

Appendix E

Regional Plan Excerpts



ADDISON COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN

Adopted July 18, 2018



- districts, flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas, shoreline and riparian buffers, and sourcewater protection areas; and
- d. Work with Addison County's farm and forestry community to promote and implement "Required Agricultural Practices" ("RAPs") and "Best Management Practices" ("BMPs") for forestry.

Working Lands: Agricultural and Forestry Resources

1. Create a regional plan and help municipalities create plans and regulations that recognize the value of the Region's working landscape and seek to preserve that landscape and the right to raise and harvest agricultural and forest products for future generations;
2. Support the work of land trusts and other voluntary conservation efforts in the Region;
3. Support statewide tax incentives like the Current Use Program to preserve large tracts of agricultural and forest land;
4. Work with Addison County Economic Development Corporation and other partners to promote the economic viability and growth of agricultural and forestry in support of Vermont's working landscape;
5. Support efforts to manage harmful invasive species.

Wildlife, Native Plants and Natural Communities

1. Periodically revise the Significant Regional Resources map within the regional plan identifying resources of regional significance;
2. Promote regional and municipal plans and regulations that recognize the value of wildlife, native plants and natural communities and seek to preserve each in viable population sizes within the Region and its municipalities;
3. Participate in land use applications (Act 250/Section 248) that impact regionally significant resources as identified in the Addison County Regional Plan;
4. Work to preserve large blocks of contiguous habitats, especially those that support east/west wildlife travel corridors;
5. Provide data and maps to help towns recognize and address significant plant, wildlife, and natural community habitat areas in town plans and other planning proceedings;
6. Assist municipalities in developing priority systems for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat areas, native plants and important natural communities.

Scenic Resources

1. Support village and downtown designation efforts to provide financial incentives that support historic preservation and mixed uses, including affordable housing;
2. Use ACRPC's mapping resources and expertise to encourage communities to identify areas of high scenic value through an inclusive public process;
3. Ensure that new commercial scale telecommunication towers, wind energy towers, solar facilities and other commercial scale energy generation sites and transmission corridors conduct proper siting analyses, including the technical feasibility of burying transmission lines, designed to encompass the lifecycle of the infrastructure and to address scenic resources, wildlife habitat and impacts on agricultural soils and forestry resources;

4.1 SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

A. SUMMARY

The region's surface and ground water resources are essential to its people, economy, and environment. They influence the cultural, social, economic, and environmental landscape of the region and offer scenic beauty and recreational opportunities. These water resources are essential to the high quality of life enjoyed by residents of the area and must be appropriately utilized, respected, managed, enhanced, and preserved to ensure the future vitality of the region and its inhabitants.

Most of the Addison County Region falls within The Otter Creek Basin, the second largest watershed in Vermont, draining an area of approximately 936 square miles. Nearly all of the sub-basins in Addison County flow into Otter Creek, which flows into Lake Champlain. There are also several sub-basins in the region that drain directly to Lake Champlain. The most prominent surface water resources in the area include Lake Champlain, Lake Dunmore, Fern Lake, Monkton Pond, Otter Creek, Lemon Fair River, New Haven River, Dead Creek, Middlebury River, Little Otter Creek, Lewis Creek, Mud Creek, East Creek, and the Neshobe River. Wetlands, vernal pools, fens, bogs, seeps, and aquifers are also integral components of the region's water systems, serving valuable functions, and linked through the hydrologic cycle.

Several watersheds, including specific water bodies and adjacent banks and shores, are identified as Regionally Significant. These are watersheds that have an effect on several Towns and/or provide particularly important resources to Addison County Residents. This list includes:

1. Bristol Pond
2. Dead Creek
3. Fern Lake
4. Lewis Creek
5. Lemon Fair River
6. Leicester River
7. Little Otter Creek
8. Lake Champlain
9. Lake Dunmore
10. Otter Creek
11. Middlebury River
12. Monkton Pond
13. Neshobe River
14. New Haven River
15. State Designated Wetlands over 20 Acres



D. DOCUMENTATION & ANALYSIS

Surface waters provide or support many facets of our culture in the Addison Region. Among those are water for domestic, agricultural, and industrial consumption, a depository for wastes, treated and untreated, riparian and aquatic habitat for wildlife and plant life, recreation, scenic amenities, power generation, and the basic function of surface waters as part of the hydrologic and climatic cycles.

Lake Champlain

Lake Champlain is 120 miles long, 12 miles wide at its widest; 400 feet deep at its deepest, has 587 miles of shoreline, and 435 square miles of surface area. The Lake is divided into five distinct areas, each with different physical and chemical characteristics and water quality. These lake segments include: the South Lake (Addison County portions), the Main Lake (or Broad Lake), Malletts Bay, the Inland Sea, and Missisquoi Bay. The total area of the Lake Champlain Basin is 8,234 square miles. 90% of the water that enters Lake Champlain flows through the Lake's drainage basin before it reaches the Lake. Fifty-six percent of the Basin is in Vermont, 37% is in New York, and 7% is in the Province of Quebec.¹ Lake Champlain is directly influenced by land use activities in the Addison Region.

Table 1: Other Lakes And Ponds In The Region

WATERBODY	ACREAGE
Lake Dunmore	1,035
Fern Lake	69
Cedar Lake	118
Johnson Pond	34
Mud Pond	26
Richville Pond	160
Silver Lake	104
Spruce Pond	25
Sugar Hill Reservoir	58
Bristol Pond	199

Watersheds and Basin Planning

A watershed or basin is the land that water flows across or under on its way to a stream, river, or lake. The landscape is made up of many interconnected watersheds that can be defined at varying scales. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is working to develop water quality management plans for the 17 major river basins in the state. Nearly all of Addison County falls within the Otter Creek Basin, which drains to Lake Champlain. There are also several sub-basins in the region that drain directly to Lake Champlain. The basin

¹ From Lake Champlain Basin Program Atlas at www.lcbp.org



B. AGRICULTURAL LANDS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS

A. Preserve prime, statewide, and locally important agricultural land.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Recognize the diverse values and benefits provided to the public by agricultural land (including but not limited to: food, energy, and fiber production, scenic and cultural landscapes for residents and visitors, and recreational opportunities).
- b) Encourage sound land use planning and clustered development to protect viable agricultural land and to preserve the open landscape.
- c) Promote the equitable taxation of agricultural lands through (but not limited to) local assessments that reflect current use. Encourage the Legislature to fully fund a program with serious withdrawal penalties that reduces the tax burden on agricultural and forest land owners who follow sustainable land use practices and are not holding their land for speculation, and ensure that it is adequately staffed (i.e. such as the Use Value Appraisal Program).

B. Conserve important agricultural lands to maintain environmental integrity, provide for present and future agricultural use, and accommodate appropriate development.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Encourage protection, enhancement, and sustainable stewardship of the quality of agricultural lands to minimize off-farm impacts.
- b) Encourage implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Accepted Agricultural Practices (AAP's).
- c) Encourage agricultural practices that maintain and enhance ecosystem diversity within the region (including land set aside in long term easements) to benefit water quality and plant and animal habitat.
- d) Encourage municipalities to consider agricultural lands in local planning and decision making.



