

Before reading this write up, keep in mind that while the residents of Marlow may want a few additions to the town such as a store and a gas station, Plan NH has a lot more in mind for the town. Be sure to read the Charrette document very carefully to see what items would be a burden on the taxpayer, are not needed, and would also change the flavor and face of your rural town, forever.

WHAT IS "PLAN MARLOW"?

Sometime before June of 2014 the selectmen from the Town of Marlow applied for "planning assistance" from a non-governmental group known as "Plan NH". The purpose of this application was to participate in "listening sessions" or "charrettes" as they are referred to, to be conducted by "Plan NH". This would cost the town \$8,000. [1]

In March of 2015 the Town of Marlow presented a warrant article to its voters at the town meeting to get permission to appropriate \$8,000 for the purpose of participating in assistance from the central planners at Plan NH. This warrant article was "recommended by the Selectmen" and it passed by voice vote. Did people know what they were voting for? [2]

WHO OR WHAT IS "PLAN NH"?

The "charrettes" were set up for October 2nd and 3rd of 2015. The **charrette booklet documentation** explains that Plan New Hampshire is "The Foundation for Shaping the Built Environment (Plan NH), and a 501(c)3 non-profit organization formed in 1989". It goes on to say that "Plan NH has a Vision" for New Hampshire..." [3]

Now you know where the "vision" for the other items on the list, other than the store and gas station, really came from.

According to the Plan NH Schedule document, there was another meeting on October 1, 2015 intended to get people to "shift" their thinking about planning. "We all need to SHIFT our thinking — we need to ALTER our traditional mindsets" claimed the flyer. The idea that your attitude must be changed should have sent up a red flag. [4]

When voters approved of the warrant article mentioned above, they may not have realized that Plan NH is a non-profit, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION with no authority to enforce any redesigns it might recommend. They may not have realized that when Plan NH made its recommendations, there would be a myriad of other projects suggested, in addition to the store and gas station the residents initially were needing.

You will note that in [3] the 'team' consists mostly of town officials who have

likely already bought into the ideas, and Plan NH's facilitators. While the public is required to be invited, how many people do you actually know of who had any idea these meetings were happening and were in attendance? (Note: In their final report of participation on Granite State Future 'listening sessions' it was admitted by "NH Listens" that 600 NH residents participated from the whole state, and of course at least half those participants were from the foundation itself or the town.)

In January of 2016 Plan NH held a meeting where they discussed plans for moving forward. Most of the discussion centered around the acquisition of a store and gas station, which are likely the only things that residents felt they truly needed in the first place. It was at this time that they seemed to have adopted the name "Plan Marlow", and agreed to create groups to tackle each item. This may have been done in another warrant article in March of 2016. [5]

Basically the overall attitude of these stakeholders and non-governmental groups is to create 'sustainable' communities by consolidating resources and to consolidate the governance of same. This push toward regionalization is something that the federal government sees as a step toward global governance — which means loss of local control in the towns and eventually the states. In California, where the push to regionalize government is strong, one central planner stated that "California has too many small and stupid governments". Of course "climate change" is the hook. The more people can be convinced that humans are killing the planet, the easier it will be implement the plan. [6]

The result of these plans is that communities are often urbanized, are compelled to include mixed-used zoning in order to comply with HUD grant money, featuring multi-housing units, trains, and smaller lot sizes. Notice that smaller housing is mentioned in [3] on page 18: "We recommend that new building, for Millennials and Boomers alike, (for the foreseeable future) be in the already – denser village center – which is where most would prefer to be anyway. We also recommend considering smaller homes, grouped together."

We wonder how they have determined that Millennials and Boomers would prefer denser urban areas and not rural areas? The goal of the sustainablits is to get people to stop building on 1-acre lots and get them out of their cars and into walkable, bikeable areas. To read more about this philosophy and why it is being pushed, visit the Granite State Future(s) website and blog. [7] and [8]

Keep in mind that even if you agree with some of the changes advocated by those who are making suggestions on how to redesign your town, all of this could be an added tax burden, especially to those left living in the rural areas. As we said before the suggestions made in [3] go far beyond a store and gas station which the residents may have genuinely expressed an interest in originally. You may be signing onto boondoggles that end up being a permanent burden to the taxpayers.

The planners have also suggested the creation of a "Blueway" (similar to a Greenway) which means areas on which no one may build, and often involves the taking of land by eminent domain.

The information cross-referenced in this document was taken directly from the Town of Marlow's "Plan Marlow" pages at this link where you can also find pictures of those who attended the various charettes and meetings. How many local residents do you see at these meetings, other than elected officials and facilitators from Plan NH? [9]

Your next town meeting will be in March of 2017. What ideas has Plan NH planted that they would like to see you implement, that you might question having come from the voters, or being only a "want" rather than a "need"?

You also have had suggestions written into your "Master Plan" which may have been influenced by the same agenda. Please read it carefully. [10]

Contracts with outside groups like Plan NH are to be considered a "public-private partnership" whereas your tax dollars are being spent to pay for outside services by non-governmental, private entities. Plan NH has an agenda to build "sustainable communities" and is a member of "Smart Growth America", a national organization with a similar mission. [11] [12]

There are many of these groups which intertwine, including "Vibrant Villages New Hampshire". They all can be traced back to federal/international pushes to influence local control, and are dedicated to concepts such as transit-oriented development (commuter rail trains!), compact housing, and a whole gamut of suggestions about how and where you live and work, your healthcare, childcare, and education choices, economics, and even your recreational needs. The center of the federal government's planning octopus now reaches into all aspects of our lives, through these outside groups and foundations, all done with the help of local and federal (your taxes) grant money (HUD, EPA, DOT etc). [13]

You have from now until the 24th to get this file to as many people as possible. Attend all Plan NH and planning board meetings and take notes. Examine all warrant articles before March of 2017 and determine the cost to the taxpayer, whether the item has "need or want" status, and what ultimate affect these changes will have on the town. Then alert others of your findings before the vote is taken.

[1] http://www.marlownh.gov/Pages/MarlowNH_BComm/Planning/PLAN%20NH/PLAN%20NH%20APPLICATION.pdf

[2] http://marlownh.gov/Pages/MarlowNH_BComm/Planning/PLAN%20NH/PLAN%20NH%20WARRANT%20ARTICLE.pdf

[3] http://www.marlownh.gov/Pages/MarlowNH_BComm/Planning/PLAN%20NH/Marlow_Charette_Booklet.pdf

[4] http://www.marlownh.gov/Pages/MarlowNH_BComm/Planning/PLAN%20NH/Schedule.pdf

[5] http://www.marlownh.gov/Pages/MarlowNH_BComm/Planning/PLAN%20NH/minutes_plannh_1212016.pdf

[6] <http://granitestatefutures.org/news/2016/04/09/too-many-small-and-stupid-governments/>

[7] <http://www.granitestatefutures.org>

[8] <http://www.granitestatefutures.org/news>

[9] http://www.marlownh.gov/Pages/MarlowNH_BComm/Planning/PLANMarlow

[10] <http://www.marlownewhampshire.org/master-plan.php>

[11] <http://plannh.org/mission>

[12] <http://plannh.org/uncategorized/smart-growth-america-now-taking-applications-for-technical-assistance-program>

[13] <http://www.vibrantvillagesnh.org/#compact-design>