxic substances which have a potential for contaminating our water supplies.
  6. A program of water testing of public and private wells using the latest technology with regular public reporting and interpretation of the results.
  7. A program for the identification and regulation of potential sources of water contamination.
  8. Continued cooperation between the Town government and the Water Supply District by means of regular communication and inter-board meetings.
  9. Efforts to increase citizen participation in Water Supply District meetings and elections.
  10. Increased accountability of Water Supply District Commission as a governmental body.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### Consensus of 1982

The Acton members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow support:

- a comprehensive environmental protection plan for Acton to deal with such inter-related issues as water quality and quantity, air quality, land use and hazardous waste.
- efforts to define Acton's environmental concerns and to clarify who has policy making, monitoring and enforcement responsibilities in these areas.
- establishment of a body within town with responsibility for overseeing environmental quality issues.
- emphasis within town government on planning and anticipation of potential problems in the environmental area.
- use of a systematic approach to the development of policies on environmental issues, employing criteria such as those listed below.
- regional cooperation on environmental issues, including communication between Acton boards and those in other towns and use of available regional resources.

When evaluating policies or regulations which impact environmental quality, the League will apply the following criteria:

- The need for a policy should be clearly established by the body preparing it. When new regulations are proposed, they should meet a need not being met by existing regulations.
- Alternative approaches, including those used by other towns, should be examined. Potential for regional action should be evaluated.
- An effort should be made to specify dollar amounts associated with the costs and benefits of a proposed policy. Consideration of costs should include all direct and indirect costs of implementing the policy, including the cost of enforcement. Methods of funding should be examined, and implementation of the policy should be accompanied by provision for adequate funding.
- Regulations should be enforceable. The responsibility for enforcement should be clearly defined.

- Citizen participation should be encouraged and this input should be utilized during the drafting, review and adoption of a new policy or new regulations.
- In technical areas, expert opinion and analysis should be sought, utilizing volunteers from town whenever possible.

These criteria may also be used to evaluate programs or purchases which are reflections of policy. A policy may be stated or may be implied through by-laws, rules and regulations, or actions taken by town boards.

## TRANSPORTATION

### TRANSPORTATION

Consensus of 1981

The Acton members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow support:

- a body of town government which has continuing responsibility for immediate and long-range planning of all forms of transportation for Acton. This body should insure the communication and coordination of the efforts of the boards, committees and departments which have an impact on transportation, including the schools.
- a safe transportation network which facilitates mobility within the community, links neighborhoods and services within the town and reduces isolation.
- a more efficient and greater use of existing transportation.
- increased ridesharing.
- sidewalks/bikeways/bi-walks.
- alternatives to the automobile.
- a program of public education which will collect and disseminate information regarding transportation options, promote pedestrian and vehicular safety and investigate alternatives to the automobile.
- an increase in the town's effort to seek funding from all levels of government, as well as from private sources and user fees, and to investigate all possible uses of such funds.

The League of Women Voters will apply the following criteria when determining support for transportation positions:

- need/demand
- cost effectiveness
- energy conservation
- environmental impact
- safety

## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Consensus of 1987

The Acton members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow supports the following:

In order to achieve the following traffic-related goals for Acton:

- Preservation of open spaces, scenic roads, historic buildings and village centers
- Access to local services
- Mobility and lack of congestion
- Traffic control and safety
- Reduction in commercial sprawl
- Protection of environmental resources
- Public/private cooperation in solving transportation problems
- Affordable taxes and housing

The Acton members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow support the adoption of the following policies by the town:

1. Consolidate services to maximize the number of errands per trip.
2. Achieve a pattern of commercial and industrial development compatible with the residential character of the town and with the residential neighborhoods that abut commercial areas.
3. Identify and protect scenic, residential roads and historic areas, and channel traffic onto main, through roads.
4. Improve traffic flow on main, through roads, and evaluate the use of signalization.
5. Achieve a balance between development and the traffic capacities of existing roadways.
6. Participate in regional traffic planning efforts.
7. Require developers to include demand management plans and pedestrian access.
8. Develop a Master Plan and be proactive in reaching goals.
9. Emphasize residential over commercial development.

