

PLAINFIELD

RESILIENCE AWARENESS & ACTION

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

November 2016

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Project funded by the Lake Champlain Basin Program

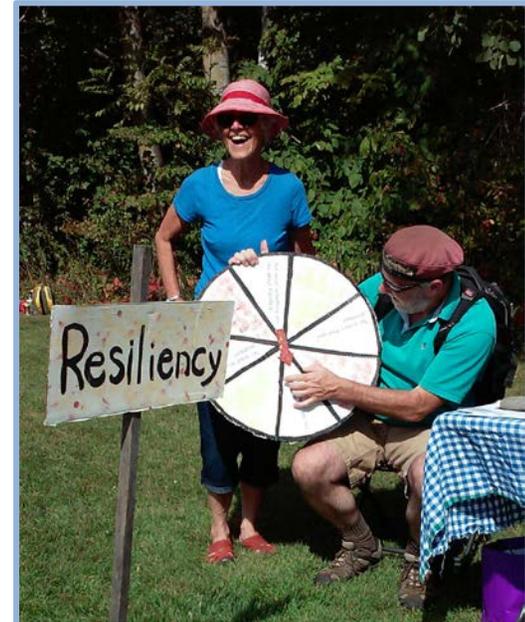
Summary

Attached are the results of the Plainfield Community Resiliency Survey. The survey was conducted during August & September 2016 as part of the Plainfield Resilience Awareness & Action Project. The purpose of the survey was to collect public comments and to identify opportunities to improve the town's overall resiliency. The survey was mailed to 438 registered voters. Paper copies were available at the Town Clerk's Office, Cutler Library, and the Plainfield Co-op. An electronic survey was also available online. A total of 68 surveys were submitted.

The survey focused on collecting opinions regarding four resiliency categories:

- Basic Needs and Services
- Environment & Natural Systems
- Physical Infrastructure
- Community Connections & Resources

The Committee anticipates the survey results will be of interest to the public, Select Board, and other town boards and commissions. The survey results will be used, in conjunction with existing reports, studies, and adopted plans, to develop short and long-term resiliency strategies and identify areas where improvements might be needed.



A resilient community is a stronger, safer, more connected community-ready for whatever comes its way.

BASIC NEEDS AND SERVICES

Overview

Participants were asked to provide their opinion on the following statement:

During a natural disaster, our town is able to supply the basic needs (food, water, energy, emergency response, medical attention, and other supplies) that residents need to survive.



Comments Received (Basic Needs and Services):

“Our fast squad is amazing and with health center in town I believe we’re okay with emergency response? Neighbors would come through with food.”

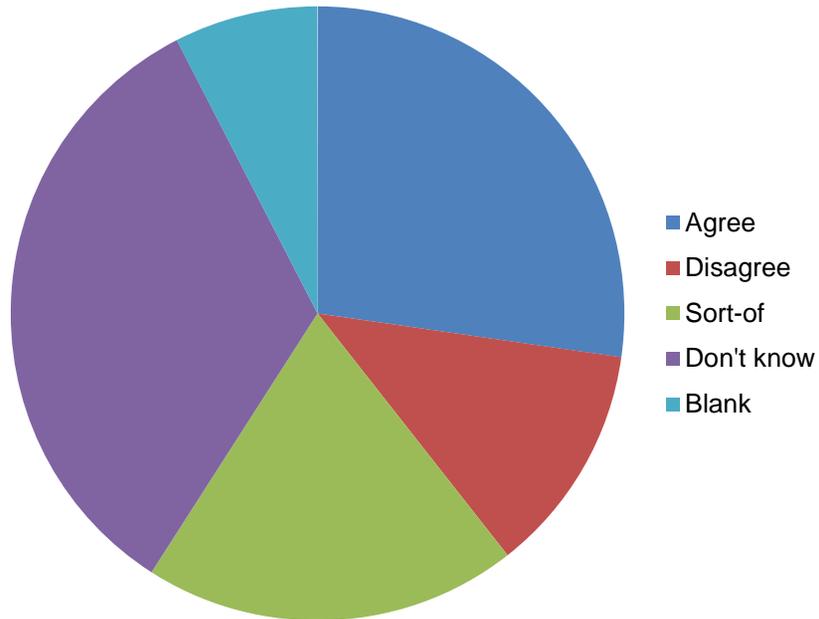
“It was completely unnecessary to have the Brook Road closed for as long as it was.”

