

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**



## **1.1 BACKGROUND**

### **1.1.1 History and Geography**

Effingham lies between the town of Freedom in the north and the town of Wakefield in the south and is one of the eastern towns in Carroll County, New Hampshire. It is bounded by the town of Ossipee in the west and the state of Maine in the east, and in the north by the Ossipee River. It lies fully within the Saco River Watershed, has its own mountain range of seven peaks, including Green Mountain, and contains 38.9 square miles of land area and 1.1 square miles of inland water area. It includes the villages of Effingham Falls, Lord's Hill, Center Effingham (Drake's Corner), Chase's Mill, Grape Corner, Pine River, and South Effingham. The Pine River State Forest, one of the last remaining pitch-pine forests in New Hampshire, is in the south.

Incorporated in 1778, Effingham was first settled by the Leavitt's of Hampton, led by Captain John Leavitt, a soldier who fought the French and Indians at Lake George. Captain Leavitt's father, Moses, was a prosperous Hampton tavern keeper. From them the settlement took the name Leavitt's Town. In 1749, the land was granted by Governor Benning Wentworth who renamed it Effingham for the Howard family, Earls of Effingham and related to the Wentworth's by marriage. North Effingham was set off in 1831 and incorporated as the town of Freedom.

Effingham was home to the first normal school in New Hampshire, established in 1830 on the second floor of the Effingham Union Academy Building, itself erected in 1819. The director of the school was James W. Bradbury who later became a Maine senator. Mr. Bradbury managed the school on the condition that it should be for the "instruction and training of teachers".

**Effingham Falls** is located in the northern part of town between Route 25 and the Ossipee River. By 1859, it had developed into a small mill town with a woolen factory, five sawmills, three gristmills, and a carriage factory. It is now home to a few small businesses, the towns Municipal Offices, and the Effingham Elementary School where large town gatherings occur, including the annual Town Meeting. The **Lord's Hill** area contains many historic buildings including New Hampshire's first normal school. **Center Effingham** boasts the Grange building, where the Preservation Society meets, and the Historical Society building. The historic Masonic Charitable Institute gave their building to the town to be used as the Town Hall. It is now home to the Effingham Public Library and the Masonic Lodge. Also located in Center Effingham is the town's main fire station. **South Effingham** borders the state of Maine and contains a portion of Province Lake. The town post office and several small businesses are located here as well.

### **1.1.2 Demographics**

At the time of the first census taken in 1790, the population of the town was 154. Population change for Effingham totaled 936 over 50 years, from 341 in 1950 to 1,277 in 2000. The largest decennial percent change was 66 percent between 1970 and 1980, followed by a 58 percent increase over the next decade. As of the 2010 census, the total population was 1,465: 728 Male and 737 Female. Additional data from the Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau, the

New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning, the American Community Survey (ACS) 2005-2009 and the US Census Bureau are summarized in the following tables.

**Population by age group**

Under age 5	63
Age 5 to 19	254
Age 20 to 34	189
Age 35 to 54	500
Age 55 to 64	236
Age 65 and over	223
Median age	45.6

**Educational Attainment, population 25 years and over**

High school graduate or higher	89.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	23.9%

**Income, Inflation Adjusted (ACS 2005-2009)**

Per capita income	\$20,035
Median 4-person family income	\$50,282
Median household income	\$44,837

**Median earnings, full-time, year-round workers**

Male	\$32,308
Female	\$28,400

**Families below the poverty level 1.6%****Labor Force (2009)**

Civilian labor force	769
Employed	716
Unemployed	53
Unemployment rate	6.9% (an increase from 3.2% in 1999)

**Housing Supply**

2010 Total housing units	963	(from US Census)
2009 Single-family units	769	(from NH Office of Energy & Planning)
2009 Multi-family units	48	
2009 Manufactured units	135	

