



SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT FROM VIRTUAL PUBLIC FORUM #3 (Nov. 8, 2020)

Meeting Purpose and Process

Purpose: To continue the community conversation regarding the Townwide Master Plan and to:

- present the plan **recommendations** and **implementation plan**
- **promote an understanding** of what the Plan includes and to **inspire support** for its recommendations
- help identify **priorities**
- understand how participants see the Plan

Process:

The public forum was held on Sunday, November 8, 2020 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

Attendees offered technical assistance in case they were unfamiliar or uncomfortable using Zoom. Opportunities for “practicing” were provided. The presentation was in the form of a slide presentation made interactive by asking participants to participate in answering polls questions with multiple choice answers as well as to respond to questions in writing (using the “chat” function). Following an Introductions and a review of the Plan’s Goals and Objectives, participants were invited to respond to the recommendations in the form of strategies and action steps proposed to achieve the goals and objectives. Finally, participants were invited to join a virtual “Break Out Room” to continue the conversation in facilitated small discussion groups.

The Plan was received well and there were many comments regarding participant satisfaction with the format of the meeting. Participants were forthcoming with their comments and questions and there seemed to be a general consensus regarding support for the Plan’s recommendations.

All participants were offered a gift as a token of appreciation for their participation. They were instructed to share their email with the Town Planner in order to receive their gift in the mail.



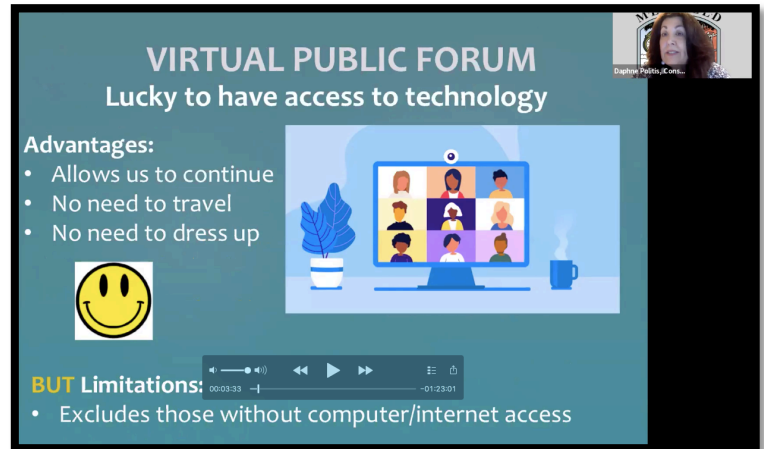
Participants:

Approximately 45 people attended the virtual forum. Not all were present for the entire forum and approximately 25 attended the break out group discussions (including members of the Townwide Master Plan Committee). Generally speaking, attendees were a fairly representative group with most being between the ages of 56 to 55, but all age groups were represented; there were more women than men attending; participants live in all four neighborhoods identified; and most do not currently have children in the school system, See APPENDIX A for a more detailed demographic breakdown of the forum's participants.

Advantages and limitations of Virtual Meetings.

The existence of the technology that allows us to continue with the planning process while continuing to engage with the community, is nothing short of wonderful. However, we are cognizant of the limitations, including the fact that it potentially excludes those without access to computers and/or internet or who lack computer literacy or confidence.

Having said this, there participants were pleased that the forum was being held virtually.



Presentation:

The meeting was recorded and the video was posted on the Town's website. Additionally, an Otter.AI transcript was created and made available for the hearing impaired and any others preferring to read the presentation and discussion.

Following an introduction to the purpose and process and instructions for virtual participation, the presentation was divided into three sections:

- **Part I:** Findings of Inventory & Assessment of Existing Conditions
- **Part II:** Master Plan Goals and Objectives for the Future
- **Part III:** 12 KEY Recommendations

PART I: Findings of Inventory & Assessment of Existing Conditions

Participants were directed to the report on the Existing Conditions on the Townwide Master Plan website where they can also view a video recording of the previous Public Forum (#2) where key findings of the Inventory of Existing Conditions was presented and discussed.

