

Town of Burke 2010 Town Meeting Public Opinion Survey Results

Overview and Methodology

In March of 2010, the Select Board in the Town of Burke developed a survey and distributed them at Town Meeting Day. One of the reasons for this survey was a proposed wood pellet plant that respondents may or may not have been aware of when answering these questions. Based on the specific responses, it is likely that some who filled in the survey were aware of the proposed project.

It is also important to note that the construction of the questions were not completely clear and that may also have impacted responses - both positively and negatively. We would suggest any future surveys be clear, more targeted and have only one question asked per number to provide for more in depth analysis. We would also suggest having follow up questions or alternative ways of asking the same questions to better understand the intent and interests of respondents and validate responses.

A total of 147 responses were gathered. The purpose of the survey was to provide the Town with guidance regarding commercial and industrial development; specifically, what types and in what location would this type of use be of interest to the citizens of Burke.

This document summarizes responses to the survey. The methodology for compiling and analyzing the survey data was as follows:

- While 147 surveys were returned, not every respondent answered every question. Also some of the questions had multiple responses. Therefore, some questions total fewer, while other totaled more than 147 responses. If a percentage is stated as a response to a given question, that percentage is out of the actual number of respondents to that particular question. Therefore, the data should be understood as, “out of the number of people who responded to this question, X percent believe that...”
- Hand-written comments from surveys (even when written in the margin) were transcribed verbatim and included with each question. Each bulleted item in the comments section (question 4) corresponds to one respondent. However, since not all respondents wrote comments, the comments should not be taken as representative of the survey as a whole.

General Summary

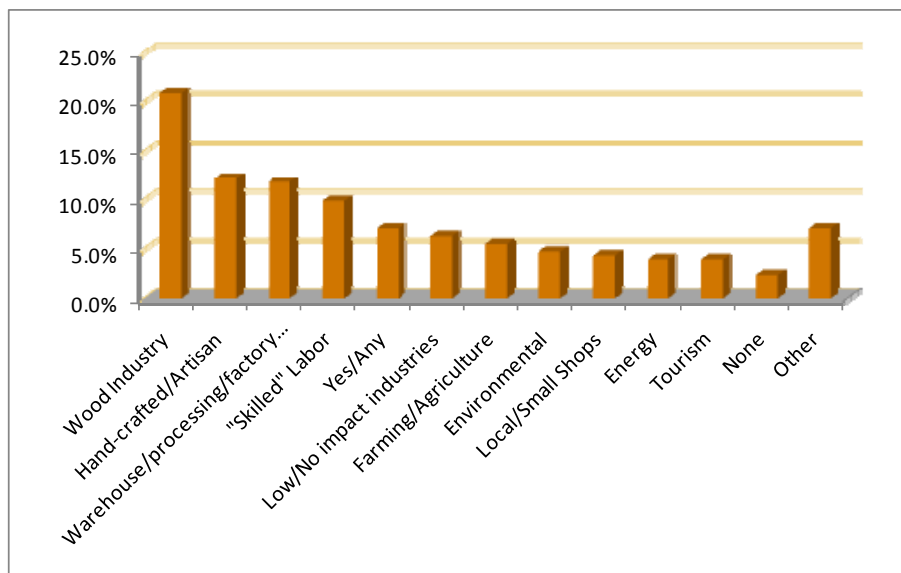
In general, survey respondents were supportive of attracting businesses that were small-scale, cottage industries and those that provided added-value opportunities for the region’s natural resources, primarily forestry and agriculture. Many respondents wanted to make sure that a cautious, measured approach to attracting larger-scale industry was utilized to ensure that harmful pollution (air, water, noise, etc.) did not impact the current residents and businesses.

QUESTION 1

List some examples of industry you would like to see in Burke?

No one industry had an overwhelming majority. Wood industry (including sawmills, pellet plants, logging, and wood related industries) was the top vote getter at approximately 21 percent. If you combine hand-crafted/artisan with the local and small businesses, another 23 percent of respondents support small-scale, cottage industries. If you look at the trend of top general issues, many respondents (35-40%) are interested in attracting small-scale, local businesses that have minimal impact and relate to hand-crafts, tourism and agriculture. (see comments in question 4 as well)

Top General Issues	Frequency	Valid %
Wood Industry	53	20.9%
Hand-crafted/Artisan	31	12.2%
Warehouse/processing/factory based	30	11.8%
"Skilled" Labor	25	9.8%
Yes/Any	18	7.1%
Low/No impact industries	16	6.3%
Farming/Agriculture	14	5.5%
Environmental	12	4.7%
Local/Small Shops	11	4.3%
Energy	10	3.9%
Tourism	10	3.9%
None	6	2.4%
Other	18	7.1%
Valid total	254	100%
Missing	25	
Total	279	