D. DOCUMENTATION & ANALYSIS

Farmland is an important resource in Addison County. It provides a base for the agricultural economy and preserves the scenic landscapes that characterize the region. Addison County agribusiness also provides support to agriculture in neighboring counties. The number and size of farms in Addison County continues to change, yet agriculture remains a major economic and cultural force. Dairy farms, orchards, vegetable farms and associated businesses are the region's agricultural mainstay. The number of smaller farms serving the region through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), farmer's markets and local grocery stores continues to grow. These farms are also serving larger markets with their meats, fruits, vegetables, and cheeses, in addition to other products.

Addison County farmers have always played a key role in local government and community affairs. It is important that governing bodies have an understanding of the needs of rural areas, and especially agricultural communities. The non-farming community can aid the agricultural community by purchasing local products and premium "Vermont" brands, and by supporting the growing array of farm enterprises. Local schools should also work to foster understanding of the importance of local agriculture.

In order to protect the environment, farmers are required to comply with regulations issued by a number of governmental agencies. Many farmers are leaders in environmental protection because of their dependence on and intimate knowledge of the land. The region must continue to seek balance between environmental and economic needs in relation to agriculture. The Regional Plan supports innovative environmental and agricultural endeavors that will help Vermont and Vermont Farmers be leaders in environmental and agricultural relations.

The Documentation and Analysis Section provides data related to the state of agriculture in the region, as well as descriptions of several key issues and programs in regional agriculture.



B. FOREST RESOURCES GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS

A. To manage, maintain, and improve the health and viability of forest areas in the region.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Encourage planning strategies that promote ecological health and sustainability at local and regional scales.
- b) Encourage research and education to enhance economic viability of individual forest enterprises and the conservation of natural resources.
- c) Encourage the conservation and maintenance/restoration of contiguous forests to conserve native biodiversity.
- d) Support community efforts to develop and manage their forest sustainably.
- e) Encourage ecosystem-oriented management on National Forest Lands, State Forest and Parks, and State Fish and Wildlife lands.

B. To manage, maintain, and improve the resources and services forest areas provide.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Recognize and maintain the diverse benefits provided to the public by forestland, including:
 - resources to support forest economies and rural culture;
 - habitat for native biodiversity;
 - recreational opportunities;
 - higher quality water supplies;
 - higher quality air supplies and carbon sequestration;
 - scenic working landscapes;
- b) Encourage the efficient use of the forest's resources and services to ensure economic viability of forest enterprises, and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.
- c) Encourage local processing and marketing of the forest's diversity of products.
- d) Encourage use of Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs).
- e) Promote the equitable taxation of forest land through, but not limited to, local assessments that reflect current use, zoning, and land capabilities.
- f) Encourage amicable relations between forestland owners and those seeking permission to use the land for recreational purposes.



4.5 SCENIC RESOURCES

A. SUMMARY

For over 200 years, family farms have shaped the Addison Region's landscape into distinctive patterns. The agricultural landscape, checkered by open meadows and forests, characterizes the Region. Panoramas of open fields interspersed with wooded areas and glimpses of the lake, rising to a middle ground of hill land against the backdrop of the Green Mountains, are common in the Region.

The changes in the landscape which occur seasonally as the result of both the productive use of the land and the natural progression of seasons add to the beauty and variety of the landscape.

The rural pattern of villages and small industrial towns within an agricultural or forest setting established in the late 18th century has remained mostly intact to this day. The scale of structures and the size of settlements are part of the composite picture. Development, both historic and modern, is generally small-scale and fits into, rather than dominating, the landscape. The scale is human and comfortable, even welcoming, especially when compared to the scale of development in the larger cities located in close proximity to the Region and the State.

Visitors come to the Region because of its welcoming atmosphere, its sense of community, its retention of a nostalgic charm from an earlier era, and the beauty of the mix of the natural and man-made environment.

This landscape has been maintained by long-term family ownership and stewardship of the land, profitable agriculture and forestry, and frugality. However, the land use pattern is changing with the growth of the small communities and the loss of many family farms. Residential subdivisions housing commuters to Burlington and Rutland are becoming more common. The traditional land use pattern is being pressured by economic forces which can alter the landscape. Telecommunication towers and alternative energy facilities are new elements of the landscape that don't have a historic context. Evaluating the visual and scenic changes that result from potential development is difficult and complex. The landscape changes in mostly a slow cumulative way and land owners are hesitant to judge other resident's endeavors.

This section will describe the goals and policies of the Region as they pertain to evaluating scenic resources and recommending actions to ensure the comfortable working landscape of the present is maintained into the future.



B. SCENIC RESOURCE GOALS

A) Maintain the existing character of the region by encouraging agriculture and forestry activities as a part of the working landscape and similarly encourage commercial and industrial activities to locate within existing business centers.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Keep agricultural land and forested lands in profitable and productive use to maintain a critical part of the Region's scenic resources.
- b) Discourage strip development along regionally significant roadways due to its conflicts with traditional settlement patterns and safety issues associated with ingress and egress. Encourage development within or adjacent to existing mixed-use areas which utilize land efficiently and preserves existing visual resources.

B) Development in areas of high scenic value due to scenic views or historic significance should minimize adverse impact on views and areas of historic significance.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Encourage the use of materials, architectural styles, color schemes, lighting fixture, building mass, scale and other design elements to promote aesthetic compatibility with surrounding uses to avoid adverse visual impacts.
- b) Encourage PUD's and clustered development to preserve views.
- c) Encourage siting of new buildings in settings which preserve the scenic quality of lakeshores and ridgelines.



C) Support the development of alternative energy sources and an efficient telecommunication network when such facilities do not have adverse environmental or aesthetic impacts.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) To support full regional coverage of telecommunication and broadband coverage in the region.
- b) Minimize the impacts of alternative energy producing plants through careful siting based on a thorough analysis.
- c) Address potential impacts at an appropriate scale and with significant public input.

D) Preserve the nighttime ambiance and aesthetic qualities of downtowns and villages by illuminating them for safety and convenience while enhancing the best qualities of streets, architecture, and public spaces. Minimize the undesirable impacts of excessive lighting in rural as well as village settings.

To meet this Goal it is our Objective to:

- a) Encourage outdoor lighting installations that use only the amount of lighting necessary for a given task.
- b) Reduce reflected light or sky-glow from surfaces into the nighttime sky.
- c) Minimize the use of electricity to achieve desired illumination.