“We could use a centrally located storage area for gallons of water and food that doesn’t require cooking- plus blankets or sleeping bags for people who want to remain in their homes, despite lack of heat.”

“We have an excellent rescue squad, but I don’t think we have emergency water or food supplies.”

“This needs to include the informed, the disabled, and pets, as well as the able bodied.”

Basic Needs and Services



BASIC NEEDS AND SERVICES

27%	Agree
12%	Disagree
20%	Sort-of
33%	Don't Know
8%	Blank

“I sort-of know this because I took an Emergency Training session with Rob Bridges. Otherwise, I would have no idea.” “Not sure how much we could supply. Most likely people are generally willing to help each other.”

“Property destroyed by a flood should not be rebuilt in the flood plane so the need for services will not be required for the same problem twice.”

“I do not live in the village.”

“One can only hope the less fortunate can acquire relief.”

“I must admit I don’t feel I know enough about this to answer. Sorry. I support your efforts and appreciate your civic spirit.”

“Town has no resources to provide any of these services, food stores? Medical?”

“Residents are helpful, creative, and skillful.”

“At hay barn, Goddard College.”

“It does really depend on how long things are not normal.”

“Small town, only so much we can do...depends on severity of disaster of course.”

“The town should have a written procedure on the steps the select board and board of civil authority go through when there is a natural disaster and how and where these basic needs will be provided. That information should be routinely distributed to residents and updated as needed.”

“I actually don’t know if this is true, but given how well Plainfield seems to take care of roads and people, I trust this in place too!”

“I think emergency service is excellent, but I have no clue about everything else.”

“Timely emergency response is limited on a “normal” day- I worry what would happened if there were several (or more than one) needs at once.”

“Survive is just fine.”

“For how long? Food, sure; really complicated medical stuff, probably not.”

“Most people rely on themselves, friends, and neighbors...I think.”

“I don’t consider it the town’s job to supply food, water, or power to my home (I live miles from the village). But the roads have always been passable so that I could access those resources.”

“Haven’t really seen that put to the test. There are many elderly and people with disabilities and I’m not clear how well prepared we are to assist.”

“A lot depends on the nature and duration of the disaster. Also, how much of the VT and New England are affected. Electricity is what we are most dependent on outside resources for.”

“Mostly the fire department. Haven’t had need for anything extended, only evacuation during Irene in the village.”

“No one contacted me. SR, no car, live alone.”

“Supply or delivers? I think the emergency shelter may be at Goddard College. The power companies work on getting power back on. We have a Fire and Paramedic Department. Otherwise, I think everyone is on this __, but are willing to help each other.”

“What is up the town?! Everyone should be adult enough to take responsibility for their own self and their own family. As a 9th generation Vermonter I am getting very tired of people thinking they should be taken care of.”

“I have no idea what the town can supply. We have a fire department, emergency responders, but for food, water, etc. I would look to the state, and red cross. Check with Rob Bridges.”

“Get rid of stop signs on Brook Road!!”

“Poor communication systems, cell coverage poor, _____disasters require more organizing and people and money than I believe we have together.”

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL SYSTEMS

Overview

Participants were asked to provide their opinion on the following statement:

It is important to protect stream banks and floodplains to avoid future floods.



Comments Received (Environmental & Natural Systems):

“More needs to be done on the Great Brook to remove trees and debris that could cause another flood.”