10. Encourage public/private cooperation in solving transportation problems.

In order to implement the above policies, the Acton members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow support the following traffic management solutions:

1. Establish traffic and land use goals.
2. Complete road and land use inventories; prioritize road improvements that will channel through traffic onto main roads; identify the main roads; protect residential, scenic roads and historic areas from increased traffic.
3. Develop traffic and land use policies; incorporate all into a Master Plan, by 1989.
4. Develop criteria for all traffic studies; include among the criteria, town-wide impact and projected development; require data consistent with the town's traffic data base.
5. Explore the use of Planned Unit Developments, Transfer of Development Rights, and Floor Area Ratios or other methods of Downzoning some commercial areas.
6. Limit commercial development to commercially zoned areas.
7. Include pedestrian links, such as sidewalk and bridges, in design standards.
8. Encourage the use of demand management solutions, such as on-site services, ridesharing, shuttle services, and flexible work hours; establish design standards that encourage these solutions.
9. Provide a focal point and appropriate staff resources to implement traffic policies.
10. Participate in regional planning groups.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT - STOW

TOWN MEETING PROCEDURES      Consensus of 1987

The Stow members of the League of Women Voters of Acton-Stow support:

The increasing of Town Meeting attendance by:

- publicity in the local newspaper
- limiting Town Meeting time from 7-10:30PM

Education the voters regarding Town Meeting by:

- publicity in the local newspaper
- publishing a Town Meeting Guideline in front of Warrant
- sponsoring a Warrant Meeting to present articles before Town Meeting

Expediting and improving Town Meeting by:

- limiting article presentation time to 20 minutes (unless prior approval is given by the Moderator)
- improving audio-visual presentations for clarity
- having motions and amendments for reconsideration submitted in writing and posted.

## ACTON PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE

Consensus 1991

The League of Women Voters of Acton supports:

- the three missions of the Acton Public Health Nursing Service (APHNS) which are to provide preventative health care, screening to detect disease and care of the acutely and chronically ill at home;
- the maintenance of local decision making regarding public health and nursing services in Acton;
- the current organizational structure with consideration that the role of the administrator be separate from that of the nursing supervisor when funding sources allow and needs so indicate;
- the use of the following criteria for evaluating Acton public health and nursing services:
  1. cost effectiveness
  2. qualified staff to meet the health care needs of the public
  3. flexibility in order to respond to changing health needs, fiscal conditions, demographic trends and state and federal regulations
  4. continuity of care
  5. use of support staff and up-to-date technological equipment
  6. the level of community support
  7. establishment of the need for the service(s), and
- flexible funding options for Acton Public Health Nursing Service; i.e., Enterprise Fund, Revolving Fund, private fundraising, community groups, user fees, grants, endowments and local, state and federal tax support.



## **GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

### **AREA position, 2002**

This is a new position based on member study and agreement 2000-2002 and adopted at the 2002 Annual Meeting

### **Local Study: "Growth Management tools: land purchase, zoning, and deed restrictions."**

**GOAL:** The towns represented by the Acton Area League of Women Voters are experiencing significant residential and business development. As a result of the local study findings, League members agreed to make growth management and preservation of open space a priority in public policy decisions on land use in the member towns.

The members of the League of Women Voters - Acton Area support the use of the following tools in meeting this Goal:

- planning and zoning bylaws,
- cluster zoning
- conservation commission bylaws
- conservation trusts,
- conservation restrictions,
- land purchases.

Existing growth management tools in these communities should be evaluated periodically to assess their effectiveness and should be modified as needed or expanded by adding new ones.

The members of the League of Women Voters - Acton Area support the following methods of implementing the growth management goal:

- Employment of professional planners and consultants,
- Adherence to master plan,
- Clarification of definitions with regard to town's character and development goals.

The League recommends that each town prepare an inventory of unprotected lands to determine which parcels should be preserved as Open Space for possible use by the town for active or passive recreation. The methodology for prioritizing the inventory list should use a locally developed rating system using weighted criteria to assign a rank order for each parcel. Land value assessment should be based on a variety of land use scenarios such as regular subdivision, partial development, and the value of land fully protected from development.

The members of the League of Women Voters - Acton Area support the following methods of funding the purchase of land to protect it from maximum development:

- Funding through a municipal set-aside fund such as Stabilization Fund
- Community Preservation Act

- Local tax revenues (debt exclusion overrides)
- Conservation trusts
- Grants
- Private donations
- Other creative approaches