



Planning Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

2:30pm to 4:30pm

CCRPC Main Conference Room, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski

Agenda

2:30 Welcome and Introductions, Joss Besse

2:35 Approval of January 11, 2017 Minutes*

2:50 Population, Employment & Household Forecasts, Melanie Needle

Melanie Needle will present the forecast information to you. As a reminder, she also emailed this to you on Feb. 16th. Click [here](#) for all the information to date pertaining to the 2050 population forecast, municipal population forecast, employment forecast and household forecast; as well as the presentation to the CCRPC Board (scroll down to the 2050 Demographic and Employment Forecast header). We'll be asking for a recommendation to the CCRPC Board for approval.

3:10 Building Homes Together – Housing Data, Melanie Needle and Emily Nosse-Leirer

We will present a few data points that we've been able to gather: 2016 housing count, GIS assessed value/acre data set, and housing affordability v. median income*. We'll also provide an update on developer interviews that we are conducting.

3:25 Legislative Updates, Regina Mahony, Charlie Baker and Alex Weinhagen (if available)

As the legislature is in full swing, we'll have a brief discussion on some relevant bills, such as: S.99 Measured Expansion of TIF Districts, S.100 Housing Reform/Promotion and more generally water quality financing.

3:50 Hinesburg Town Plan - Public Hearing and Review*, Emily Nosse-Leirer

- a. *Open the Hearing*
- b. *Accept Public Comment*
- c. *Close the Hearing*
- d. *Review Staff Summary*
- e. *Questions and Comments*
- f. *Recommendation to the CCRPC Board*

4:20 Regional Act 250/Section 248 Projects on the Horizon, Committee Members

4:25 Other Business

- a. Potential Census Boundary Line Adjustment
- b. Sharing Skill Sets – I'll pass out the topics that have been offered to date to assess your interest.

4:30 Adjourn

* = Attachment

NEXT MEETING: May 10, 2017 at 2:30pm to 4:30pm.

In accordance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the CCRPC will ensure public meeting sites are accessible to all people. Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other requested accommodations, should be made to Emma Vaughn, CCRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-846-4490 ext 21 or evaughn@ccrpcvt.org, no later than 3 business days prior to the meeting for which services are requested.

CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE - MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, January 11, 2017
TIME: 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
PLACE: CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT

Members Present

Joss Besse, Bolton
Greg Duggan, Essex
Jacob Hemmerick, Milton
Andrew Strniste, Underhill
Paul Conner, South Burlington
Dana Hanley, Essex
Meagan Tuttle, Burlington
Alex Weinhausen, Hinesburg
Everett Marshall, Huntington

Karen Purinton, Colchester

Cathyann LaRose, So. Burlington

Jeff Castle, Milton

Staff

Regina Mahony, Planning Program Manager

Charlie Baker, Executive Director

Lee Krohn, Senior Planner

Emily Nosse-Leirer, Planner

Bryan Davis, Senior Transportation Planner

1. Welcome and Introductions

Joss Besse called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

2. Approval of November 9, 2016 Minutes

Karen Purinton made a motion, seconded by Jacob Hemmerick, to approve the November 9, 2016 minutes. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED.

3. Bike Parking

Bryan Davis provided the PAC with a presentation (see attached) on bike parking. Bryan showed a variety of bike racks that don't work particularly well. Generally you want a rack where you can lean the bike up to it and securely lock both the frame and at least one tire. U racks work well, but you can definitely get creative with it. You also want to make sure the racks are sited in the right location – distance from a building, easily found, etc. Bryan provided the leading guidance documents on bike parking. Bryan indicated that we have the ability to assist a few towns with bike parking bylaw language and asked if there was any interested. We know Williston is working on this now. South Burlington and Burlington expressed interest. If any other municipalities are interested, please let us know.

4. Sharing Skill Sets

Regina Mahony introduced this topic, and credited Paul Conner for the idea. The idea is to better facilitate peer learning and skill sharing at the PAC. Each of you has likely done a deep dive into a specific topic for a zoning bylaw that others could benefit from. We thought we'd set aside 15 minutes on your agendas for folks to give a presentation on a zoning bylaw that you've researched, so that others are aware of the latest local research, and can look to each other for input when they do an update on a similar topic. Paul Conner gave an example that he talked with Alex Weinhausen when they were starting to look at energy efficiency regulations because Alex had done quite a bit of research on this topic for his bylaw amendment. Initial topic ideas include:

Energy Efficiency

Low Impact Development Stormwater Standards

PUDs – topic request from Greg Duggan. South Burlington has done some work on this lately.

Paul Conner suggested that everyone send Regina one sentence description in next two weeks or so, and then we'll send the list of topics out to the group to vote on, so we are sure that there is interest in the topics.

Meagan Tuttle asked if we have done these types of presentations to multiple planning commissions and do something a little more in depth? Paul Conner mentioned that they have done that and it could work as well; however, you could also ask another Planner to come to your PC to talk with them directly. Alex Weinhausen stated that it would probably help to start here at the PAC. Could be challenging to gather more than one planning commission in a room.

Regina Mahony added that CCRPC is required to host four trainings this year as well, so stay tuned for those.

5. Bonus Densities

Regina Mahony showed the PAC some initial data that she collected from each of the municipal bylaws on housing bonus densities (though she also made note if bonuses are allowed for other reasons as well). There is quite a range on the level of bonus density allowed (400% in Essex Center to 25% or none), and the requirements for receiving the bonus. Many of the bonus provisions are associated with PUDs, but not all. The method of calculation/process is also quite varied. In addition, Burlington, South Burlington and Hinesburg have an inclusionary zoning provision. There was a good amount of discussion about getting the base density correct, rather than issuing bonuses; and whether or not the bonuses are targeted to growth areas are allowed in all districts. The PAC members described whether applicants have made use of the bonus densities, and if not, why not:

Burlington – Meagan Tuttle explained that Burlington has bonus densities for two reasons: 1. Bonuses that help a developer accommodate the inclusionary requirement; and 2. Additional bonuses for those that go above and beyond the inclusionary requirement (or other public benefit reasons). Most of the bonuses are not economically worth it for the developer – they don't get enough in return for having to incorporate the required elements in their project. Under the Form Based Code, the bonus densities will go away and the density will be set by right. Also, there has been a consultant looking at Burlington's Inclusionary Housing provision and they are expecting the results in a couple of months.

Milton – Jacob Hemmerick stated that no one has used it in the last three years. His thought is that it would make more sense to get the base density correct.

Underhill – Andrew Strniste indicated that they have one application that is trying to take advantage of a bonus right now – from 1 unit to 2 units. The DRB isn't clear on how to apply the bonus density so it's been a challenge.

Essex – Greg Duggan described that it has been used in the Town Center (and there is some debate about whether the 400% bonus can be used for multi-family outside of the Town Center). Throughout the rest of Town, they only allow a 25% bonus, which are tied to PUDs (which are a mess). Dana Hanley stated that they are starting to look at zoning updates for the Town Center area.