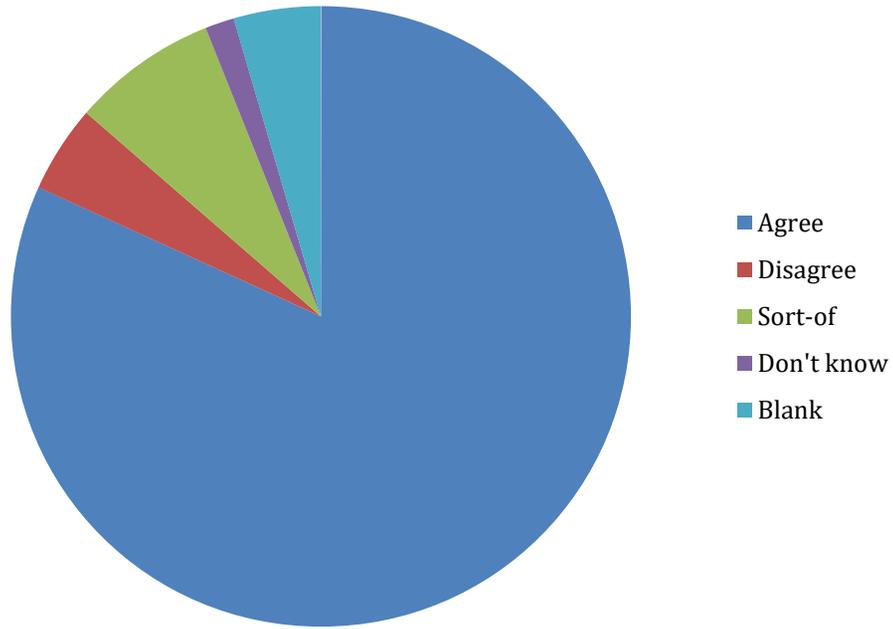
“Let the people do the job they know how to do without all of the outside ____ from people in back of the desk at town, state, and federal level.”

“This is a priority.”

“As long as not protected with rip-rap.”

“Within the confines of what is environmentally responsible.”

Environment & Natural Systems



ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL SYSTEMS	
82%	Agree
4%	Disagree
8%	Sort-of
1%	Don't Know
5%	Blank

“True, but the ANR is more concerned with “fish” and the natural “direction” of a river, etc.”

“I live in a high place, so my home wasn’t threatened, but my well burned out and had to be replaced, big \$\$.”

“We need to gradually reduce the number of homes in the flood plains.”

“Great Brook is never cleared of debris by anyone. In a flood all of the blow down takes out bridges. Neither town or state takes the responsibility.”

“No published or posted disaster routes to follow.”

“Town has no public places in a disaster.”

“We don’t do enough to keep streams open before disastrous weather arrives.”

“Agree in protection but unsure how much of a doomsday scenario it makes sense to spend a lot of \$ to prepare for.”

“It’s important to be mindful and use common sense and be reasonable.”

“If the Marshfield Dam were regulated, GMP would have to take environmental matters into account when deciding how to manage the power generation at the dam.”

“I see how Plainfield is trying to deal w/ (study) the complex brook/water system, which I appreciate.”

“Our intervention may not be worthy in some situations.”

“I’m not sure we’ll be able to avoid future floods, but we should be trying to mitigate their potential.”

“We should have done something years ago. How is it that Barre can have a catchment and we not? Have we done anything at all to alleviate flooding?”

“Let life happen.”

“I don’t think you can totally avoid floods. We also need to plan for what happens in the event of a flood.”

“Our new zoning regs and fluvial erosion map help w/ this, but people in Brook flood area need information.”

“The recent damage above makes it mute. Need to set aside \$ for this and make annual appeal as well.”

“How do you get there?”

“Of course. Flood plains should do their jobs. No one should build in them. Too late for that though.”

“Let them be- they will flood as they have been doing for millennia.”