C. SCENIC RESOURCES RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1) Encourage participation in a program with serious withdrawal penalties that reduces the tax burden on agricultural and forest land owners who follow sustainable land use practices and are not holding their land for speculation to reduce costs related to maintaining a working landscape (i.e. such as the Use Value Appraisal Program).
- 2) Recommend siting roads and buildings along hedgerows where possible to keep meadows, agricultural land and views open.
- 3) Encourage the use of plantings to soften building edges, direct views and reduce runoff in parking lots.
- 4) Support village and downtown designation efforts designed to provide financial incentives that support historic preservation and mixed use including affordable housing.
- 5) Encourage communities to identify areas of high scenic value through an inclusive public process.
- 6) Arrange workshops on identification of scenic landscapes and the siting of telecommunication and alternative energy facilities with company representatives, towns and other interested parties.
- 7) Ensure that new telecommunication or wind energy towers conduct proper siting analyses that address wildlife habitat, soil conditions and impacts on agricultural and forestry resources
- 8) Encourage co-location of communication equipment on existing poles and towers to minimize additional sites.
- 9) Locate utility poles and lines in areas lower than the principle view, require plantings to shield properties from visual impact. Line burial should be considered when feasible.
- 10) Encourage lighting plans and designers to address sky-glow and energy efficiency in all development proposals.
- 11) Encourage municipalities to consider the lighting guidelines set forth in “*Outdoor Lighting Manual for Vermont Municipalities*” in their zoning bylaws.



D. SCENIC RESOURCES DOCUMENTATION & ANALYSIS

It is easy to wax poetic about the Region's scenic values. It is not so easy to understand the particular forces which have worked and continue to work to maintain scenic resources. Major factors in past maintenance of the landscape seem to be long-term family ownership and stewardship of the land, continuing profitable agricultural and forestry production and a basic orientation towards frugality. The public commitment to the value of the scenic resource can be traced to the late 1960s with the passage of Vermont's anti-billboard legislation. This legislation was strongly endorsed by the Vermont Hotel and Motel Association which recognized the direct economic relationship between visual resources inherent in the landscape and a growing tourism sector. A past Governor's Commission on the Economic Future of Vermont summarized; "we consider Vermont's environment to be the goose that lays golden eggs" More recently, in 2004, The National Trust for Historic Preservation listed Vermont as an 'endangered' place in part due to the impact of development on the scenic quality.

Much has been written about preserving scenic vistas. Viewsheds and rating systems are set forth in great detail, but very few scenic protection programs are actually implemented. Part of the reason for lack of implementation is the complexity of many of these systems. Another major reason is the inherent subjectivity and the arbitrariness of any process that attempts to define for the general public what is and what is not scenic beauty. Many residents of the Region also feel that protection of scenic resources is not necessary at this time since the Region has abundant scenic resources and limited development pressures. Small town planning commissions look at the time and work required to set up a system, shake their heads, and say, "later, maybe". The advent of computer programs, which can visually simulate potential effects on viewsheds, may make viewshed models more usable and understandable to citizens, landowners and commissioners. While few town plans have established specific scenic overlay districts, all town plans have reinforced the desire to maintain the rural character of the landscape.

Next we need to decide exactly what creates the landscape, which parts are the most important to maintain, and methods which we can use to do this. Many of the following concepts are taken from a publication of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources titled "*Vermont's Scenic Landscapes: A Guide for Growth and Protection*". The book recommends the following steps: Describe the resource, Identify the sensitivities, and Prescribe the Protections as a clear community standard.

Scenic landscape can be comprised of villages, urban centers, working landscapes or distant views. Their relative scenic value is dependent on characteristics which make some landscapes more scenic than others.

- (1) Landscape diversity and spatial contrast - a combination of scenic elements which together enhances visual quality, including:
 - (a) topographic variation;
 - (b) mixture of open meadows and woodlands;



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- (c) water;
- (d) distant views; and
- (e) mixture of vegetative types.

- (2) Extent of Order or Harmony in the Manmade Landscape - Landscapes that contain a sense of order or logic are visually pleasing. The cultural landscape that is represented by haphazard development becomes indistinguishable and often chaotic. Order is influenced by the following:
 - (a) scale of building;
 - (b) pattern of buildings; and
 - (c) architectural similarities in form, size, or other factors.
- (3) Focal Dominance – A natural focal point may be a distant mountain, or a church steeple in a village. They can also disrupt a landscape as well.
- (4) Intactness/Uniqueness - Landscapes that have retained traditional patterns or forms or have absorbed modern development with minimal disruption are unique and are more likely to contribute to the scenic quality of an area.

The following is a list of considerations for review:

Unique or Prominent Landscapes

Such areas are generally accepted as areas of scenic significance and should be addressed in any review.:

- (1) shore lands immediate to public lakes, rivers, or ponds;
- (2) areas immediately adjacent to scenic corridors;
- (3) prominent ridgelines, mountain tops, or excessively steep slopes that can be readily viewed from public corridors;
- (4) exceptional agricultural and historic areas, recognized as outstanding resource values;
- (5) areas within or immediately adjacent to natural areas (i.e. wetlands) designated by the State; and
- (6) areas of high scenic quality which are publicly recognized as exceptionally.

Ridgelines or Mountain Tops

Where land development or subdivision is proposed on a prominent ridgeline or mountain top and visible from a wide area, design plans should work toward the goal of retaining its prominent natural appearance. To accomplish this, structures or buildings are encouraged to locate away from the highly visible ridgeline to a lower backdrop on the hillside and structures should be partially hidden within existing wooded hillsides, where possible, and avoid excessive use of reflective glass. Additional planting may also be considered.



Highly Scenic Areas with Distant Views

Where land development or subdivision is proposed in the foreground of a highly scenic location with distant views, design plans should work toward the goal of retaining or enhancing the view. New buildings or structures should be as unobtrusive as reasonable. To accomplish this, structures or buildings are encouraged to be designed so as to be compatible with the traditional pattern, scale, size, form, etc., and not unnecessarily block distant views from highways or locations noted as especially scenic. Buildings or structures are encouraged to be sited in less visible areas such as at the edges of or within wooded areas rather in open meadows. Clustering of buildings or structures is encouraged to leave vistas open on the site. Design of structures which does not unduly compete with the existing natural or cultural focal point is encouraged.

Scenic Working Agricultural Land

Where land development or subdivision is proposed on highly scenic agricultural land within a scenic context, design plans should work toward the goal of retaining the overall quality of the scenic area and of minimizing loss of the agricultural potential of the land. To accomplish this, structures or buildings are encouraged not to be sprawled over the entire site, leaving areas that are unusable for agriculture. In the alternative, development or subdivisions should be planned so that structures are clustered or located in a manner that remaining land is made available for practical use as open land, cropland, or hay-land. Common access drives to properties are encouraged. Location of utilities and common access drives is encouraged on the site away from productive agricultural land and in a manner to minimize visual impact on the scenic resource.

Scenic Areas Highly Visible from a Public Corridor

Where land development or subdivision is proposed in scenic areas highly visible from a public corridor, design plans should work toward the goal of minimizing the adverse visual impacts often associated with large-scale box-like buildings and/or large lot parking areas. To accomplish this, structures, buildings and other site improvements should be planned so that building form, massing, and other features are compatible with dominant patterns of the area or site and in ways that reduce the apparent scale of the project on the site. Design planners are requested to break large parking areas into smaller lots with ample landscaping or screening from off-site views, and to locate the project on the less scenic areas of the site. Prominent grade changes that starkly contrast with existing or surrounding contours should be discouraged.