Inventory & Assessment of Existing Conditions

- Housing and Population
- Economic Development
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Open Space, Recreation and Natural Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Land Use and Zoning

ALSO:

- Summary of Sustainability Measures
- Medfield State Hospital Reuse Efforts

PART II: Master Plan Goals and Objectives for the Future

The Master Plan Goals and related Objectives were presented. For each objective, a series of recommended strategies were presented and participants were invited to comment and discuss these. There specific comments are documented in the pages that follow.

PART III: 12 KEY Recommendations

The top 12 key recommendations were presented and are as follows (order does not indicate priority):

- **Renew and revisit the vision for the DOWNTOWN**
- **Develop a network of PEDESTRIAN and BIKE paths and connections to open spaces**
- **Support OLDER ADULTS who wish to age in community**
- **Support the SCHOOL DEPARTMENT'S efforts to update its facilities**
- **Continue to support FACILITIES MANAGEMENT practices**
- **Explore options for creating a new PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY**
- **Consider creating an intergenerational COMMUNITY CENTER**
- **Make MEDFIELD STATE HOSPITAL into a town destination**
- **Develop a town-wide HEALTH AND WELLNESS CAMPAIGN**
- **Prepare CLIMATE CHANGE, Adaptation, Mitigation and Resilience Plan**
- **Evaluate the benefits of the COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT as a source of funding**
- **Review, revise and update the ZONING BY-LAW**

TOWNWIDE MASTER PLAN GOALS

GOAL 1: Honor Medfield's TOWN CHARACTER

GOAL 2: Making GETTING AROUND TOWN safe and pleasant

GOAL 3: Encourage ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

GOAL 4: Provide a range of HOUSING options

GOAL 5: Provide PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES that meet the needs of all residents.

GOAL 6: Support the reuse of the STATE HOSPITAL

GOAL 7: Support HEALTH AND WELLNESS of residents.

GOAL 8: Improve GOVERNANCE and plan for FUTURE RESILIENCE

Key Highlights

The following is a summary of the virtual community conversation.

A complete recording of the meeting is available on the Medfield Townwide Master Plan Committee's webpage:

<https://www.town.medfield.net/350/Townwide-Master-Planning-Committee>

GOAL 1: Honor Medfield's TOWN CHARACTER

Celebrate the DOWNTOWN and increase its vitality

- Update vision
- Improve signage, paving, sidewalks, crosswalks parking
- Attract diverse dining and retail
- Revise zoning to help increase vitality

Preserve and enhance Medfield's HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Create a Medfield Story to connect and preserve features
- Reuse historic buildings on State Hospital campus
- Preserve historic municipal buildings
- Evaluate adopting CPA
- Apply to become a certified Local Government

Protect, enhance, and connect existing NATURAL FEATURES and acquire additional OPEN SPACE

- Protect existing open space/natural features
- Acquire additional open space
- Create connections between spaces and improve equity of access
- Evaluate benefits of CPA

Guide DEVELOPMENT and REDEVELOPMENT so in keeping with the Town's character

- Guide new development with impact on services in mind and so that open space is preserved
- Guide new development so complements existing neighborhood character

COMMENTS ON GOAL 1: Honor Medfield's TOWN CHARACTER

- *What is way-finding?*
- *Cultural district supporting the arts*
- *What is the concept of certified Local Government?*
- *Do you have to adopt CPA to be a certified local government?*
- *Bury electrical wires/internet, etc. in center of town - more like Wellesley and Concord center*
- *Would you please repeat / explain a connection to climate*
- *Do we have a list and plan for possible [open space] acquisitions?*
- *Shouldn't we perhaps look at making sure future developments are highly energy efficient*

GOAL 2: Making **GETTING AROUND TOWN** safe and pleasant

Reduce traffic congestion and make traveling by **AUTOMOBILE** safer

- Maintain roads, intersections, and sidewalks
- Make Improvements to the Route 109 corridor
- Improve Safety at High Crash Locations
- Implement Traffic Calming Program

Improve **PARKING** when/where possible

- Implement Parking Management Strategies in Downtown
- Improve Signage and Wayfinding Downtown
- Consider Zoning Amendment to Reduce Required Parking for Development

Improve existing infrastructure and connect **PEDESTRIAN** and **BICYCLE** networks

- Connect pedestrian and bike facilities to create a network
- Maintain existing sidewalks, trails, crosswalks and pedestrian ramps
- Improve Walking and Biking Facilities in the Downtown area