“The new stop signs suck.”

“What about structured neighborhood gatherings (with trained instructors to facilitate those groups. Provide resource info and neighborhood plans get developed. Who has what (food, water, blankets, etc.), first aid and CPR, phone chain/who walks to whose house, pet care, etc. Who is physically or emotionally frail, elders, handicapped, very isolated. Especially in more rural/out of town.”

“I highly agree, this is a worthy investment.”

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Overview

Participants were asked to provide their opinion on the following statements:

#1. In the event of a natural disaster, my neighbors and I know alternate transportation routes.

#2. My neighbors and I know the location of public facilities that offer help during a natural disaster.



Comments Received (Physical Infrastructure):

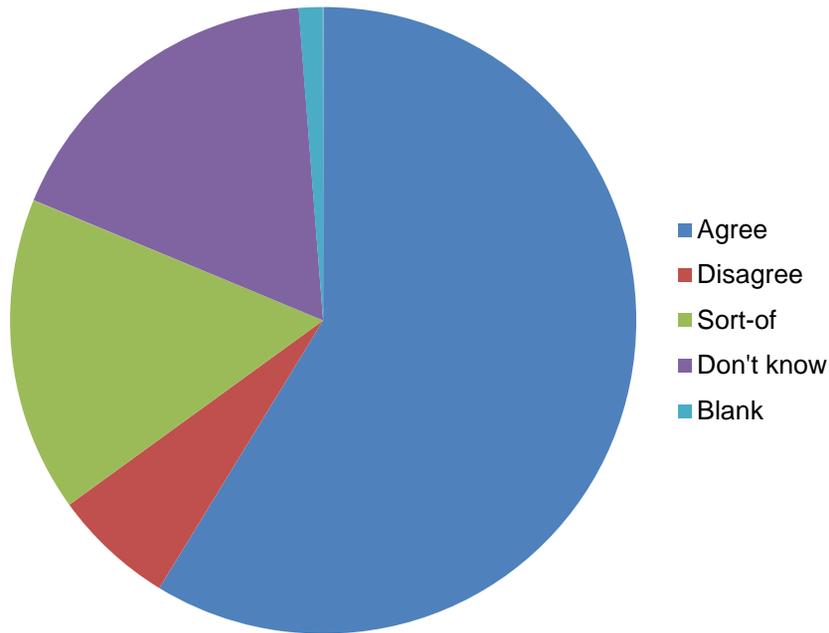
“The more we do as the state and federal government ask the worse it get when well ___ever town.”

“I know about emergency shelter at Goddard, but I don’t think my neighbors do. Also if is on the other side of the river, which may be cut off in the event of a flood.”

“Yes we can wait out if the road goes.”

“Fire Department/ Goddard College.”

Physical Infrastructure #1



PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE #1

59%	Agree
6%	Disagree
16%	Sort-of
18%	Don't Know
1%	Blank

“When you live in a floodplain it’s hard to __ a balance between necessity and affordability.”

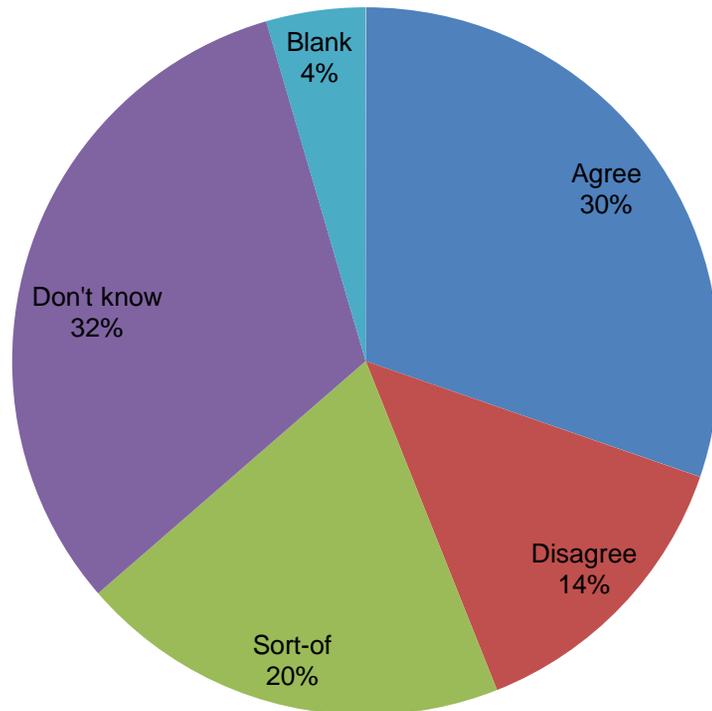
“Town has none.”