Colchester - Karen Bates indicated that onsite septic is a huge limitation in Colchester and lots of times people can't do more than the base density due to septic limits. S.D. Ireland wanted to do a bonus density at Severance Corners, but couldn't meet the open space/buffer requirements associated with the PUD application. This was part of the reason the Town moved to a FBC system for Severance Corners.

Huntington - Everett Marshall indicated that they have bonus densities in their current and proposed regulations, however, to his knowledge they haven't been used. Fell through the one time that it was proposed.

Bolton – Joss Besse stated that they don't have a bonus density, but don't see a lot of development.

South Burlington - Paul Conner explained that it has been used in the So. Village master plan (bonus of 30 or 40 units out of 350 overall); on Ferrell Street a building or two took advantage of a bonus density a few years ago; and Kirby cottage also got a bonus (which is now slated for buy-out by the airport). Those worked fairly well, but they don't often see them requested where they allow both residential and commercial because there is a residential cap, but not a commercial cap. Cathy LaRose added that they've seen a few other one offs here and there. The paper work and legal work associated with it doesn't seem worth it. Partnering with CHT sometimes doesn't work b/c it doesn't often fit into CHT's model (as an example, CHT doesn't want to take on 2 units in a building).

Hinesburg - Alex Weinhausen described that Hinesburg's density bonus is varied and you can get a bonus for a lot of reasons. It is a confusing provision that requires a lot of explanation. Have had one person take

1 advantage. Two others thinking about it right now. In Village area available to any kind of a development
2 (not just PUDs), only PUD outside of Village for 25% by right – you don't need to give anything to get
3 anything except the amount of open space that is needed. 25% just isn't enough especially when the base
4 density is really low. The ones that have worked are the easy ones – small unit size b/c it works for multi-
5 family. And that is something the Town really wants to see which has some real validity.

6
7 Lee Krohn asked if it would make more sense to flip the system on its head and write the bylaws to build what
8 you want rather than establish a complicated system to allow waiver from the standards. Paul Conner
9 indicated that they are in phase 2 out of 3 of a project to revise their PUDs (these are located based). He would
10 be happy to share this work. Cathyann LaRose added that they find PUDs too easy, not too difficult as Jacob
11 Hemmerick described in Milton. Karen Purinton agreed that Colchester's PUDs are the same (too easy rather
12 than too hard/complicated).

13
14 Regina Mahony added that Ferrell Madden (the national FBC Consultants that worked on the Winooski Form
15 Based Code) indicated that most bonus provisions don't give the developer nearly enough of a bonus to
16 incentivize them to include affordable housing in their project. There will be more to come on this topic.

17 18 **6. Bolton Town Plan**

19 Joss Besse asked Paul Conner to run this part of the meeting since he is the Bolton Rep. Paul Conner indicated
20 that this Plan is still in draft form, so we are doing an initial review and will see the Plan again before making a
21 recommendation to the CCRPC Board. Emily Nosse-Leirer is the principal author of the Plan and didn't do
22 the Staff review but she provided an overview of where Bolton is on the process and some of the basic
23 concepts of the Plan. Lee Krohn did the CCRPC Staff review and found that while not all required provisions
24 are included yet, most are and he found the Plan to be consistent with the state requirements and the ECOS
25 Plan. He further described the Plan as thoroughly researched, incredibly encyclopedic presentation of
26 information about the community, and representative of a significant effort. Lee Krohn added that there
27 is a question about the consistency between the proposed West Bolton Hamlet and the Rural Planning Area as
28 described in the *ECOS Plan*. The West Bolton Hamlet is an effort to match the zoning with the traditional
29 development pattern of the area, while also expanding the development capacity of the area. It makes good
30 sense at the local level, and with this change there is still only 4% of the land area in Bolton that is
31 developable, so it's very small scale. There was a discussion about how we could resolve the differences
32 between the two plans – potentially by including a commitment by CCRPC to update the ECOS Plan in
33 accordance with the West Bolton Hamlet in their Resolution (and then CCRPC would officially amend update
34 the ECOS planning area map in June 2018 when the Plan is updated). Paul Conner suggested that the scale of
35 the West Bolton Hamlet is so small that perhaps it is consistent with the Rural Planning Area.

36
37 Comments from the PAC included:

- 38 • Alex Weinhagen asked how the Plan components will fit together in the final form, and specifically
39 asked where the actions will end up. Emily Nosse-Leirer described that the goals and objectives will
40 be further up front (as you can see in the graphic mock-up), while the actions will be in a table in the
41 back. Alex Weinhagen suggested that perhaps the actions, what you are actually going to do, should
42 be in front. He added that he liked the design mock-up but there could still be a lot less words, and
43 more pictures.
- 44 • Paul Conner indicated that the Bolton Valley is described as a major economic driver for the Town,
45 however the action is simply to increase the relationship. He suggested that it may be more effective
46 to get more specific about how the Town is planning to do that.
- 47 • Paul Conner asked Lee Krohn to ensure that the communication back to the Bolton Planning
48 Commission include a robust introduction about how great the Plan is.
- 49 • Meagan Tuttle described that she really liked how the format of the Plan is around the three core
50 values rather than 12 chapters based on the required elements of the Plan. Meagan prefers that the
51 actions are all in one chart, and perhaps a one or two page summary of the Plan could be drafted that
52 accompanies the action table as a quick reference.
- 53 • Dana Hanley stated that this is a really great job.

CCRPC Staff will get these comments over to Bolton's Planning Commission, and the Plan will come back to the PAC again further down the road.

7. Regional Act 250/Section 248 Projects in the Horizon

- Essex – 32 unit PUD
- Colchester – Nothing new
- Underhill – nothing
- Huntington – nothing
- So. Burlington – This won't go to Act 250, but they have received their first application for a bldg. in the FBC (3,600 sf).
- Bolton – small development in West Bolton, probably won't trigger Act 250
- Richmond (as reported by Joss Besse) – Creamery project headed to Act 250. Mixed Use, 30,000 sf and 40 housing units. No senior component.
- Hinesburg – Nothing new
- Burlington – Burlington Town Center not going to Act 250 (currently reviewing under DRB); Cambrian Rise currently under DRB review and will go to Act 250, Pine St & Flynn Ave at Act 250, City Market.
- Milton – nothing new.