Explore the possibilities for providing **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

- Institute a pilot program for a town shuttle
- Provide transit service for those without vehicles or who do not wish to drive (especially for older adults and teens)

COMMENTS ON GOAL 2: Making **GETTING AROUND TOWN** safe and pleasant

- *Public transportation for who?*
- *Many communities are working hard to - reduce- future automobiles*
- *Is there a tie-in between reducing emissions, re: getting around goals, and also sustainability goals?*
- *Future use of automobiles*
- *how can we work with our police to change the speeding culture? more speeding stops?*
- *accelerated conversions from ICEs to EVs*
- *Some of the sustainability objectives also include increasing low-carbon transportation options*
- *So sidewalk to Shaws plaza is a likelihood?*
- *109 is very dangerous for pedestrians/bikes/any non-cars*
- *Has the police chief been involved in traffic calming discussions?*
- *Love the goal of improving bike and pedestrian traffic around town, especially trying in neighborhoods that have no connection to town (Hospital/Harding)*
- *Any pedestrian zones considered changing a street from being car traffic to a pedestrian zone*
- *The KEY to downtown vitality is “boots on the ground” — people out of their cars and walking*

GOAL 3: Encourage **ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

Diversify the **TAX BASE**

- Incentivize development
- Update the Zoning Bylaw with economic development in mind
- Recognize elder care as an economic development opportunity
- Provide for a wider mix of uses in the BI district
- Encourage and support local self-employment

Become more **BUSINESS FRIENDLY**

- Hold business roundtables with local businesses
- Increase efficiency in permitting
- Create a small business portal on the town website
- Train Town boards and staff
- Institute a business visitation program

COMMENTS ON GOAL 3:

Encourage **ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

- *It seems more business is counter to historic/rural character*
- *But will increase residential taxes*
- *The Planning Board has discussed undertaking a zoning bylaw “diagnostic” after this planning process is completed to review uses and permitting processes*
- *Design review for downtown business area would be great*
- *Two PB members are attending the CPTC design review session this week!*

GOAL 4: Provide a range of **HOUSING** options

Provide **SMALLER UNITS** for older adults, younger adults and others looking for more **AFFORDABLE** housing

- Reduce regulatory barriers to housing production
- Encourage congregate residences, assisted living, and memory care residences
- Support mixed uses in business-zoned areas
- Evaluate the effectiveness Inclusionary Zoning

COMMENTS ON GOAL 4:

Provide a range of **HOUSING** options

- *Where, there is no land*
- *Detached accessory dwelling makes sense*

Encourage the development of **ALTERNATIVE** housing types

- Review existing regs re: group residences
- Work to establish additional dwellings in Medfield
- Revise the Open Space Residential Development Bylaw
- Evaluate options for cottage units

GOAL 5: Provide PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES that meet the needs of all residents.

Support excellence in EDUCATION

- Support the School District to meet its facility needs
- Improve communication and relationship between the School Department and other Town Departments
- Support the Dale Street School process
- Preserve the town-wide grade configuration

Continue to plan, manage and maintain municipal FACILITIES

- Continue to support facilities management practices
- New Parks and Recreation Facility
- Consider creating an intergenerational Community Center
- Develop a Dale Street School Reuse Plan (if it is decided to vacate the school)
- Determine appropriate uses for other Town-owned properties

Improve municipal UTILITIES

- Ensure adequate funding for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the town's infrastructure
- Establish and annually update a 20-year capital plan for Sewer and Water Systems
- Assess whether or not the Town's long range plans are supported by long range plans for infrastructure improvements

COMMENTS ON GOAL 5: Provide PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES that meet the needs of all residents

- *We are under a severe water restriction, and have water bans every year. How will more building affect town services?*
- *As part of Master Plan, how do we incorporate a regular third-party analysis of enrollment projections, similar to what other towns do? Our enrollment projection for this year alone was overstated by 109 students K-3, with little indication there was pandemic impact*

GOAL 6: Support the reuse of the STATE HOSPITAL

Pursue the vision and aspirations of the Medfield State Hospital MASTER PLAN

- Integrate into town-wide economic development plans
- Make the MSH campus into a town destination
- Prevent over-development
- Support the reuse of the Chapel as an arts and cultural center

