

**For Immediate Release 6/4/2006**

## **Sandwich Citizens Housing Releases Survey Results**

Interested in maintaining the small town rural character and sense of community of Sandwich, a group of residents formed the Sandwich Citizen's Housing . As with many of NH's small rural towns, Sandwich has been home to people from all kinds of backgrounds: There have always been rich and poor and those in between, those who are self-educated and those with varying levels of formal educations. What we all have shared over the years has been a love of the town. This history is what the housing committee wants to preserve by following its mission of "increasing the availability of housing to meet the diverse needs of our community". The vision statement of the Committee has been: "The community of Sandwich would maintain its small town rural character and would consist of people of all ages, interests and incomes. Housing would be available to families of all occupations and incomes".

This winter the Housing Committee distributed a questionnaire to all residents of Sandwich in hopes of learning more about what people see as the housing needs in town.

Approximately 100 people responded to the questionnaire. When the results were collated there were several areas of agreement:

Everyone who responded seemed to feel strongly about the town in a favorable way.

Everyone wants to maintain the rural character.

Respondents see Sandwich as extraordinary in its physical beauty with a strong character and sense of community, and everyone is interested in preserving that character.

People were clear that they did not want Sandwich to "change".

People expressed their concerns that the population of the state is increasing and their fears that this increase will impact Sandwich.

The decrease in enrollment at the Sandwich Central School is a concern.

While there were about 20% of the questionnaires that expressed the hope that the SHC would do nothing at all, each one of those objections stated that Sandwich is just fine the way it is. The SHC agrees, but sees change coming and that it will not be the way it is much longer if people of a range of ages, incomes, education, occupations and interests can no longer live here due to the inflated costs of land and houses.

This winter the Sand. Historical Society hosted an evening to remember some of the old characters of Sandwich history. Dave Chase, Peter Pohl, and Ray Elliot shared stories of some of the colorful characters of days past. It was interesting to think that many of those people might not be able to afford to live here now. This is the shared legacy that the SHC want to preserve as it works to maintain housing for all.

The Sandwich Housing Committee meets on the third Thursday of every month. The next meeting is June 15 at 7:00 in the Town Hall. All are welcome.