Built Environments with Scenic Value

Where land development or subdivision is proposed within or adjacent to a built environment noted for its exceptional scenic value, including historic sites or areas



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recognized by the State of Vermont or municipalities, design plans should work toward the goal of minimizing contrast with the exceptional resource and to enhance visual quality. To accomplish this, project planners are encouraged to site buildings and structures that are compatible with the scale, massing, texture, or otherwise respect the pattern of nearby structures. Plans that promote large box-like structures which sharply contrast with existing scenic resource values are not recommended, particularly where the composition of the overall project is highly visible from public viewpoints.

Industrial or Commercial Developments in Areas of Scenic Value

Where single purpose developments such as industrial or office parks, or shopping centers are proposed in areas of exceptional scenic value, design plans should work toward a goal which reflects the traditional settlement pattern and characteristics of the area. To accomplish this, project planners must design the site so the development does not appear to be grossly out of scale with its surroundings. It must not extend or enlarge existing patterns of development that are deemed unacceptable (e.g. strip development). Design solutions should respect location and design of the project to minimize visual intrusion on the most valuable scenic attributes of the site. They should respect the natural contours of the land, utilize, where necessary, landscaping which harmonizes with existing vegetation to create project buffers and screening of buildings, and to encourage pedestrian access and internal circulation.

ACT 250 Review

Review of Act 250 projects includes a review of protection of scenic resources under Criterion 8. Criterion 8 reads (before granting a permit, the board or district commission shall find that the subdivision or development):

(8) will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas (24 VSA § 6086(a)(8).

Prior to 1985 the meaning of this statute had been interpreted in various ways. In 1985 the Environmental Board issued a decision on a Quechee Lakes project that has become the standard for review of Criterion 8 decisions. There are two stages to the process:

- (1) Are the impacts of a proposed development adverse?
- (2) If adverse, are they undue?

Meaning that any one of the following is true:

- (a) The project violates a clear written community standard intended to preserve the scenic or natural beauty of an area.
- (b) The projects impacts are shocking and offensive to the average person.



(c) The applicant has failed to take generally available mitigating steps to improve the compatibility of the project with its surroundings.

There are many project reviews that have involved the use of the Quechee analysis. These reviews become quite detailed with several experts testifying on the quality of visual resources. Generally, a good practice is to follow the recommendation noted earlier: Describe the resource, Identify the sensitivities, and Prescribe the Protections as a clear community standard.



Regional Standards for Siting Energy Generation and Transmission Projects

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission supports responsibly sited and developed renewable energy projects within its boundaries. It desires to maintain the working landscape, adopted conservation and habitat protection measures and scenic rural views important to its tourism economy and rural cultural aesthetic. Not all industrial or community scale generation or transmission projects proposed can meet this standard. In order to not unduly impact the community values and aesthetics of the Region this Plan intends to protect, projects must meet the following Regional Standards in order to be considered “orderly development” supported by this Plan:

SOLAR

1. Siting:

Where a project is placed in the landscape constitutes the most critical element in the aesthetic siting of a project. Poor siting cannot be adequately mitigated. Accordingly, all energy generation and transmission projects proposed in the Region must evaluate and address the proposed site’s aesthetic impact on the surrounding landscape.

Good sites have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Building and roof-mounted systems;
- Systems located in close proximity to existing larger scale, commercial, industrial or agricultural buildings;
- Proximity to existing hedgerows or other topographical features that naturally screen the proposed array from view from at least two sides;
- Reuse of former impacted property or brownfields that have qualified for and are listed in the State of Vermont Brownfield program.
- Sites designated as “preferred” areas by member municipalities.

Poor Sites have one or more of the following characteristics:

- No natural screening;
- Topography that causes the arrays to be visible against the skyline from common vantage points like roads or neighborhoods;
- A location in proximity to and interfering with a significant viewshed. The Addison County Regional Plan has chosen not to include any viewsheds at the Regional level. However, it recognizes that many of its member municipalities have defined locally significant viewsheds. Where that has occurred, this Plan should be read to incorporate those significant local viewsheds;
- The removal of productive agricultural land from agricultural use;
- Sites that require public investment in transmission and distribution infrastructure in order to function properly;



TRANSMISSION:

A. Siting:

Good sites have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Systems located in close proximity to existing larger scale, commercial, industrial or agricultural buildings;
- Proximity to existing hedgerows or other topographical features that naturally screen the proposed corridor from view from at least two sides;
- Shared or neighboring ROW with other transmission or transportation infrastructure

Poor Sites have one or more of the following characteristics:

- No natural screening;
- Topography that causes the lines to be visible against the skyline from common vantage points like roads or neighborhoods;
- A location in proximity to and interfering with a significant viewshed. The Addison County Regional Plan has chosen not to include any viewsheds at the Regional level. However, it recognizes that many of its member municipalities have defined locally significant viewsheds. Where that has occurred, this Plan should be read to incorporate those significant local viewsheds;
- The removal of productive agricultural land from agricultural use;
- Height and Scale: The historical working landscape that defines the Region is dominated by viewsheds across open fields to wooded hillsides and eventually the Green Mountains or Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks. Rural structures like barns fit into the landscape because their scale and mass generally do not impact large tracts of otherwise open land. Industrial scale transmission lines may need to be limited in height and scale, and/or have their height and scale broken by screening to fit in with the landscape in any given municipality. At the Regional level, Commercial transmission projects with tower heights greater than 72 feet are higher than the tree line and nearly all other structure within the Region. They cannot be adequately screened or mitigated to blend into the Region's landscape and are therefore must be designed to travel underground or to limit the total height of the structures to 72 feet.

B. Mitigation methods:

In addition to properly siting a project, transmission developers must take appropriate measures from the list below to reduce the impact of the project:

- Consider burying the transmission infrastructure in sensitive areas;
- Locate the structures on the site to keep them from being “skylined” above the horizon from public and private vantage points;
- Shorter towers may be more appropriate in certain spaces than taller towers to keep the project lower on the landscape;



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- Developers are encouraged to increase setbacks away from public roads to reduce the views of the infrastructure;
- Use the existing topography, development or vegetation to screen and/or break the mass of the transmission facility;
- In the absence of existing natural vegetation, the commercial development must be screened by native plantings beneficial to wildlife and pollinators that will grow to a sufficient height and depth to provide effective screening within a period of 5 years. Partial screening to break the mass of the site and to protect public and private views of the project may be appropriate;
- Use black or earth tone materials that blend into the landscape instead of metallic or other brighter colors.

SUBSTATIONS

A. Siting:

Where a project is placed in the landscape constitutes the most critical element in the aesthetic siting of a project. Poor siting cannot be adequately mitigated. Accordingly, all energy generation and transmission projects proposed in the Region must evaluate and address the proposed site's aesthetic impact on the surrounding landscape.