“Pretty well kept, but lack parking in the village is becoming problematic.”

“The main bridge into the village is a definite weak link in the chain.”

“Not clear what media to go to to get this information.”

Physical Infrastructure #2



"Um...what are the public facilities? The schools?"

"There are no public facilities in the event of flooding."

"I'm not sure which public facilities offer what resources, but I'm confident that I could find out or get to one if needed."

"Rob Bridges does a lot of this, but information is not getting out if people don't come to meeting or read it on FPF. Then again, I don't look at the town website- people rely on this sort of thing."

"Could be better."

"Depends upon how many bridges get wiped out. If not too many, we're good."

"We haven't needed shelter since we've never been hit hard at our home. The old bridges have held up well. We just need larger bridge decks to span further."

"No stop signs."

"Easy for down town to get separated/cut off from folks on the many out of town roads and hills."

"Improvements have been made but _____the Plainfield Community Center as a vital active part of the this communities resources and not have handicap access is dysfunctional. We need to be included."

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS & RESOURCES

Overview

Participants were asked to provide their opinion on the following statements:

#1. Our town has community networks, resources, and structures that support the functions of our government and help residents resolve their concerns.

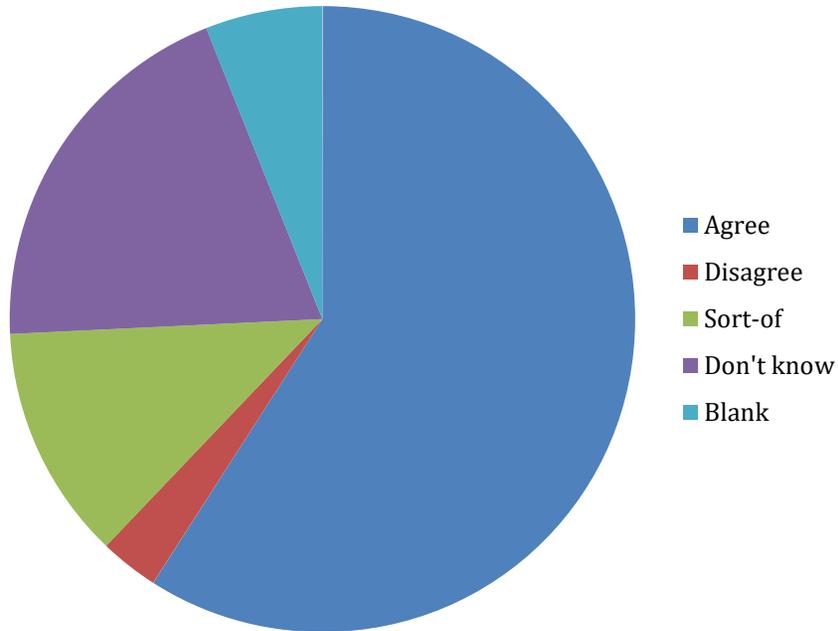
#2. Community leaders communicate and collaborate adequately through the town website, Front Porch Forum, WGDR radio, and public meetings.