8. Other Business –

- a. Joss Besse stated that White Burke is working on an ask to the Legislature for more TIF districts, and looking for support for this ask.
- b. Regina Mahony explained that we expect to receive the answers to the current questions on county age cohorts, interim countywide employment, municipal level population, households, and employment forecasts in time for a February PAC meeting. However, these will also be presented to the Board on Feb. 15th, and we hope to have a Board vote on March 15th. Regina Mahony asked the PAC if they would like to meet for a special meeting on Feb. 8th to review these, or would you prefer to receive them via email (and we can point you to the Board presentation), and make your recommendation at your regularly scheduled March 8th meeting? The PAC would prefer to meeting in March, no need for a special meeting in February.
- c. The PSB has a new website, with searchable [ePSB](#).
- d. An email will be coming from Melanie Needle shortly to request the 2016 development data.
- e. We will be sending out the Planning Area map soon to ask you to double check that the areas match up correctly with your zoning. We don't anticipate any changes, except a minor tweak in Colchester, and potentially Bolton.
- f. We will be doing municipal level technical assistance as part of one of the Energy contracts. We are planning to work with Colchester, Shelburne and Winooski. Let us know if there is any other interest in this.
- g. Once the population forecast is set, that will be allocated down to the TAZ level for use by the Transportation model. We will run that distribution by you for a quick cross check to ensure that it makes sense from the municipal perspective. Expect this request in April.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

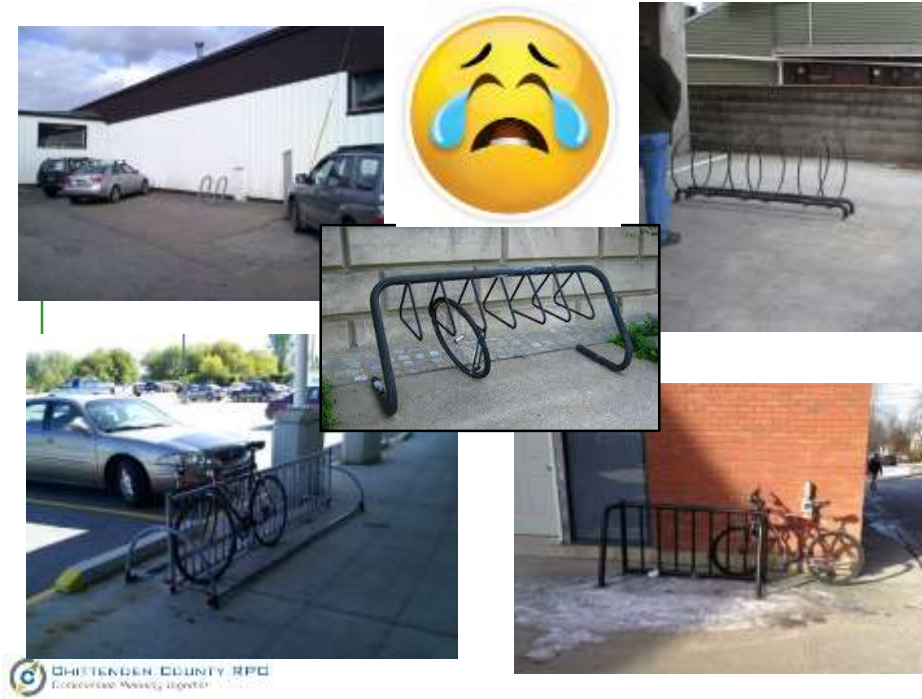
Respectfully submitted, Regina Mahony



GOOD BIKE PARKING BEGINS WITH YOU

The Bad, the Good and the Fun




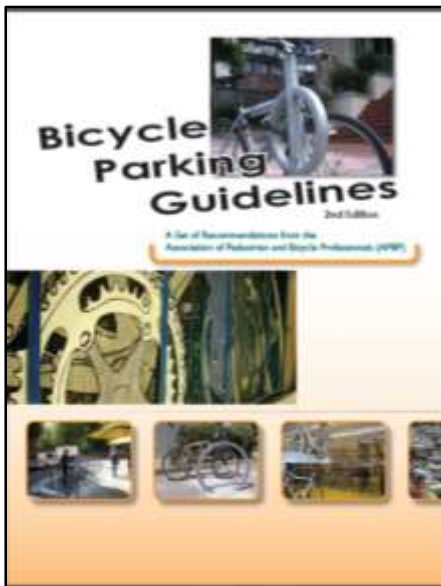


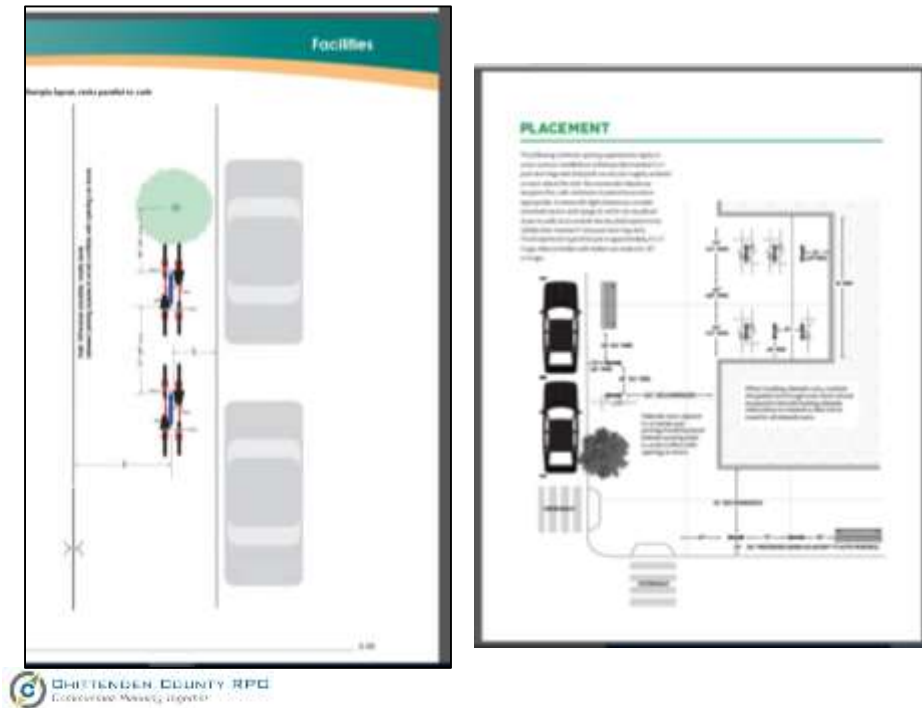


 CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPO
Local voices. Moving together.



 CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPO
Local voices. Moving together.