Good sites have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Systems located in close proximity to existing larger scale, commercial, industrial or agricultural buildings;
- Proximity to existing hedgerows or other topographical features that naturally screen the proposed array from view from at least two sides;
- Reuse of former impacted property or brownfields that have qualified for and are listed in the State of Vermont Brownfield program;

Poor Sites have one or more of the following characteristics:

- No natural screening;
- Topography that causes the sub-station to be visible against the skyline from common vantage points like roads or neighborhoods;
- A location in proximity to and interfering with a significant viewshed. The Addison County Regional Plan has chosen not to include any viewsheds at the Regional level. However, it recognizes that many of its member municipalities have defined locally significant viewsheds. Where that has occurred, this Plan should be read to incorporate those significant local viewsheds;
- The removal of productive agricultural land from agricultural use;
- **Mass and Scale:** The historical working landscape that defines the Region is dominated by viewsheds across open fields to wooded hillsides and eventually the Green Mountains or Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks. Rural structures like barns fit into the landscape because their scale and mass generally do not impact

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ACRPC Plan Consistency

ACRPC, like other regional commissions, is working with the Agency of Transportation and member municipalities to provide transportation planning on a regional basis under the federal TEA-21 program. In addition, ACRPC was instrumental in the formation of Addison County Transit Resources, a non-profit public transportation provider.

Transportation goals and objectives include:

- A. Support growth centers (Goal B, page 6.1-6).
- B. Work to improve travel safety (Goal A, Objective 1, page 6.1-5).
- C. Plan for efficient functioning of the transportation network by reducing congestion. (Goal A, Objectives 1 & 2, starting on page 6.1-5).
- D. Promote the development of transportation services for disadvantaged persons, and of alternative transportation systems, i.e. bicycle, carpool, rail, etc. (Goal A, Objective 4, page 6.1-6).

The Energy subsection contained in the Utilities, Facilities and Services section contains several objectives related to energy conservation and transportation. This plan section provides support for public transportation, carpooling, and bicycle and pedestrian paths to reduce energy consumed for transportation in the region (Energy Goal B, page 7-27).

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, archeological sites and archaeologically sensitive areas.

ACRPC Plan Consistency

a. Significant Natural and Fragile Areas

Significant natural and fragile areas are identified on the Natural Heritage Sites Map, (Map 4.2-1, page 4.2-7) and in the listing starting on page 4.2-10. Privately owned resources are listed starting on page 4.2-12 with the provision that more work needs to be done with the state, with landowners and the public to determine which resources are regionally significant and which are better protected at the local level. As noted in Natural Heritage documentation, not all identified sites are of equal importance. Natural and fragile area policies (page 4.1-3) encourage identification, protection and conservation of natural and fragile areas in a form commensurate with their importance, and the degree to which protection and conservation is necessary. The policies also encourage the maintenance and perpetuation of a diversity of

biological habitats in Addison County, and establishment and maintenance of interconnecting wildlife corridors, including riparian buffer zones.

b. Outstanding Water Resources

Water resources policies (page 4.1-5) include policies on lakes and ponds (including shorelands), rivers and streams, aquifers and wetlands. These policies recognize the multiple uses of these resources, encourage the maintenance and protection of the quality of these resources, including where they might be incrementally degraded, improvement and monitoring of water quality, reduction in activities which cause significant impacts on the resource, and maintenance of diverse areas of vegetation along water resources sufficient to protect the viability of the resource.

The wetlands policies support the protection of each wetland commensurate with its importance and the type of benefits provided, both system-wide and long-term, and also encourage the use of AMPs, AAPs and BMPs. The policies also support a definition of wetlands with a hydrological base. This policy is partly in response to the problem with existing rules that include many acres of farmland in the Addison Region that have been, and continue to be in agricultural use, but are not planted in commodity crops. Under those rules, such land reverts to wetland status if not planted to a commodity crop during a five-year cycle.

c. Scenic Roads, Waterways and Views

The Scenic Resources subsection, (page 4.8-1) identifies the general landscape as an integral part of the scenic character of the region and supports continuation of working agriculture and managed forestry practices as the most essential ingredient in maintaining the scenic quality of the Addison Region. This would include stream and shoreland buffers as part of riparian wildlife corridors supported in the natural areas and wildlife policies. Ridgeline protection measures are also supported. No recommendations for Outstanding Resource Waters or Wild and Scenic Rivers have been made in this plan.

d. Historic and Archeological Resources

We are indeed fortunate in the Addison Region to have excellent background documentation of both historic and archeological resources. The Cultural Resources section of the plan recognizes the importance of *The Historic Architecture of Addison County* as a resource to document the historic values of structures should a municipality wish to establish an historic district or in other ways recognize and preserve their historic heritage (page 4.7-1). Policy 7 (page 4.1-13) encourages the conservation of historic resources, including the adaptive reuse of historic structures and townscapes. Policy 3 supports a regional consortium of local historical societies to promote regional efforts at preservation. Policy 9 encourages responsible ownership and protection of historic resources and Policy 10 directs the commission to assist municipalities in their efforts to establish local strategies and tools to protect historic resources.

Appendix F
Town Plan Excerpts

Town of New Haven

Town Plan

Adopted

March 7, 2017

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Introduction

New Haven's past and present form the foundation for our vision of our future. Our Town Plan contains policies and recommendations based on that vision to guide future development in the Town. For more than 250 years, New Haven's economy, land use, character and way of life has been and remains strongly linked to agriculture. We have a fervent desire to continue this strong agricultural and rural heritage and the scenic cultural and natural landscape it creates.

Globalization, new technology and a multitude of economic and development pressures pose threats to the continued existence of family farms all over the country, including in Addison County and New Haven. Although farms are still the most visible use of land in the Town, the number of houses increases slowly but steadily, and a growing number of Townspeople commute outside New Haven to work. This Town Plan reflects New Haven's very strong support of farming and scenic vistas, and the cultural, economic and visual benefits that agricultural use provides.

Preservation of New Haven's visual pastoral vernacular, which has been formed by agricultural and farming activities and is reflected in the context, scale, and proportion of its farm structures, buildings and homes, and how these elements create vistas that are harmoniously integrated into the topography of the land, are of paramount importance to the Town's character and economy, including quality of life,

property values, local businesses and tourism.



*New Haven Town Green in a prior century
photo supplied by Beverly Landon*

The Vermont State legislature grants Towns the ability to plan and zone the land within their borders to “conserve the value of property and encourage the most appropriate use of land.” All future development within the Town must be managed and fit within New Haven's existing landscape and aesthetic. State statute also describes statewide goals to be incorporated into municipal objectives.

The primary purpose of the Town Plan is to assess the Town's present condition, describe the community's desires for the future, and provide recommendations governing future changes and development to protect the Town's natural, agricultural, historic and scenic resources, public health, safety and welfare, and property values. The Town Plan provides the vision; Town zoning and subdivision bylaws implement the recommendations of the Plan through regulation. Both the Town Plan and the zoning and subdivision regulations reflect a democratically established vision that

Policies and Goals

24 VSA §4382(a)(1)

Goal 1. To protect New Haven’s scenic, rural and agricultural character while supporting a diverse range of housing options and business opportunities.