Reuse the buildings and campus to meet TOWN NEEDS

- Find a new location for the school buses
- Locate and build a dog park
- Address Town housing needs
- Create a sustainability model

COMMENTS ON GOAL 6: Support the reuse of the STATE HOSPITAL

- *Accelerate State hospital development*
- *These are issues that MSHDC is actively discussing right now as they look to craft the RFP*

GOAL 7: Support HEALTH AND WELLNESS of residents

Maintain existing and provide additional opportunities for RECREATION

- New Parks and Recreation facility
- Town sports complex
- Partner with private entities
- Provide more outdoor winter recreation activities
- Increase access to the Charles River

Promote HEALTHY LIFESTYLE choices, especially for YOUTH

- Support Medfield Outreach (MO)
- Broad range of activities
- Promote a town-wide health and wellness campaign
- After School Teen Center
- Youth representation in Town government

Support older adults to AGE-IN-PLACE

- Intergenerational Community Center
- Affordable, appropriately designed, sized and located housing
- Services and activities needed by older adults
- CoA provide off-site programming and co-programming with other Town Departments
- Explore ways of expanding tax relief program for older adult volunteers

Attract a more DIVERSE POPULATION to live in Town

- Promote diversity /cultural competence training
- Establish an Inclusion and Diversity Committee
- Send welcoming messages
- Support people with a range of incomes

Expand opportunities for COMMUNITY GATHERING

- Consider creating a Community Center for all ages
- Organize more town-wide events
- Support the redevelopment of the Chapel on the MSH into an Arts and Cultural Center
- Support the Medfield Public Library to increase programming for all ages
- Provide more spaces and activities for middle and high school-aged youth

COMMENTS ON GOAL 7: Support HEALTH AND WELLNESS of residents

- *Have there been any support to provide spaces/house for the scouting or other youth organizations in town at the MSH?*
- *Some towns have a scout house, and since the MSH houses were condemned, there has been no home for scouting in town. Most recently, the Legion was torn down, reducing scouting support further*
- *I'd be happy to work with you on the scouting needs*
- *Also a need for a permanent space for the Medfield Food Cupboard*
- *New in town*
- *The way we build buildings, move around town, etc. can affect the health and wellness of residents. Building codes, zoning etc. reduced energy use.*
- *New technology for fireworks - drones*
- *Park & Rec consultant had noted that a teen center was typically most attractive to teens 15 and younger. If that's the case, some thought would be good on how to best meet needs of teens in town older than 15 -- the age span most at risk for alcohol overuse.*

GOAL 8: Improve **GOVERNANCE** and plan for **FUTURE RESILIENCE**

Improve TOWN GOVERNANCE

- Develop a long term financial plan
- Improve communication with Town residents and business owners
- Increase civic involvement
- Explore additional ways of providing services on a regional basis
- Evaluate parcels of town-owned land and consider whether they should be sold to help pay for Town facility and service improvements

Promote measures that respect and protect the ENVIRONMENT

- Prepare for a changing climate and assess greenhouse gas emissions
- Improve energy efficiency and increase the percentage of Medfield's energy coming from renewable sources
- Increase low-carbon transportation options
- Improve and promote waste diversion programs

COMMENTS ON GOAL 8:

Improve **GOVERNANCE** and plan for **FUTURE RESILIENCE**

- *Would be great to expand # of positions on Select Board*
- *Keep town meetings on zoom!*
- *I have been working on making a GHG inventory for Medfield. Could I share my preliminary data?*
- *Congratulations on an efficient and informative session, so far.*
- *A breakthrough program is coming up next week on Monday 11/16: Medfielders Decarbonize. Please attend to move your own awareness along, listen to fellow Medfielders who will be discussing the very-substantial steps they have taken; if they can, everyone can.*
- *I agree very well done!*
- *Truly, you're one of the best master plan consultant groups -- great job.*
- *I didn't know about the decarbonizing— thank you!*

SMALLER GROUP DISCUSSION: 2 BREAK OUT ROOMS

Participants were invited to join smaller facilitated discussion groups. Approximately 22 residents stayed on to do so and were randomly divided into two virtual break out rooms. They were joined by several Townwide Master Plan Committee members for a lively discussion focused on further discussing the Master Plan.. The following is a documentation of participants' comments.