Comments Received (Community Connections and Resources):

“I’m not aware of regular town postings/news pieces, but I don’t spend much time at mentioned sites. I’m sure I could have town business questions answered with a couple of phone calls...”



Community Connections #1



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS #1

59%	Agree
3%	Disagree
12%	Sort-of
20%	Don't Know
6%	Blank

"I have had just about all I can take of special interest groups in that are in this town bring up grate ___ the working people can pay for."

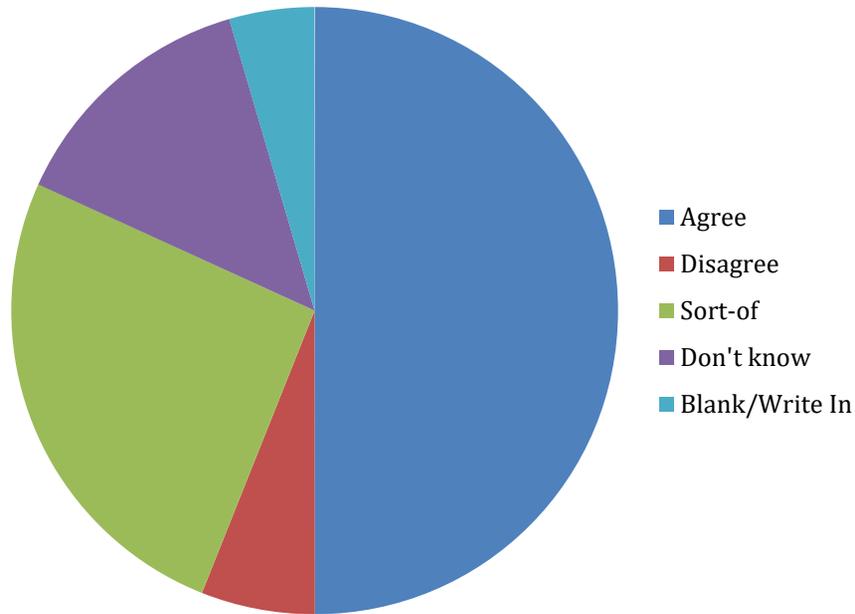
"We perhaps could use a communications system which doesn't rely on electricity. GDR, FPF, websites and mobile homes (to recharge) all need electricity."

"Many residents aren't "in the loop" and don't look to the local community for support or to air their concerns."

"If I am not on-line what resources do I have??"

"Not on-line!! Not everybody is online!!"

Community Connections #2



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS #2

50%	Agree
6%	Disagree
26%	Sort-of
14%	Don't Know
4%	Blank

“It was very helpful to have a phone message re: Closed roads during the last flood.”

“Yes, better now but still not addressing the needs of the few.”

“We don’t go to the website, nor listen to WGDR, nor go to public meetings, so this is our problem.”

“Excellent communication from Select Board- Bram Towbin.”

“My knowledge of the above is limited, __ is my direct input.”

“I admire our Selectboard- smart, proactive, transparent.”

“Really has none.”

“I feel squeaky wheels and relentless voices overpower the majority (in some/ a lot of cases).”

“It’s difficult to find what your looking for on town website.”

“The library is a vibrant community gathering hub. It is also a resource for research needs of the town, and has offered to assist in making the historic town reports accessible via the internet. The librarian created this online format for the survey.”

“Some people may not use a computer.”

“Too person based, need to set procedures that are reasonable in time and effort for any select board to carry out over time.”

“I LOVE that I can see the meetings by minutes by video. Thank you for this!!! And Bram seems all over the important stuff. (Sorry to see y’all take so much heat from a few...)

“Better than Marshfield.”

“Not enough!”

“The first question here should be about eight different questions, but I truly don’t know what resources and structures exist to support town government or residents with grievances against the town (I’m assuming that’s what you mean, and not resident v. resident grievances). I often don’t know what’s going on with the town, but I think that’s my fault for not paying attention, not a lack of outreach from town leaders.”