Objective A. Strengthen the traditional pattern of small, densely settled enclaves, surrounded by large areas of farm and forestland in order to protect the Town’s rural character and maintain an adequate base of working lands.

Objective B. Promote sustainable development, reinforcing traditional land use patterns and Town development policies, maximizing energy efficiency and conservation through weatherization of existing structures and appropriate siting and design of new structures.

Objective C. Maintain the Town Community Center (also referred to as the Town Offices) that includes the Town offices and library, Beeman Elementary School, and the Town Green as the hub of community life and promote the development of a strong Town center. Create a Municipal District .

Goal 2. To preserve and promote the economic viability of agriculture.

Objective A. Support viability of the Town’s family farms in cooperation with state and federal government programs and private efforts.

Objective B. Protect the right to farm in accordance with required agricultural practices, including those that generate odors and noise, regardless of the presence of nearby development.

Objective C. Support diversification of the Town’s agricultural economy, including production of local food and other value-added agricultural and silvicultural products as well as biomass or methane energy production that utilizes farm waste (crop waste, manure), to expand farmers’ income.

Objective D. Limit or preclude future development, particularly commercial development projects, away from productive agricultural lands and prime and other valuable agricultural soils in order to ensure an adequate land base for future generations of farmers.

Objective E. Site and design non-farm commercial, industrial and utility development to prevent adverse impacts on prime agricultural soils.

Objective F. Site and design non-farm commercial, industrial and utility development to prevent adverse impacts on statewide important agricultural soils that have been in active cultivation at any time since January 1, 2010.

Objective G. Support the actions of landowners, land trusts and other parties to permanently protect agricultural and scenic land through voluntary conservation easements, and explore ways for the Town to participate or assist in these efforts.

Goal 3. To provide housing that supports a diverse population, allowing those who choose to do so to live in New Haven throughout their lives, while maintaining the Town's rural character.

Objective A. Allow development of senior and affordable housing, particularly in proximity to the Village Center, Junction and major travel corridors where residents will have more convenient access to services and transportation.

Objective B. Cooperate with and support the efforts of non-profit organizations to provide affordable and senior housing for Town residents.

Goal 4. To protect the natural, cultural, historic and aesthetic resources which create the Town's unique character and sense of identity.

Objective A. Maintain the natural appearance of ridges and steep slopes by restricting development that degrades scenic and environmental quality.

Objective B. Site future land development below ridgelines, and require design that precludes new structures from being visible against the skyline from public vantage points.

Objective C. Identify and limit or preclude adverse development impacts on ecologically sensitive and significant natural areas, and maintain high environmental quality.

Objective D. Support the efforts of landowners, land trusts and other parties to permanently protect ecologically sensitive and significant natural and scenic areas through voluntary conservation easements or purchase of land for conservation purposes.

Objective E. Support the agricultural use of lands that, if in their natural state would be classified as wetlands, in accordance with state and federal regulations, while encouraging all landowners to maintain naturally vegetated buffers around or along surface water features.

Objective F. Improve and protect water quality and aquatic habitat in the Town's watersheds, waterways and wetlands by limiting development near these important natural resources.

Objective G. Support the efforts of organizations like the Addison County River Watch Collaborative.

Objective H. Guide development away from mapped deer yards, and other significant habitat areas or travel corridors including habitat for state or federally identified species of significance, threatened species or endangered species such as the bobolinks and the Indiana bat, in order to maintain healthy wildlife populations, which are an important element of the Town's rural character.

Objective I. Recognize that the beauty of the Town's pastoral landscape is a result of generations of farming, and support continued agricultural use, efforts to conserve land, preservation of historic buildings and careful siting of new development within scenic viewsheds.

Objective J. Site and design future land development to prevent adverse visual impacts on public vantage points including roadways,

Town lands, recreation facilities and Town trails, scenic viewsheds, and surrounding private properties.

Objective K. Identify and promote appropriate rehabilitation, maintenance, continued use and/or adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Objective L. Site and design future land development to prevent or preclude forest fragmentation, environmental degradation and habitat destruction.

Objective M. Establish a Town conservation fund to serve as a source of funding to permanently conserve areas with valuable agricultural, scenic, and/or natural resource qualities. Possible sources of funding for a conservation fund could include public and private grants, taxpayer appropriations, donations, and compensation payments made by developers of energy projects or other significant commercial or large-scale residential development projects.

Goal 5. To manage the rate of industrial, commercial and residential growth in accordance with the capacity of the Town to provide services.

Objective A. Envision and plan for long-term Town objectives over short-term solutions.

Objective B. Recognize the need for and feasibility of an annual limit on new residential development.

Goal 6. To foster a diverse economy by accommodating small businesses, clean light industries, and agri-businesses.

Objective A. Allow residents to work from home or operate home-based businesses to the extent that such activities are of a scale and impact that is compatible with surrounding land uses.

Objective B. Allow residents working from home or operating home-based businesses to reuse existing accessory buildings for their operations.

Objective C. Guide new small businesses to appropriate locations, particularly currently vacant or under-utilized commercial or industrial buildings or sites.

Objective D. Ensure availability of local child care by being receptive to child care proposals as home occupations and or conditional uses for larger facilities.

Goal 7. To encourage energy conservation and the responsible development and use of renewable energy sources in a manner that preserves New Haven's rural landscape and character.

Objective A. Encourage energy conservation to reduce energy consumption and costs for New Haven's residents, businesses and public institutions.

Objective B. Support appropriate development of renewable energy projects that serve the on-site residential, home occupation, small business or agriculture energy use requirements of New Haven residents and are sited and designed to prevent adverse visual impacts on public vantage points (including roadways, public lands, trails and recreation facilities) and surrounding private properties.

Objective C. Site and design all energy and utility projects, including generation, transmission or distribution facilities, to preclude adverse impacts on public health, safety and welfare (including economic impacts), the Town's historic and planned pattern of development, environmentally sensitive areas, prime agricultural soils, and New Haven's most highly valued natural, cultural and scenic resources, consistent with the adopted plan policies and community standards for energy development, resource protection and land conservation.

Objective D. Ensure that all energy and utility projects, including generation, transmission or distribution facilities, developed within the Town provides appropriate benefits to affected residents and to the Town as a whole.

Objective E. Continue to support local recycling efforts.

Goal 8. To provide energy- and cost-efficient transportation systems that meet the needs of Town residents and businesses.

Housing Costs

The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners in the New Haven area was \$1,769, non-mortgaged owners \$708, and renters \$1,013. An estimated 36% of owners with mortgages, 21% of owners without mortgages, and 54% of renters in 05472 spent 30% or more of household income on housing.

Statewide, median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$1,541, non-mortgaged owners \$636, and renters \$889. New Haven's housing costs are high compared to the state average.

The purchase price of housing in the New Haven area is also likely considerably in excess of statewide averages. Vermont Realtors do not disaggregate data by town for Vermont's rural areas. However, the Median Sales Price in August 2016 across Vermont was up to \$215,000 for single-family homes, while in Addison County the median sales price for a single-family home was \$242,000.