What do you like most about the Plan?

- Comprehensive
- Completeness of the coverage
- The varied focus on town betterment that doesn't focus solely on the schools
- Redesigning traffic. Bike lanes and pedestrian. trolley
- It is thoughtful and includes a wide variety of perspectives. It also addressed negatives that others do not address.
- I also like taking our treasures and lifting them up
- That sustainability is considered throughout
- Pedestrian safety measures although I would like to see them as high priority
- Community outreach & responses well represented
- Exactly - comprehensive nature
- Continued emphasis on Downtown— a lot of the other stuff hinges on that
- It creates lot of future work for us to do
- And you have put it a good format to follow through

What obstacles do you foresee to the Plan's implementation?

- Zoning changes are very important
- Outdated thinking on climate change and the available technology and policy initiatives/state funding sources
- People worried about financing this. Not understanding how this would improve finances
- Town committees, the town itself does not seem to be on the same page
- \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
- Funding
- Cost
- Participation – residents
- Conflicting goals -- how to reconcile

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- *Would help to understand the best community/political process for reconciling conflicting goals*
- *Participation - not a high % of our residents with us tonight*
- *There are a lot of competing efforts in town that probably impacted participation as well.*
- *Diversifying the tax base*
- *political will*
- *CPA is not the answer*
- *Agree re: CPA*
- *The state match has been getting lower every year. and, a committee decides how to spend our tax dollars*
- *Major public awareness/education is needed for CPA*
- *I think we all want lower taxes, but I am not sure how many want to live next door to a business. that is the reason the Clark Tavern is not a restaurant*
- *Unidentified needs that interfere with accomplishing the goals*
- *Town finances are very tight now and project to be for a few years*
- *Cost - taxes are already so high and with the school project I'm worried about the ability to fund these other objectives*

What do you want to be absolutely sure is included in the Plan?

- *Making town center a place to be, walking, biking, public transport*
- *Giving youth something to do and somewhere to go*
- *Keeping /supporting a thriving town center*
- *Agree on zoning, MSH, and downtown*
- *Appropriately designed small homes for people to age in place in the community that are moderately priced*
- *Ongoing support for our community's mental health and needs based assistance - esp given the impacts of the pandemic*
- *Climate mitigation*
- *connection of open spaces*
- *Energy efficiency goals*
- *ideas to improve the downtown*
- *ideas to diversify the tax base*
- *Keeping residents in town for long term -- not just for schools*
- *ways to improve our business climate - and encourage businesses to stay*
- *circulation study/strategy to achieve active transportation goals/connection of open spaces*
- *Ideas to diversify the housing types with more affordable housing*
- *Increasing civic engagement overall, and especially among youth*
- *Streetscape, crosswalks, etc.*
- *Include youth more in town planning*
- *Autonomous electric bus*
- *Electric bike incentives?*

- *Easement along the train track?*
- *More connections*

Is there anything that you feel you would like more information about?