CURRENT BYLAWS VARY

- In addition to the requirements listed in Table 3.1, all public, commercial and industrial uses must provide adequate clearly marked accessible parking spaces in accordance with state and federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and at least one (1) bicycle rack for use by employees and/or the general public.
- The DRB may require at least one bicycle rack for use by employees and/or the public.
- A minimum of one [1] bicycle parking space shall be provided for every five [5] parking spaces required by Section 11.2.2.1 of these regulations. Required bicycle parking spaces shall be of sufficient size to accommodate a full sized bicycle, including space for access and maneuvering, and shall allow the bicycle wheel and frame to be locked to the facility.
- [NONE]

CURRENT BYLAWS VARY

- In addition to the requirements listed in Table 3.1, all public, commercial and industrial uses must provide adequate clearly marked accessible parking spaces in accordance with state and federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and at least one (1) bicycle rack for use by employees and/or the general public.
- **The DRB may require at least one bicycle rack for use by employees and/or the public.**
- A minimum of one [1] bicycle parking space shall be provided for every five [5] parking spaces required by Section 11.2.2.1 of these regulations. Required bicycle parking spaces shall be of sufficient size to accommodate a full sized bicycle, including space for access and maneuvering, and shall allow the bicycle wheel and frame to be locked to the facility.
- [NONE]



CURRENT BYLAWS VARY

- In addition to the requirements listed in Table 3.1, all public, commercial and industrial uses must provide adequate clearly marked accessible parking spaces in accordance with state and federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and at least one (1) bicycle rack for use by employees and/or the general public.
- The DRB may require at least one bicycle rack for use by employees and/or the public.
- **A minimum of one [1] bicycle parking space shall be provided for every five [5] parking spaces required by Section 11.2.2.1 of these regulations. Required bicycle parking spaces shall be of sufficient size to accommodate a full sized bicycle, including space for access and maneuvering, and shall allow the bicycle wheel and frame to be locked to the facility.**
- [NONE]



#NoExcuses



WHO'S IN?

- 2-3 communities
- New or updated bylaws
 - Definitions
 - Type of bike parking
 - Location of bike parking
 - Quantity of bike parking



CCRPC Formal Staff & PAC Review and Hearing – 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan
March 8, 2017 PAC Meeting

Staff Review of the 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan

Emily Nosse-Leirer, CCRPC Planner

March 8, 2017

The Town of Hinesburg has requested, per 24 V.S.A §4350, that the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (1) approve its 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan; and (2) confirm its planning process.

This draft 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan is a comprehensive update and re-adoption of the 2013 Hinesburg Town 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 in 2013 as part of an Enhanced Consultation process. The 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan addresses several new required elements, and also describes some significant changes to the community's vision for the future.

CCRPC staff completed an informal review of the 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan in November 2016, prior to the first Planning Commission public hearing (discussed below). Staff have completed this formal review of the plan in advance of the Selectboard public hearings on the plan, which have not been scheduled.

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 2017 Hinesburg Town 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 2017 Hinesburg Town 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 2017 Hinesburg Town 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 2017 Hinesburg Town 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 2017 Hinesburg Town 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 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan is compatible with the municipal plans for Shelburne, St. George, Williston, Richmond, Huntington, Monkton and Charlotte. The plan acknowledges that there are potentially incompatible land uses planned for Hinesburg's border with Starksboro. Along Route 116, Hinesburg plans

CCRPC Formal Staff & PAC Review and Hearing – 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan
March 8, 2017 PAC Meeting

for future industrial use, while Starksboro plans to preserve farmland. Staff finds that while an industrial planning area and a large scale agricultural planning area may be incompatible, they are not inherently so if managed properly.

- a. Staff suggests that as Hinesburg moves forward in developing this industrial area that they consult with Starksboro and mitigate any concerns from development pressures that may arise in Starksboro.

6. Hinesburg has a planning process in place that is sufficient for an approved plan. In addition, Hinesburg has provided information about their planning budget and CCRPC finds that Hinesburg is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning.

Additional Comments/Questions:

In November 2016, CCRPC staff completed an informal review of the draft 2017 Hinesburg Town Plan before the first Hinesburg Planning Commission hearing on the plan. The informal review included a discussion of one required section that needed to be added to the plan (a reference to basin planning), as well as a number of suggestions for changes intended to improve the next draft of the plan. All suggested and required additions were incorporated. The details of the suggestions and the way in which they were addressed can be found in the annotated 2016 memorandum, attached.

While Staff does not find that any amendments are necessary for approval and confirmation of the process by the CCRPC, the following recommendations are for the next full Plan update:

1. CCRPC staff discussed several small typos and formatting issues with Town staff.
2. The Housing chapter (Chapter 3) says that the provision of municipal water and sewer is allowing more housing development in the village center area, and says that this new pattern represents a change in the town's historic pattern of development (page 23). However, in several other places in the plan, the village center is described as an area that has historically been the town's center of development. Therefore, the statement in the housing chapter could use some clarification.

CCRPC Staff have no other recommendations, however we would like to commend the Town on this Plan for the following reasons:

1. This plan left me with a very clear picture of the town as a whole: its character, the key issues and challenges facing the people and government, the specific strategies that have been identified, what's already been done and the areas where the town is letting things "shake out" before making decisions.
2. There are numerous helpful cross-references in the plan, such as emphasizing the very important connection between economic development in the town and the ongoing water and wastewater challenges.
3. The implementation section is particularly strong. I especially appreciated the top 10 strategies for plan implementation, along with the acknowledgement in the implementation section that not all the good ideas identified in the plan are possible to accomplish.

Proposed Motion & Next Steps:

PROPOSED MOTION: The PAC finds that the draft 2017 Hinesburg Town 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.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Alex Weinhausen, Director of Planning and Zoning

FROM: Emily Nosse-Leirer, Planner

DATE: November 4, 2016 – **Updated 2/27/2017**

RE: Review of 2016 Town Plan in preparation for Hinesburg Planning Commission's Public Hearing

In accordance with CCRPC's *Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes and Approval of Municipal Plans*, CCRPC staff has conducted a staff review of the Town of Hinesburg's 2016 Town Plan at the request of Town staff. The purpose of this review is to provide formal staff recommendations to the Planning Commission of the Town of Hinesburg. This review has been completed in time for the public hearing which will be held by the Planning Commission on November 9, 2016. The Town will seek PAC review of the Plan and CCRPC approval and confirmation following the public hearing process.

Plan Strengths:

1. This plan left me with a very clear picture of the town as a whole: its character, the key issues and challenges facing the people and government, the specific strategies that have been identified, what's already been done and the areas where the town is letting things "shake out" before making decisions. I haven't spent much time in Hinesburg but I felt well educated when I finished the plan.
2. The layout of the plan is easy to read in both electronic and paper form.
3. The incorporation of public survey data and information in the land use section was very interesting.
4. There are numerous cross-references in the plan, such as drawing the connection between economic development in the town and the ongoing water and wastewater challenges.
5. The Top 10 strategies for plan implementation, along with the acknowledgement in the implementation section that not all the good ideas identified in the plan are possible to accomplish, are good reality checks.