## 1.2 EFFINGHAM MASTER PLAN HISTORY

The Effingham Planning Board produced a Master Plan in 1981 with an update in 1998. The Master Plan was completely revised in 2003 and this plan remains in effect. In April 2009, the Effingham Planning Board convened a group of citizens (the Master Plan Advisory Committee) to begin developing another Master Plan with the assistance of the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. During 2009 the group developed a WBS (work breakdown structure), identified issues important to the community through a Public Forum and several other events,

devised a community survey, and issued a request for proposals for assistance in plan development. In the spring of 2010, the community survey was distributed and the results

tabulated. In May 2010, a second Public Forum was held to review the results of the survey and receive other input from the community. The Planning Board agreed to contract with the Lakes Region Planning Commission to develop the Land Use and Transportation portions of the plan. In the Fall of 2010, the committee broke into work groups to develop chapters relating to Economic Development, Recreation and Community Resources, Utilities and Public Services, Land Use, and Transportation. The Conservation Commission was asked to assist on the Natural Resources Chapter. The Conservation Commission presented their 2010 Action/Implementation Plan at that Public Forum. Based on the community input gathered from the survey and the Public Forum events, Chapters 1-8 were revised and submitted to the Planning Board.

## **1.3 AUTHORITY**

New Hampshire RSA 674:1(I), states: "It shall be the duty of every planning board established under RSA 673:1 to prepare and amend from time to time a master plan to guide the development of the municipality." The duties of the planning board are varied, but the only duty specifically required is the maintenance of the town's master plan. The sole purpose of the master plan is to aid the planning board in the performance of its duties. The purpose and description of master plans were changed considerably by amendments to RSA 674:2, the enabling legislation, which became effective July 14, 2002. In the introduction to the bill which revised the law on master plans it was recognized by the legislature "that growth and development are changing the look and feel of New Hampshire, against the desires of most citizens." The newly enacted legislation was designed to provide more definitive guidance in planning and managing future growth, not only within a municipality, but within the region as well. This new legislation changed both the required and recommended sections of master plans for towns in New Hampshire.

## **1.4 PURPOSE**

In simple terms, a master plan is a planning document that serves to guide the overall character, physical form, growth, and development of a community.

The primary purpose of a master plan is to set down, as clearly and practically as possible, the best and most appropriate future development for the community; guide the planning board in performance of its duties to achieve principles of smart growth, sound planning, and wise resource protection; establish statements of land use and development principles; and establish legal standing to implement ordinances and other measures of the planning board. The plan provides recommendations on ways to maintain or improve features of the town and enhance the unique quality of life and culture of Effingham. It provides guidance to local officials when setting public policy, and serves as the primary reference when making community decisions. A master plan articulates the vision, desires, and concerns of a community. Through the preparation of a new master plan, Effingham residents are acting to define a vision for the town and a means of achieving that vision. The shared vision is based on historical patterns of development, local and regional trends and, most importantly, input from Effingham residents

and property owners on how to accommodate future growth and development, while preserving those characteristics that make Effingham a desirable place to live.

Equally important, a master plan is needed to ensure that growth and development are orderly and predictable, to save taxpayers' money by avoiding premature development and costly sprawl, and to plan efficiently for capital improvements.

The legal significance in New Hampshire is that a master plan is required as a prerequisite for adopting a zoning ordinance, a historic district ordinance, establishing a capital improvement program, and adopting a growth management ordinance. By reference this can also be implied to include innovative land use control ordinances adopted under RSA 674:21. The master plan gives legal standing and aid to the planning board in designing and implementing ordinances and other measures. The Effingham Master Plan is a collection of information, ideas, and recommendations to help the town make decisions about future growth and development in Effingham.

## **15 GOING FORWARD**

Unlike other "master devices," a master plan has no force of law, no way to generate action, and no way to raise the resources required for its implementation. The Effingham Master Plan can only be implemented through organizations of the townspeople and through the democratic town meeting system. The true power of the document is derived from the citizens, as they will ultimately approve the staffing, funding, regulatory options, and strategies identified by this plan.

A master plan can be a powerful tool to help shape a community by giving suggested direction to appointed and elected officials. The Effingham Master Plan is a prerequisite to adopting the Capital Improvements Plan. We urge that attention be focused on the steps outlined in each chapter in order to accommodate future growth and development which is consistent with the goals and objectives expressed by the community.

*"It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan."  
~Eleanor Roosevelt*