Local Economy and Economic Development

24 VSA §4382(a)(11)

New Haven residents support local economic development that allows families to live comfortably within the Town. In the planning process, many residents expressed an interest in exploring support for increased local small and home-based businesses. Looking forward to the next Town Plan, the Town will focus on bolstering its economic development plan with evidence-based options.

Agricultural Sector

New Haven's family farms and agriculture-related businesses contribute positively to the local and regional economy, define the community's character and express and preserve the Town's cultural heritage. **The highly scenic, intact rural landscapes throughout New Haven contribute substantially to the quality of life in the Town and enhance local property values. New Haven's scenic landscapes also enhance the quality of life for state residents from surrounding**

towns who regularly travel our roads -- particularly Route 7 and Route 17 -- and attract visitors and tourists from near and far.

Farming continues to dominate New Haven's landscape, and is becoming more diversified. Farming operations active in New Haven in addition to dairy include Christmas trees, poultry, fruit and vegetable, vineyards, horse stables, sheep, and a variety of small, diversified operations. New Haven's soil is good for agricultural use, and many fields are large enough to adapt well to modern agricultural practices.



Residents, visitors and tourists enjoy pick-your-own produce opportunities, riding lessons, entertainment events and wine tastings as part of New Haven's agricultural economy. A substantial portion of New Haven's retail and service businesses are related to and dependent on the agricultural sector and other farmland use, including cattle feed production, landscaping, sale of local food products, sale and maintenance of farm equipment, and hunting and fishing supplies. Notable among these is the

Addison County Fair and Field Days fairgrounds, which forms the heart of Addison County's enduring farming culture and economy, and serves as the site for agricultural related events such as horse shows throughout the year.

Agricultural Soils and Farmland. Total land area in New Haven is 26,576 acres, of which 7% (1,949 acres) is considered prime agricultural soil, 58% (15,381 acres) is classified by USDA as soils of statewide or local agricultural importance, and 35% (9,253 acres) is non-agricultural soil.

Prime soil types are well drained with high natural fertility: examples are Melrose, Nellis, Winooski and Hadley. Agricultural soils of statewide importance are usually wetter or stonier, but still considered good for most farming: examples are Covington, Vergennes clay, Livingston and Limerick. Terrain varies from low-lying wetland to ridge.

While agricultural soils are a critical component of New Haven's agricultural landscape and economy, the value of those soils is enhanced by the pattern of large, adjacent or contiguous farmlands, and the pattern of hedgerows, woodlots and forested tracts interspersed with those farmlands.

This pattern throughout the Town outside of designated pockets of development such as the Village Center or Junction supports economic viability for agriculture while also providing environmental and scenic benefits.

When fragmentation of land parcels occurs, it becomes difficult for farms to expand in the face of land values, which rise with increased non-farm development. **Fragmentation of farmland -- cutting up of larger parcels and interspersing non-farm uses such as residential, commercial, industrial or utility development -- diminishes the farming options and economies of scale for future farmers, degrades the scenic and cultural heritage values of the landscape, and diminishes environmental values including grassland bird habitat.**

To sustain agricultural use beyond this generation, the Town discourages or precludes development in areas with the best agricultural land and encourages the maintenance of larger parcels or contiguous adjacent farm parcels intact. The Town also encourages diversified agricultural and agriculture-related business uses of smaller parcels including farmstands and local food production.

New Haven's RA Zoning District regulations and subdivision are some of the implementation methods by which the Town precludes inappropriate fragmentation and development of agricultural lands. **Density-based zoning tools also provide a means for permitting flexible development to maintain open land for farming, environmental protection and scenic viewsheds. Scenic viewshed protection, discussed below, also helps protect the Town's agricultural lands and the valuable aesthetic effects of open farmland.**

Agricultural Operations. According to the 2007 Agricultural Census, there were 73 farms within the New Haven zip code (05472), 30 of which were the primary occupation of their operator (as of the writing of this plan data from the 2012 Agricultural Census was not available by zip code). This compares to 53 farms counted in the 1997 census, 38 of which were the primary occupation of their operator. Anecdotal evidence and the census data suggest that agriculture in New Haven is diversifying. Dairy farms are consolidating into fewer, larger operations, while many smaller non-dairy farms are being started in response to the growing consumer desire to purchase locally produced products and food.

While farming practices are primarily within the province of state regulation, the Town will encourage environmentally sound farming practices where appropriate and within the Town's authority.

Business Sectors

New Haven has experienced growth in the number of businesses and in the number of people employed within Town over the past two decades. The Vermont Department of Labor statistics (which include only those jobs "covered" by unemployment insurance and so likely under counts the total number of people working in Town by 25 to 30%) counted 641 jobs in New Haven in 2015, 568 of

which were in the private sector. There were 81 establishments employing people, including businesses engaged in construction, extractive industries, retail trade, and professional or business services.

Many New Haven businesses are interrelated with the farms and forests of the community. For example, Phoenix Feeds and Nutrition manufactures and distributes cattle feed to farms locally and across New England, while Stark Mountain woodworking often sources

wood locally for their custom cabinetry and furniture production. Firearms dealers and sporting good purveyors in the Town support local hunting and fishing.

The Vermont Secretary of State's office lists 183 registered business entities in the Town of New Haven. Of these, at least 60 are farms, food, and forest-product related businesses, including a winery, several equestrian centers, firewood cutting and timber transport.

NOTE REGARDING MAPS:

The base maps used in Figures 8, 25, 26, 27, and 28 of this Town Plan omit the Town Legal Trail as well as a portion of the North-South Highway evidenced by historical surveys of that roadway.

The Transportation and Facilities Map omits certain recreational resources such as the ball fields behind the Town Offices.

A map of potential energy generation facilities development sites has been created for the Town by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, but it was not correlated to the Town's parcel map, and did not include layers related to utility constraints (GMP solar map red lines, and the three-phase power line map) or the Town's scenic and historic resources.

Over the next few years from the adoption of this Plan, the Town, through the Planning Commission, will work with Regional Planning and VTRANS to update the base maps; to produce maps affiliated with the upcoming scenic resources and town lands management planning; and to map potential energy facilities development sites that incorporate the Town's designated scenic, cultural and historic resources as well as utility constraints.

Recreation

The Town is served by a Park Committee that is responsible for oversight of the Town Green and Demers Park on River Road. The Town Green contains picnic tables, benches and a gazebo (with electric power). Demers Park provides residents with river access, a rudimentary picnic area and a softball field. A part time Events Coordinator is responsible for scheduling use of the Town Hall and other town resources.



Beeman Playground

The elementary school grounds and the area behind the Community Center include several play structures, an outdoor basketball court and a soccer/baseball field. These are often used by Townspeople during non-school hours, and allow for the existence of a Town-sponsored Little League. The Town Hall is also host to many extra-curricular activities, including fund-raising events for local organizations, meeting space and informal basketball play.