State Requirements:

In reviewing the plan, there was only one state requirement that I did not see addressed:

1. As of July 2015, plans must reference basin planning per the new water quality goal in § 4302 6(B): "Vermont's water quality should be maintained and improved according to the policies and actions developed in the basin plans established by the Secretary of Natural Resources under 10 V.S.A. § 1253." While this plan makes it clear that the Town is concerned about water quality and actively working to maintain and improve water quality in the town, the plan needs to include a reference to basin planning. Simply adding a few sentences referencing which basins the town is located in and discussing the basin planning would ensure consistency with the new goal. For example, did the Town participate in the development of the Northern Lake Champlain Basin Plan, finished in 2015, or do you plan to give input to the Winooski Basin Planning Process when it begins? More information on basin planning can be found [here](#). See pg. 67 of the [2016 Essex Town Plan](#) for an example of a brief discussion of basin planning. **Addressed—basin planning is now discussed on pg. 52.**

Plan Recommendations:

The following recommendations are not requirements, but are offered as suggestions to be considered during the next round of editing the plan.

1. There is a brief reference to the Town's 2011 All Hazards Mitigation Plan on Page 56. Are there any actions identified in the 2017 draft AHMP that should be mentioned in the town plan? I also suggest an action regarding general implementation of the strategies included in the plan, as well as town involvement in the next round of AHMP drafting with CCRPC. [Addressed. Hazard mitigation has been moved to Chapter 6, Community Facilities and Services, and is discussed in greater detail.](#)
2. The energy section is very comprehensive. Page 96 discusses the role of town plans and bylaws in the S.248 process, but it would be more accurate if it were updated to include information on Act 174 and the possibility for town plans to receive "substantial deference." We can provide language about this if you're interested. Is Hinesburg interested in possibly amending the plan in relation to Act 174? [Addressed. The town will wait and see the results of the regional energy planning process before making any decisions.](#)
3. What is the relationship between Appendix D (Economic Development Goals and Actions) and the Economy goals in Chapter 4? It looks like the Chapter 4 goals may have been pulled from Appendix D, but are the rest of the goals and information in Appendix D still relevant? It may be helpful to reference Appendix D in Chapter 4. [Addressed.](#)
4. The demographics chapter of the plan is very thorough. One suggestion on the graph showing changes in Hinesburg households receiving SNAP benefits: the graph shows yearly numbers from 2009-2014. It looks like these data come from the 5-year estimates in [this](#) table. Generally, overlapping years of 5-year estimates shouldn't be compared to ensure data accuracy (Census documentation on this can be found [here](#)). For that reason, I suggest only showing the 2009 data and the 2014 data here. [Addressed.](#)
5. There are a few places in the plan where more data would be helpful:
 - a. In the housing section, providing more information on housing affordability in the town may be helpful. For example, [these ACS estimates](#) show percentages of Hinesburg residents paying over 30% of their income for housing costs. [Addressed.](#)
 - b. The plan mentions that residents are already increasing their use of solar and wind energy, but including statistics on the number of households that are already producing some of their own energy through solar panels may be a useful addition. A quick look at the [Vermont Energy Dashboard](#) shows that there are 134 solar sites in Hinesburg, including 72 roof-mounted systems which provide a total of 501,758 kWh per year. [Addressed.](#)
6. There were a few places where the narrative left me with some questions:
 - a. The narrative says that high speed internet is available in the town (pg. 38, 42, 82), but Action 4.2.4 gives the impression that there is not high speed internet throughout the town. Clarification would be helpful here. [Addressed.](#)
 - b. Does Hinesburg already have a PACE program? It's mentioned in the actions on Page 92 but it was unclear from the narrative what the current status of it is. [Addressed.](#)
7. The plan is really user friendly and easy to read, but a few small additions might improve usability:
 - a. Indicating where information can be found on maps in this way would be useful throughout the plan—in some chapters it's included, in other it's not. (For example, on Page 30, in the discussion of the village center, the reader is told that the designation area discussed can be found on Map 15.) [Addressed.](#)
 - a. The plan does a great job referencing other documents and information. Some of them have hyperlinks/web addresses so people can find more information (Go Vermont, Dark Sky Society), but others could benefit from this (ex. linking to the Housing Needs Assessment or the Rt 116 Corridor Study). [Addressed.](#)



Town of Hinesburg
Planning & Zoning Department
10632 Route 116, Hinesburg, VT 05461
802-482-2281 (ph) 802-482-5404 (fax)
www.hinesburg.org

February 20, 2017

Emily Nosse-Leirer
Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
110 West Canal Street
Winooski, VT 05404

Emily,

As you know, Hinesburg has been working on a complete overhaul of our Town Plan for several years. The Planning Commission public hearing was on November 9, 2016. Thanks again for your preliminary staff comments in advance of that hearing. After two months of PC discussion and revisions based on public comments, the PC recently forwarded the proposed plan to the Hinesburg Selectboard. The Selectboard review will likely take several meetings. The two required Selectboard public hearings have not been scheduled.

Our current Town Plan was adopted on September 9, 2013. That plan and Hinesburg's planning process were confirmed by the CCRPC on October 16, 2013. The purpose of this letter is to request preliminary review of our revised Town Plan by the CCRPC Planning Advisory Committee, with formal confirmation of the plan and Hinesburg's planning process by the CCRPC after the Selectboard adopts the plan.

Hinesburg has a well-established planning process, and allocates funds for local and regional planning purposes via an annual Planning & Zoning Department budget, which includes annual dues to the CCRPC. Highlights of our planning "infrastructure" are listed below, along with a table summarizing municipal funding over the last five years dedicated to supporting our planning process:

- Planning Commission and Development Review Board
- Several advisory boards including: Conservation Commission, Village Steering Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, Trails Committee, Economic Development Committee, Town Forest Committee
- Planning & Zoning Department staffed by a full time Director of Planning & Zoning, a full-time Development Review Coordinator, a part-time Zoning Administrator, a part-time Planning/Zoning Assistant, a part-time recording secretary.
- Town Plan (last revised September 9, 2013)
- Zoning Regulations (last revised October 3, 2016)
- Subdivision Regulations (last revised July 28, 2015)

- Official Map (adopted May 9, 2009)
- Capital Budget and Program (last updated/adopted January 30, 2017)
- Fire Impact Fees and Police Impact Fees

Planning & Zoning Department Budget: FY12-13 through FY16-17

	FY12-13	FY13-14	FY14-15	FY15-16	FY16-17
Salaries/Benefits*	178,201	186,738	200,000	212,206	213,716
CCRPC Dues	6,579	6,566	6,628	6,756	6,934
GBIC Dues	600	600	600	600	600
Miscellaneous**	30,320	28,820	25,320	19,106	16,834
Total	215,700	222,724	232,548	238,668	238,084

*Benefits include FICA, health insurance (estimated), retirement (estimated)

**All other expenses – e.g., special projects, telephone, notices, supplies, etc.

This revision represents a complete update. As such, the revisions affect all of Hinesburg. All sections were reviewed with most Town committees contributing revisions and/or feedback. Substantial community outreach was done. In addition to regular meetings and required hearings, other outreach included two community surveys, tabling and conversation at community events, and several topic-specific public forums that included presentations and discussion with knowledgeable speakers. The revised Town Plan includes some significant changes in the community's vision for the future.

