

CCRPC Formal Staff & PAC Review and Hearing – 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan
November 8, 2017 PAC Meeting

Staff Review of the 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan

Emily Nosse-Leirer, CCRPC Planner

October 25, 2017 – Annotated 3/13/2018

The Town of Milton has requested, per 24 V.S.A §4350, that the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (1) approve its 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan; and (2) confirm its planning process.

This draft 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan is an update and re-adoption of the 2013 Milton Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with statute, re-adoption means that this is a fully compliant plan that will expire eight years after adoption by the Selectboard. CCRPC reviewed the 2013 plan and met with Milton staff to discuss it in November 2016 as part of an informal review and consultation process. The 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan addresses several new required elements and provides updated data. Staff have completed this formal review of the plan in advance of the Planning Commission's December 5, 2017 hearing on the plan.

Following the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's (CCRPC's) *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes and Approval of Municipal Plans (2013)* and the statutory requirements of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, I have reviewed the draft 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan to determine whether it is:

- Consistent with the general goals of §4302;
- Consistent with the specific goals of §4302;
- Contains the required elements of §4382;
- Compatible with the 2013 Chittenden County Regional Plan, entitled the *2013 Chittenden County ECOS Plan* (per §4350); and
- Compatible with approved plans of other municipalities (per §4350).

Additionally, I have reviewed the planning process requirements of §4350.

Staff Review Findings and Comments

1. The 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the general goals of §4302. See the attached Appendix A submittal that describes how the Plan is consistent with these goals.
2. The 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the specific goals of §4302. See the attached Appendix A submittal that describes how the Plan is consistent with these goals.
3. The 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan contains the required elements of §4382. See the attached Appendix A submittal that describes how the Plan is consistent with these goals.
4. The 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan is generally compatible with the planning areas, goals and strategies of the 2013 Chittenden County Regional Plan, entitled the *2013 Chittenden County ECOS Plan*.
5. The 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan is compatible with the municipal plans for Georgia, Fairfax, Westford, Essex and Colchester.
6. Milton has a planning process in place that is sufficient for an approved plan. In addition, Milton has provided information about their planning budget and CCRPC finds that Milton is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning.

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Additional Comments/Questions:

CCRPC staff understands that the town intends this update to address new statutory requirements and to update the data included in the plan while maintaining the community vision and most of the goals and objectives of the 2013 plan. We understand that while town staff and the planning commission plan to conduct new community engagement and update the plan more thoroughly in the near future, they want to ensure that the town has an adopted plan by the February 2018 expiration date.

We find that the plan meets all the statutory requirements of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117. While we appreciate the effort that has been put into updating the data charts throughout the plan, **there are a few additional updates that we ask the planning commission to consider before the 2018 plan is finalized.**

1. Several times throughout the plan, population, employment and housing forecasts from 2001 and 2002 are referenced. The CCRPC board has recently approved new population, household and employment forecasts for our 2018 ECOS Plan. These projections differ significantly from the 2001 forecasts, reflecting the county's slowing growth rate. Consider updating the 2018 draft plan to reflect this more recent work. The forecasts can be found on our website: <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/our-plans/ecos-regional-plan/#2018-update> **This was not updated, but was not necessary for adoption. Milton will be updating their plan to address data issues before the eight year expiration date.**
2. There are transportation studies referenced in the transportation chapter and an appendix containing the titles and summaries of transportation studies, but these listings appear to reflect only studies completed by 2007. Consider updating this list with the titles and summaries of studies completed since then, and updating the reference to the 2005 MTP with the 2013 ECOS Plan. **This was not updated, but was not necessary for adoption. Milton will be updating their plan to address data issues before the eight year expiration date.**
3. While the introduction to the housing chapter correctly states that CCRPC's 2004 housing targets are no longer accurate and that CCRPC no longer provides housing targets for our municipalities, the targets are mentioned multiple times elsewhere in the chapter. Consider eliminating Goal 6.1.3, as this goal states that the town should "continuously compare the housing stock to the CCRPC's housing targets." **This was updated before plan adoption.**
4. While the plan addresses all 14 state planning goals, the list on page 12 of the plan omits Goal 14: To encourage flood resilience communities. Consider adding this to the list to clarify that the plan is consistent with all 14 goals. **This was updated before plan adoption.**

When the town completes another update of the plan after the 2018 adoption, there are outdated statements that will need to be addressed. For example, the plan states that Georgia Mountain Community Wind is still being constructed and that the last amendment of the zoning regulations was in 2007. However, we do not consider these issues to affect the plan's compliance with statute.

Proposed Motion & Next Steps:

PROPOSED MOTION: The PAC finds that the draft 2018 Milton Comprehensive Plan, as submitted, meets all statutory requirements for CCRPC approval, and that the municipality's planning process meets all statutory requirements for CCRPC confirmation.

Upon notification that the Plan has been adopted by the municipality, CCRPC staff will review the plan, and any information relevant to the confirmation process, for changes. If staff determines that changes are substantive, those changes will be forwarded to the PAC for review. Otherwise the PAC recommends that the Plan, and the municipal planning process, should be forwarded to the CCRPC Board for approval.