“These are all dependent on data/phone infrastructure in the town. (Unless WGDR has a generator.”

“Could and should use WGDR more. A 2way relationship there could be really great.”

“However you need access to them.”

“Unfortunately, I don’t watch enough TV to catch town meetings. I do like the posts on facebook and front porch forum.”

“Much better than other towns, i.e. Calais, Cabot, Marshfield.”

“Some people aren’t on the internet, so they may not be aware. Direct mail is still important.”

“Get rid of the stop signs!” “The new stop signs suck.”

“I know they try but still feels disconnected, as different mediums reach different pops. We should def know where to look for emergency alerts and instructions (what to do/not to do), where to go, closed roads, who/# to call in emergency, etc.”

“More communication also with smaller non profess and activist individuals and working on eg. Facebook, coop___, better communication.”

MISC. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

“Why do we have to have some from out of town to tell us how to live and run our town.”

“Why is it if your ideas of what this town should be we have lost all are business in town got empty houses all over the village. It is about time we started to love within our means and stop try be Santa Clas. The working class has had about all they are going to put with.”

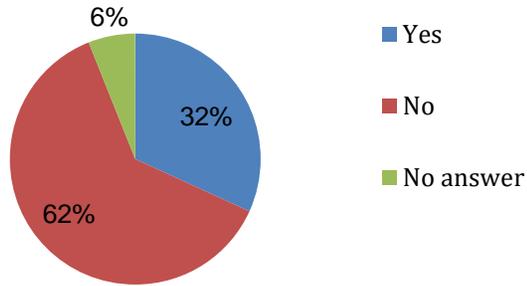
“I live in the hills...”

“What is the plan for the town forest? I understand it’s clear-cut. I’m all for planting acorns, beach nuts, maple seeds, etc. to grow a hardwood forest. If there’s enough land, we should plant a soft wood and hard wood area for cash crops to aid the Plainfield coffers (if that’s allowable).”

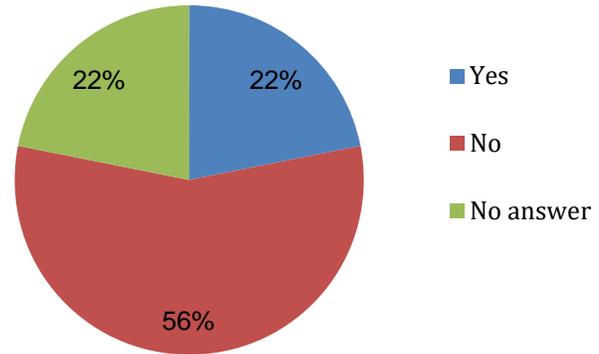
“Resilience is newish), popular concept...it means different things to different people/groups. It might be helpful to add disaster to the title. What about other disasters, such as blizzards, roads closed, long electric/phone outages, (can mean heat for many), field fires, hazardous spills, etc.”

“I know Rob Bridges did a lot of work toward some of this, but too big a job for one person. The community neighborhoods need to see all this as a community, mutual support necessity.”

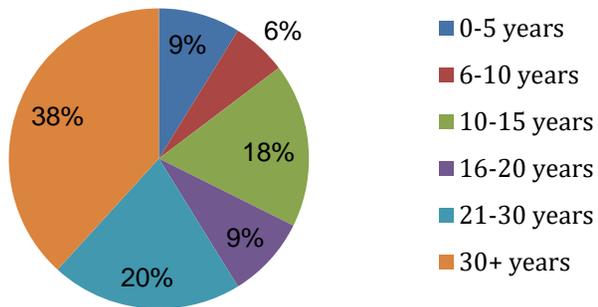
Have you served on a Town Committee, Board, or Commission in the last 3 years?



Do you live or own a business in the village?



How long have you lived or owned a business in Plainfield?



Do you live in Plainfield or Marshfield?