- Village Growth & Design – address phasing based on infrastructure limits, ensure measured growth over time, better regulations/review to ensure good design.
- Rural Residential 1 & Shoreline Areas – need to overhaul allowed development densities and uses.
- Stormwater – greater emphasis on this issue and the Town's responsibility for solutions (e.g., Town roads).
- Economic Development – be proactive to encourage job creation, new and expanded business, etc.

The goals outlined in VSA Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4302 are addressed in the attached document (Appendix A) that you provided. This section of State Statute also requires that the Town address changes that would alter the designation of any land area. No specific land area designations are outlined in the plan; however, Chapter 3 does anticipate refinements in the Rural Residential 1 (RR1) zoning district. Changes are likely given the variable land use, development densities, and natural resources across this district. The Planning Commission has discussed changing the more rural northern portion of the district around Mt. Pritchard to a more rural district (e.g., Rural Residential 2). The southern portion of the RR1 district may be changed similarly. Changes in and around the Shoreline district to improve Lake Iroquois and Sunset Lake water quality are also contemplated, but still in discussion. A more detailed treatment of the statutory requirements follows:

1) The probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.

Likely changes to the RR1 zoning district will refine development potential to better align with municipal infrastructure (e.g., Town water and sewer), existing development areas where more development will have less impact, and natural resource areas where less development is appropriate. The changes supports the community's shared vision for Hinesburg's overall pattern of land use with clear boundaries between high density and low density areas. It helps to ensure a vibrant town center and surrounding area which benefits all residents. Traffic safety and congestion continue to be a challenge during peak times in the village area. Changes to the RR1 district are unlikely to impact this situation meaningfully. With that said, we do seek to address continual traffic increases through the improvement of existing infrastructure (including pedestrian and bicycle facilities), and the orderly creation of additional street networks in the village area.

2) The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality...

Refinements of the RR1 district are unlikely to result in new long-term costs to the Town. With that said, the plan language only enables the consideration of these changes. Clearly much work still needs to be done on the planning and design of these new areas. This work will flesh out the costs and benefits, and seek to offset fiscal costs to the extent reasonable through capital budgeting, impact fees, water and sewer connection fees, etc. The Town is very conscious of the property tax burden on residents, and will seek to have new development help fund the lion's share of new infrastructure needed for such development.

3) The amount of vacant land which is already subject to the proposed new designation, and actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.

Planned refinements to the RR1 district are not intended to create new designations per se. The core of the district along Richmond Road has a higher existing development density and has access to municipal water and sewer. Further buildout here versus more remote portions of the district makes sense, but is quite limited by the existing pattern of development. As such, it's unlikely that large changes will result from refining development densities and uses in the district. With that said, some of the more remote portions of the district effectively function like the rural zoning districts that surround the RR1 district. These areas could be rezoned with development densities and design standards similar to or the same as Hinesburg's rural regions.

4) The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose.

It is exactly the varying suitability within the RR1 district that will be considered – i.e., development potential, ecological function, water quality impacts, etc. Site constraints will be factored into that process, so that the resulting land use plan and regulatory framework is realistic. Land ownership patterns, existing land use, topography, proximity to the existing village core, and natural resource protection all support the need to re-evaluate this district.

I trust this information is sufficient to get the CCRPC review process started.

Sincerely,

Alex Weinhausen
Director of Planning & Zoning

Appendix A – Municipal Plan Review Tool

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Guidelines and Standards for Confirmation of Municipal Planning Processes and Approval of Municipal Plans

This form addresses the statutory requirements of the State of Vermont for town plans, as cited in the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A Chapter 117 (the Act). It includes the 12 required elements found in § 4382 of the Act; the four planning process goals found in § 4302(b), the 14 specific goals found in § 4302(c); and the standard of review found in § 4302(f), which covers consistency with goals and compatibility standards.

During the Regional approval and confirmation process, specified in § 4350 of the Act, the regional planning commission is required to assess town plans and the process whereby they are developed according to the criteria of the Act. Sections of relevant statute are quoted at each question.

Required Elements § 4382		Met	Not Met
1	Statement of Objectives, Policies, Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Land Use Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Transportation Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Utility and Facility Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Rare Natural Resources/Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Educational Facilities Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Implementation Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Development Trends	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Energy Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Housing Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Economic Development Element	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Flood Resiliency Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

State Planning Goals § 4302		Met	Not Met
1	Development Pattern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural and Historic Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Quality of Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Agriculture and Forest Industries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Use of Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Public Facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Child Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Flood Resiliency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOWN PLAN REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Title 24 Chapter 117: Municipal and Regional Planning and Development

24 V.S.A. § 4382. The plan for a municipality

(a) A plan for a municipality may be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region and with the regional plan and shall include the following:

(1) A statement of objectives, policies and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment.

Comments:

Met

Pages: 12-13 (General);
specific objectives & actions
noted throughout

(2) A land use plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses, that indicates those areas proposed for forests, recreation, agriculture (using the agricultural lands identification process established in 6 V.S.A. § 8), residence, commerce, industry, public and semi-public uses and open spaces, areas reserved reserved for flood plain, and areas identified by the State, the regional planning commission, or the municipality that require special consideration for aquifer protection; for wetland protection, for the maintenance of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors; or for other conservation purposes; sets forth the present and prospective location, amount, intensity and character of such land uses and the appropriate timing or sequence of land development activities in relation to the provision of necessary community facilities and service; identifies those areas, if any, proposed for designation under chapter 76A of this title, together with, for each area proposed for designation, an explanation of how the designation would further the plan's goals and the goals of § 4302 of this title, and how the area meets the requirements for the type of designation to be sought; and indicates those areas that are important as forest blocks and habitat connectors and plans for land development in those areas to minimize forest fragmentation and promote the health, viability, and ecological function of forests.

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 3 (land use) and Chapter 5 (natural resources) as well as on various maps.

Met

Pages: 27-38 (land use); 45-65 (natural resources)

MAPS

Present Land Use Plan ✓

Prospective Land Use Plan ☒

(3) A transportation plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities showing existing and proposed highways and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, with indications of priority of need;

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 7 (transportation) and on map 1 (base map), map 12 (official map), map 13 (trail vision).

Met

Pages: 86-93

MAP

Transportation ☒

(4) A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse disposal, storm drainage and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs and method of financing;

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 6 (community facilities & services) and on map 1 (base map) map 4 (buildings), map 10 (sewer & water), map 11 (public facilities), map 12 (official map), map 13 (trail vision).

Met Pages: 66-85
MAP Utility and Facility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(5) A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources;

Comments:

Addressed with a general strategy on page 12, and more specifically in Chapter 5 (natural resources) and Chapter 9 (cultural resources).

Met Pages: 12 (strategy 4); 45-65 (natural resources); 104-106 (cultural resources)

(6) An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system;

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 6 (community facilities & services).