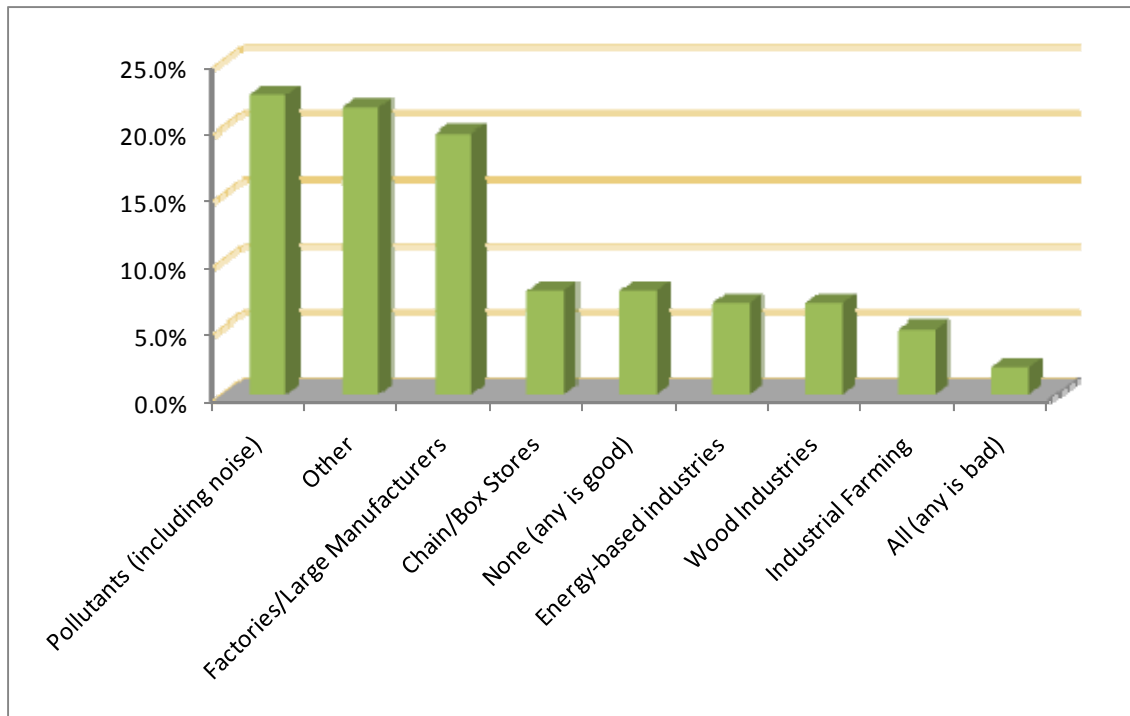


QUESTION 2

List some examples of industry you would not like to see in Burke

Almost one-quarter (25%) of respondents did not want any industry that caused pollution – noise, air, and water and another twenty percent did not want to see large factories. See also Question 4: Comments.

Top General Issues	Frequency	Valid %
Pollutants (including noise)	23	22.5%
Other	22	21.6%
Factories/Large Manufacturers	20	19.6%
Chain/Box Stores	8	7.8%
None (any is good)	8	7.8%
Energy-based industries	7	6.9%
Wood Industries	7	6.9%
Industrial Farming	5	4.9%
All (any is bad)	2	2.0%
Valid total	102	100%
Missing	71	
Total	173	