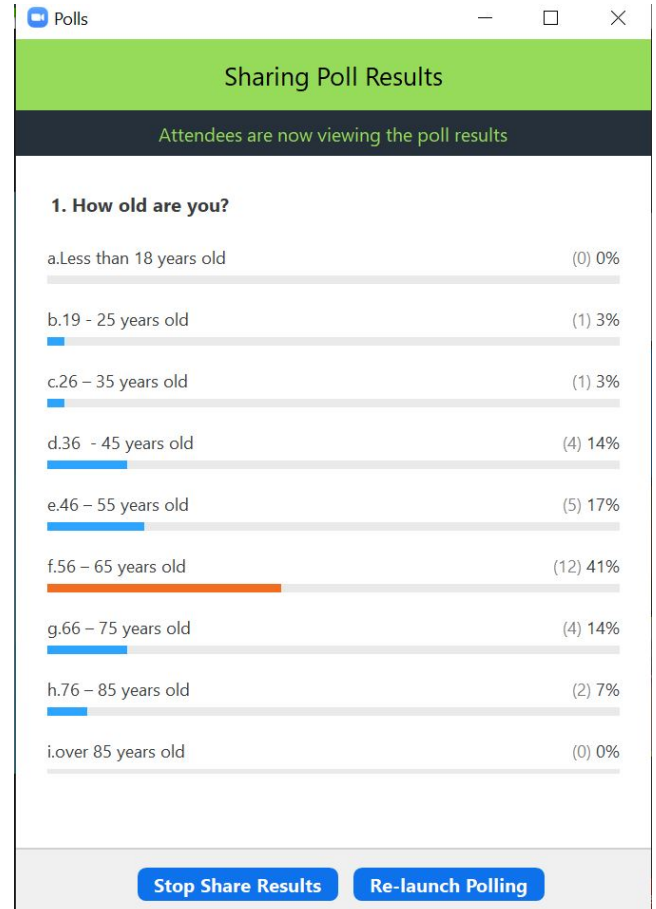
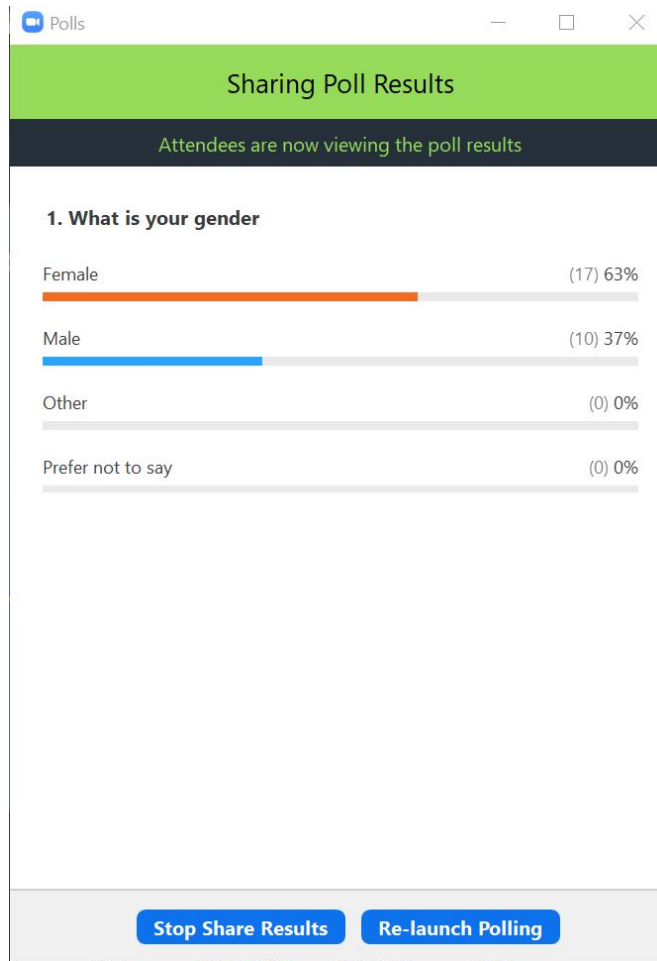
- *I think this will be included in the plan but who is responsible for what? who will follow up with the parts as time goes on? (We have indicated a town lead for each action)*
- *The town has traditionally had a lot of privately supported youth programs, but they need spaces to meet (DI, Girls scouts, boy scouts)*
- *Medfield Outreach is currently partnering (or beginning to partner) with other town agencies/committees such as COA/CAM etc.*
- *I think you have been very thorough*
- *Certified local government - is there any overhead we have to consider it maintaining that once achieved?*
- *looking forward to implementation*
- *Can you send us examples of better designed websites? (We just implemented this current one 4 years ago and its hundreds times better than the old one)*
- *Can we have Matt Triest start printing the Townwide Master Planning Committee logo on t shirts?*
- *we also talked about the resurgence of economic development committee/resources to tackle that goal*
- *Are grants available to cover cost of hiring downtown economic development consultant?*

Any other thoughts or concerns?

- *Great job!*
- *I am very impressed.*
- *Thank you for job well done*
- *Also impressed, excited to read the plan*
- *Thank you!*
- *Thank you very much*
- *Just wondering on Covid impact going forward*
- *Thoughts on spreading the education leading to town meeting?*
- *You guys have been great!*
- *I thought the presentation went really well*

APPENDIX A: WHO PARTICIPATED?

Participants were more female than male and the majority were between the ages of 56 and 65, but participants of all ages were represented. A majority (70%) do not currently have children in the Medfield school system and those attending the meeting lived in all four quadrants of the Town.



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