Met Pages: 78-82
MAP Educational Facility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(7) A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan;

Comments:

Addressed with top priority actions in Chapter 1 (introduction) and more fully in Chapter 10 (implementation).

Met Pages: 7 (top priority actions), 107-126 (implementation)

(8) A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans of adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under this title;

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 1 (introduction).

Met Pages: 13-14

(9) An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs and problems within the municipality, a statement of policy on the conservation of energy, including programs, such as thermal integrity standards for buildings, to implement that policy, a statement of policy on the development of renewable energy resources, a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy;

Comments:

Met Pages: 94-103

Addressed in Chapter 8 (energy).

(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should account for permitted accessory dwelling units, as defined in subdivision 4412(1)(E) of this title, which provide affordable housing.

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 2 (demographics and housing) and in Chapter 3 (land use).

Met

Pages: 21-26 (housing); 27-38 (land use)

(11) An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth.

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 4 (economic development).

Met

Pages: 39-44

(12)(A) A flood resilience plan that:

(i) identifies flood hazard and fluvial erosion hazard areas, based on river corridor maps provided by the Secretary of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1428(a) or maps recommended by the Secretary, and designates those areas to be protected, including floodplains, river corridors, land adjacent to streams, wetlands, and upland forests, to reduce the risk of flood damage to infrastructure and improved property; and

(ii) recommends policies and strategies to protect the areas identified and designated under subdivision (12)(A)(i) of this subsection and to mitigate risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments.

(B) A flood resilience plan may reference an existing local hazard mitigation plan approved under 44 C.F.R. § 201.6.

Comments:

Addressed in Chapter 5 (natural resources) in the floodplain and flood resiliency section.

Met

Pages: 57-59

GOALS AND STANDARDS OF REVIEW

GOALS

24 VSA § 4302

(a) General purposes . . .

(b) It is also the intent of the legislature that municipalities, regional planning commissions and state agencies shall engage in a continuing planning process that will further the following goals:

(1) To establish a coordinated, comprehensive planning process and policy framework to guide decisions by municipalities, regional planning commissions, and state agencies.

(2) To encourage citizen participation at all levels of the planning process, and to assure that decisions shall be made at the most local level possible commensurate with their impact.

(3) To consider the use of resources and the consequences of growth and development for the region and the state, as well as the community in which it takes place.

(4) To encourage and assist municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans.

(c) In addition, this chapter shall be used to further the following specific goals:

Goal 1:

To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.

(A) Intensive residential development should be encouraged primarily in areas related to community centers, and strip development along highways should be discouraged.

(B) Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, or employed to revitalize existing village and urban centers, or both.

(C) Public investments, including construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area.

Consistent

Pages: 27-38 (land use), 39-44 (economic development)

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

The proposed revisions retain Hinesburg's long-time commitment to this goal. Overall, the plan seeks to achieve this goal through orderly growth of Hinesburg's existing village area where higher residential density and a wide variety of commercial, retail, and municipal uses can co-exist. Outside of the village growth area, the plan prioritizes lower density growth and natural resource conservation as well as innovative development techniques to preserve rural character. See Chapter 3 (Land Use) for details and specific recommendations on this front. The Official Map (map 12) elucidates future community facilities and infrastructure in the village growth area to further this goal.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 2:

To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.

Consistent

Pages: 39-44

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

The proposed revisions address this more directly than any of Hinesburg's previous plans thanks to the inclusion of a new Economic Development chapter. Overall, the plan recognizes this as an important goal, and seeks to address it by allowing and encouraging continued economic development in the village growth area (redevelopment, in-fill, and new development) as well as appropriate industrial land use areas. The plan seeks to concentrate much economic development in the village growth area so as to provide services and employment close to higher density residential areas and public infrastructure like municipal water and sewer. With that said, this plan also advocates for the continuation of Hinesburg's tradition of small scale home occupations and businesses that fit within the community. Home-based businesses often allow greater entrepreneurial opportunities with less upfront capital costs. Furthermore, these businesses enrich community life by increasing local activities, providing local services, saving energy on commuting, and reducing impact on local and regional transportation infrastructure. Hinesburg, and the greater Chittenden County area have low unemployment and generally high per capita income, and this plan recommends actions to maintain this strong and diverse local and regional economy. See Chapter 4 for details on economic development.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 3:

To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.

Consistent

Pages: 78-82

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

Similar to previous plans, the new plan addresses this goal to the extent possible. Overall, the plan recognizes the importance of educational opportunities, including our local elementary school and union high school and regional vocational/technical centers. Hinesburg's commitment to education is demonstrated by the community's strong support of the Champlain Valley Union High School, which the Town hosts. This commitment is further evidenced by the plan's language to address child care issues outside of the formal educational setting (see child care section in Chapter 6). At the same time, the plan reports on census data that shows the number of young children is declining here, just as it is across the rest of the state. These trends make efficiency considerations critical for any attempt to "broaden" access to educational opportunities.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 4:

To provide for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.

Consistent

Pages: 86-93

- (A) Highways, air, rail and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced and integrated.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

Hinesburg takes its transportation systems very seriously, especially since it is the 2nd largest budget item (after schools) for property taxes. The plan includes a comprehensive transportation section (Chapter 7) that addresses the needs of conventional vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation options. It tackles the difficulties related to the State highway (Route 116), which runs through the center of town, and constitutes Hinesburg's "Main Street" within the village core. It prioritizes the creation and maintenance of a truly "walkable community", especially within the greater village area. It recognizes that the management of rural roads, especially dirt roads, requires special consideration in order to preserve the rural character and related recreational uses. The plan addresses this goal by detailing specific studies and road improvements, by recommending additional pedestrian and bicycle project areas, and by continuing to support public transportation – which came to fruition with new CCTA/ACTR bus service in 2012.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 5:

To identify, protect and preserve important natural and historic features of the Vermont landscape including:

- (A) significant natural and fragile areas;**
- (B) outstanding water resources, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands and wetlands;**
- (C) significant scenic roads, waterways and views;**
- (D) important historic structures, sites, or districts, archaeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas**

Consistent

Pages: 45-65 (natural resources); 104-106 (cultural resources); appendix A

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

The plan very clearly identifies and requires protection of important ecological and cultural resources. Hinesburg residents care deeply about the natural and historic features that define both the rural character and the industrial history of the community. A conservation ethic for significant natural areas, open space, and water resources permeates the entire plan – particularly in Chapter 5. The plan also includes two sections detailing the town's historic resources (Chapter 9 and Appendix A).

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 6:

To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests and other land resources.

Consistent

Pages: 45-65 (natural resources)

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

As stated above, Hinesburg residents continually rate natural resources as important elements that need good stewardship, conservation, and preservation where appropriate. The planning process recognizes this shared community value, and the plan specifically incorporates it via a comprehensive natural resource section (Chapter 5). Water quality in particular is an issue highlighted again and again in the plan, with goals and actions items that anticipate an "all-in" approach to cleaning up Lake Champlain – e.g., municipal demonstration projects, municipal road stormwater control improvements, development regulations, public outreach, etc.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 7:

To encourage the efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy resources.