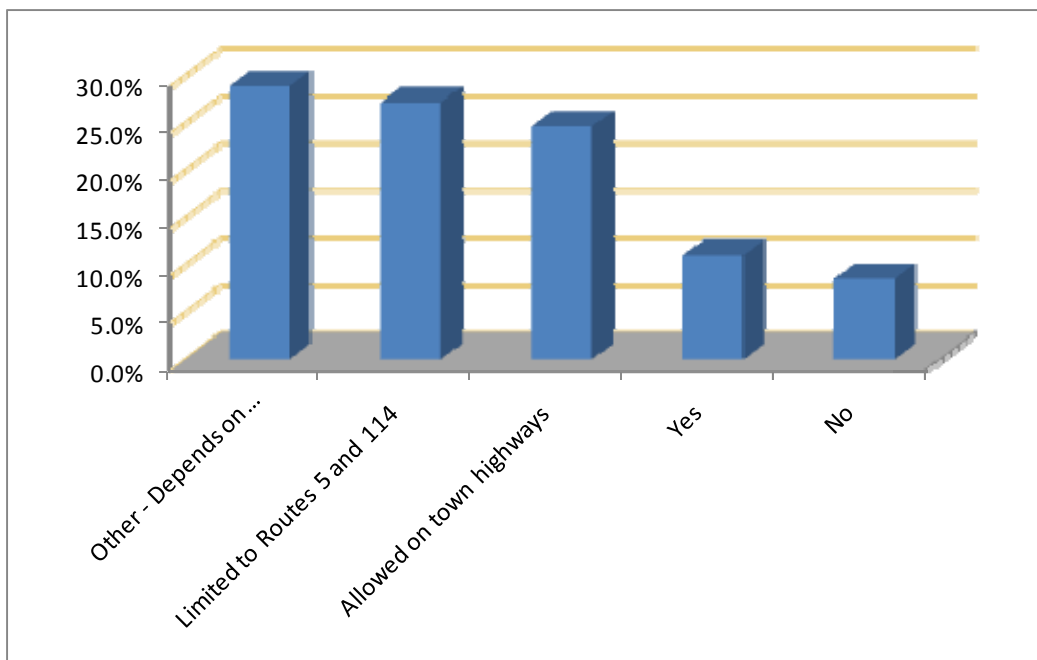


QUESTION 3

Should these types of industry be limited to the Route 5 and Route 114 State Highway corridors or also be allowed on town highways?

This was a confusing question to summarize as there are two questions to answer and while, often the answer was clear, a “yes” or “no” answer is almost like a non answer as you can not definitely say which question they are answering. Of those with a clear answer, it was fairly evenly split between those that wanted industry limited to Routes 5 and 114 and those that would also include town highways. Approximately 29 percent of respondents had a “depends on the industry and potential impact in response to this question.

Top general issues	Frequency	Valid %
Other - Depends on industry/situation/conditions	34	28.8%
Limited to Routes 5 and 114	32	27.1%
Allowed on town highways	29	24.6%
Yes	13	11.0%
No	10	8.5%
Valid total	118	100%
Missing	32	
Total	150	



QUESTION 4

Other Comments

Several comments center around the need to foster the business that are already in town. Themes mentioned in earlier questions - limit impacts; go slowly and need jobs - were again mentioned. There were suggestions for notifying neighbors and the community as well as ensure current regulations are enforced before new ones are in place.

Comments

NOTE: Each bullet represents all the comments from one respondent.

- town should remain as residential as possible
- go slowly - things are so often not what they seem. Potential industry will say that they will hire, for example 60 people, but really only plan to hire 12!
- please have strict limits on impacts on neighbors and rural character
- I would support industry but please be mindful of impacts to air and our waters
- Any business that doesn't create too much of the above list. It would be nice to have a few more businesses in Burke to help employee people. Our town is a beautiful town, but we can't only depend on tourist business for our town.
- Whatever we can do to help bring jobs we should check out
- When there are proposals for new industry, it would be good for voters to be informed and given the opportunity to have input
- We would benefit from industry in our Town
- Industry in the town is a good thing, the placement of any enterprise is a key concern. While lighter industry may be acceptable on our highways, judicious placement as "abstract" as that is an absolute essential.
- We need to acknowledge that Burke is a tourist ski/vacation town. If we open up our zoning to have the above which are already in place as grandfathered operations, it will be nearly impossible to limit their growth. As of now we have little if no enforcement of existing bylaws. Put a better "fine" system in place and have people remove unpermitted structures.
- any type of business
- Don't want to see any industry in Burke
- They shouldn't be limited to state highway corridors, nor should they automatically be allowed in a town or state highway corridor. They should be located in areas where they don't have a negative impact on other nearby properties ie. Not in the middle of a village

- Use East Burke for all Industry
- Keep what we have
- Route 5 should have depth limits;
- RR 1 and 2 should have title change; see 117 4414(B1)
- Burke is doing well as it is
- We already decided when we approved the new zoning that we don't want industrial plants in Burke!
- Take the time to listen and to support the entrepreneurs (Burke taxpayers) who are trying to bring jobs and revenue to this town
- I would like to see the mountain become a year round resort. I'm afraid that if we (DRB, etc.) give them too much grief they will leave and there will be NO revenue form the mountain at all
- Times are tough. People need jobs. Common sense needs to prevail!
- Don't cut off your nose to spite your face. Be open to industry and job growth. I'm all for maintaining the rural character and taking care of the environment, but I need to be able to afford to live here too.
- Burke needs industry
- Not appropriate for this place and time! Should be covered at selectman's open meeting

This report prepared by:



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We work with local officials, developers, nonprofit organizations, political leaders, and businesses to understand the factors that are changing our state's unique landscape.

Our goal is to develop creative land use and development policies that increase our prosperity while protecting Vermont's distinctive landscape.

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