Consistent

Pages: 94-103

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

These concepts are well established, and are reflected in Chapter 8 of the plan, which borrows heavily from the State comprehensive energy plan. Hinesburg has been very supportive of renewable energy development. The Town itself has a sizable ground-mounted solar installation on its property adjacent to the wastewater treatment facility. With that said, this plan also provides clear guidance on factors to be considered in the siting of such facilities.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 8:

To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.

Consistent

Pages: 74-77

(A) Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities.

(B) Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

Recreational activities abound in Hinesburg thanks to the varied landscape, rural land use, and multi-use back roads and trails. The plan recognizes the importance of rural recreation (hiking, hunting, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, bicycling, etc.), and the role that public and private lands play in providing these opportunities. The Town is also committed to providing a wide variety of organized recreational programs, primarily through the Recreation Department and school programs. The plan recognizes the importance of recreation and advocates for continued and enhanced opportunities (see Chapter 6). The plan advocates a proactive stance on providing recreational opportunities within the Town's growth center. It also advocates for greater planning in the rural areas to develop networks of trails with connections to important residential areas and services. The trail vision map embodies this continuing effort.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 9:

To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.

Consistent

Pages: 27-38 (land use), 39-44 (economic development), 45-65 (natural resources)

(A) Strategies to protect long-term viability of agricultural and forestlands should be encouraged and should include maintaining low overall density.

(B) The manufacture and marketing of value added agricultural and forest products should be encouraged.

(C) The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.

(D) Sound forest and agricultural management practices should be encouraged.

(E) Public investment should be planned so as to minimize development pressure on agricultural and forest land.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

The plan includes a number of strategies to retain and bolster agricultural and forest uses. First and foremost, it identifies the bulk of town as a lower overall development density area where agricultural and forest uses receive priority (see Chapter 3). Secondly, it provides mechanisms for home-based businesses and rural-based enterprises (e.g., farm café, integrated agricultural uses, etc.), which allows producers greater flexibility in the manufacture and marketing of value-added agricultural and forest products. Lastly, it addresses the importance of agricultural and forest lands, along with strategies to ensure continued access to viable agricultural and forest parcels (see Chapter 5).

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 10:

To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.

Consistent

Pages: 63-64

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

Chapter 5 of the plan provides the background information and specific recommendations for Hinesburg's abundant natural resources. Earth or geological resources, and their importance to the community are identified. The planning process (i.e., conditional use review) makes adequate provisions for proper restoration, once extraction of these resources begins or ends.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 11:

To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.

Consistent

Pages: 21-26 (housing)

(A) Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly for those citizens of low and moderate income.

(B) New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers, and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities.

(C) Sites for multi-family and manufactured housing should readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single-family conventional dwellings.

(D) Accessory apartments within or attached to single family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost-effective care and supervision for relatives or disabled or elderly persons should be allowed.

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

Hinesburg's plan specifically addresses and encourages the creation of affordable housing, especially within the village growth area, where more municipal infrastructure is available. The plan includes definitions of both affordable and "reasonably-priced" housing. Both the plan and the Town's existing regulations provide for density bonuses as an enticement to build safe and affordable housing for a variety of income levels. In fact, the plan goes on to recommend that the Town expand its municipal services (e.g., wastewater treatment capacity, sidewalks, etc.) so as to further the provision of needed housing. See Chapter 2.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 12:

To plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.

(A) Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal.

(B) The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services.

Consistent

Pages: 66-85 (community facilities and services)

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

The plan and the community recognize the importance of maintaining and fully utilizing our existing public facilities. As noted above, it recommends the expansion of certain critical pieces of infrastructure (e.g., public safety facilities, recreation fields & facilities, road improvements, etc.), and advocates for continued use of the capital budget to adequately plan for their creation and financing. Furthermore, the plan recommends the Town continue to utilize impact fees, or other comparable mechanisms, to help fund improvements that will undoubtedly be needed as the community grows. Fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewage and solid waste disposal are all addressed. Our regulatory process is designed to consider impacts to these services, and try to minimize these impacts wherever possible. See Chapter 6 (Community Facilities and Services) for details. Hinesburg is currently in need of infrastructure improvements to meet the vision outlined in the plan – e.g., water supply, wastewater treatment, new highway garage. The plan addresses these needs and recommends more work on development phasing to ensure growth and development doesn't outstrip the community's resources.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 13:

To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development.

Consistent

Pages: 78-82

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

This plan provides baseline information on available child care and demand. It goes on to make recommendations (see Chapter 6) to improve child care by addressing financing difficulties, ensuring adequate infrastructure, and assisting with business assistance and work force development. The plan strives to meet both the spirit and letter of this State standard/goal, while recognizing that there is only so much the community can do on this front.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

Goal 14:

To encourage flood resilient communities.

(A) New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.

(B) The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.

(C) Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged.

Consistent

Pages: 57-59

How has the Town Plan addressed this goal:

This is addressed in Chapter 5, with flood hazard areas (including fluvial erosion areas) indicated on Map 7. New development in flood hazard areas and riparian areas is discouraged. The Zoning Regulations allow development in such areas only in keeping with flood proofing standards, and only after a demonstration of no undue adverse impacts on surrounding properties, upstream/downstream properties and infrastructure, as well as water quality. The Town has actively worked to conserve important floodplain areas (e.g., LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest). Building setbacks from streams have been required for decades in Hinesburg, but the plan further recommends the creation of vegetated riparian buffers to improve water quality and help minimize flood impacts.

If the goal is not relevant or attainable, how does the plan address why:

STANDARD OF REVIEW

24 V.S.A. § 4302(f)

(1) As used in this chapter, "consistent with the goals" requires substantial progress toward attainment of the goals established in this section, unless the planning body determines that a particular goal is not relevant or attainable. If such a determination is made, the planning body shall identify the goal in the plan and describe the situation, explain why the goal is not relevant or attainable, and indicate what measures should be taken to mitigate any adverse effects of not making substantial progress toward that goal. The determination of relevance or attainability shall be subject to review as part of a consistency determination under this chapter.

(2) As used in this chapter, for one plan to be "compatible with" another, the plan in question, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan. If a plan, as implemented, will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan, the plan may be considered compatible if it includes the following:

(A) a statement that identifies the ways that it will significantly reduce the desired effect of the other plan;

(B) an explanation of why any incompatible portion of the plan in question is essential to the desired effect of the plan as a whole;

(C) an explanation of why, with respect to any incompatible portion of the plan in question, there is no reasonable alternative way to achieve the desired effect of the plan, and

(D) an explanation of how any incompatible portion of the plan in question has been structured to mitigate its detrimental effects on the implementation of the other plan.