New Haven has one legal trail, which connects Route 17 near the Addison

County Field Days site with Pearson Road. It runs generally east-west. The western half of the Legal Trail has been maintained very well by the Dubois Brothers of Addison. It is passable with a standard motor vehicle. Access to the old cemetery is via this route. The eastern half has not been maintained and is currently not passable by vehicles.

The trail is open to pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian use, and to snowmobiles when snow cover allows. The views from the midpoint, which is an elevated section, are quite beautiful and encompass the rolling hills around the scenic Field Days valley (described more specifically in the Scenic Viewsheds section), providing a popular spot for picnics.

New Haven's many small dirt roads, with their generally slow traffic and many scenic views, provide ample opportunity for recreational walking, running and horseback riding. The Town maintains sidewalks in a limited portion of the Village Center and adjacent Municipal District, allowing safer pedestrian passage between the Town Green, adjacent community store, the Beeman School, playground, ball fields, and the Town Offices and Library.

Hunting and fishing also play an important role in the recreational, cultural and economic environment of the Town. The Town has an ordinance precluding firearms discharge in the Village District. Hunting is otherwise

Rail Transportation

Vermont Railway services the Town of New Haven on state-owned tracks. This service is limited to a single 7.5-mile line with 2 siding facilities, one at New Haven Junction and the other at the Pike Industries Plant on Campground Road. There currently is no passenger service on this line, although the infrastructure for a station still exists in the Junction.

The Town supports the continued use of the existing rail system in Town and recognizes the importance of both rail bed and sidings in its operation. The Town encourages the state to ensure that all rail-highway junctures be appropriately marked and maintained to limit their dangers, while retaining the current system of ground-level crossings.

Air Transportation

The Town allows privately owned and maintained airstrips for individual, non-commercial use, where such use does not have an adverse impact on the surrounding land use.

Public Transportation

Public transportation is provided in the Town by Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR) which offers scheduled service between Middlebury, Bristol and Vergennes (the “Tri Town Bus” route), with frequent stops at the Community Center, as well as ride sharing services and subsidized rides for the elderly and disabled. ACTR and the Chittenden County Transit Authority (CCTA) provide bus service to Burlington.

The Town promotes and encourages the use of public transportation by supporting routes provided by CCTA and carpooling. The Town has installed and maintains a park-and-ride at the Town Offices in the Village Center. In the public process for this Town Plan, some residents noted that the CCTA commuter schedule to Burlington only serves limited needs. The Town will participate in and encourage increased public transportation options -- including bus and rail -- as such opportunities arise.

Bicycle Travel, Walking and Horseback Riding

Bicycling is a popular activity in New Haven, particularly on the Town’s scenic back roads. This activity provides health benefits and energy savings to New Haven’s residents, and also provides an opportunity to attract tourists and visitors to the Town. The Town will promote and encourage bicycling and bicycle safety by working with federal, state and private funding sources to make our roads safer and more bicycle-friendly whenever such opportunities arise.

Walking and horseback riding are also common on New Haven’s roads. These are addressed in the Recreation section of this Town Plan.

Transportation and Energy

Energy analysis of transportation is included in the Energy Plan section of this Town Plan.

ruled on by the Vermont Supreme Court. Statutes and regulations have been changing annually, but interpretation of how those statutes and regulations will work has not yet caught up.

New Haven is the site of a hyper-abundance of energy projects and utility infrastructure, described in more detail below. **Town residents have repeatedly expressed their fervent desire to minimize or preclude the negative impact of both utility infrastructure and non-utility generation facilities** (particularly of a commercial scale -- the Town consistently supports its residents' rights to install alternative energy such as solar or wind to offset their own residential or home and farm business energy needs) **on the Town's scenic landscape, agricultural soils and economy.** In response, the Town has actively engaged in specific project review proceedings at the Public Service Board and at the Vermont Supreme Court. The Town has also participated in hearings, workshops

and comment sessions on utility regulations and statutes at the Public Service Board and Vermont Legislature.

The Town's efforts have had a positive, substantive impact both in terms of mitigating adverse effects of projects within the Town, and in creating regulatory processes that are more appropriate and accessible to municipalities and project neighbors. No other town in the state has taken as active a role in the ongoing public dialogue about energy generation siting and the ability of municipalities and project neighbors to participate meaningfully in Public Service Board processes.

Legislation adopted over the past several years authorize municipalities to adopt solar development screening bylaws, and to address §248 project issues in Town Plans in such a way as to warrant greater consideration and deference by the Public Service Board.

Act 56, adopted in June 2015:

- mandated statutory minimum setbacks for solar electric generation facilities, as an amendment to 30 VSA §248(s). The statute states that the Public Service Board *may* require setbacks greater than those mandated.
- authorized municipalities to adopt solar screening requirements as a 'municipal bylaw... under 24 VSA Section 4414(15)' or by a 'municipal ordinance...under 24 VSA Section 2291(28)'.
- added 30 V.S.A. §248(a)(4)(F) to read: (F) The legislative body and the planning commission for the municipality in which a facility is located shall have the right to appear as a party in any proceedings held under this subsection.

Metro -- is in the process of constructing a natural gas pipeline that would transmit gas through the Town, and also develop local distribution lines that would serve a small portion of New Haven near the Town Offices, School and Village Center. The Town has been an active participant in the Public Service Board review process and has negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement with VGS to reduce adverse impacts of the project and ensure that a portion of the Town will have access to natural gas distribution service.

Within New Haven are a rapidly escalating number of non-utility distributed electrical generation facilities, all of which have been constructed within the last few years. These vary in size from the 2.2MW Cross Pollination solar facility on Route 7 approved by the Public Service Board in 2011, to several ground-mounted group net metering arrays, to many dozens of residential rooftop solar panels generating a few kilowatts of power used primarily on site. The list of

Background: New Haven's Experience with Utility and Non-Utility Energy Projects

In 2009, VELCO completed a major upgrade to its transmission infrastructure within the Town, including the addition of a 345 kV line and construction of a much larger substation off Route 17 west of the Village Center. Green Mountain Power has installed lines connecting to the VELCO

applications and project proposals is too fluid to describe accurately, but in the several years preceding the writing of this 2017 Town Plan, has included at least one additional 2.2MW facility occupying over 20 acres of farmland, and well over a dozen ground-mounted group net metering project proposals, several located on prime agricultural soils or on wetlands. Several of these have been constructed; others are undergoing PSB review or Vermont Supreme Court appeal.

As a result of this profusion of distributed electric generation within the Town, Green Mountain Power has designated most of the distribution circuits serving the Town as "Poor" (red) on their online Solar Map, indicating that these circuits are at or exceeding capacity. As of the writing of this Town Plan, only a small portion of the easterly side of New Haven has available capacity on its distribution lines, according to GMP.

infrastructure.

The VELCO upgrade project was strongly opposed by many New Haven residents. The Town participated in the Public Service Board process, opposing the VELCO upgrade and vigorously arguing that the lines within the Town should be buried to diminish the significant negative aesthetic impact of the project. The PSB did not rule in the Town's favor, and the massive power line today creates

a garish contrast with New Haven's stunning visual landscape, particularly from certain views on Route 7 and as they cross Main Street (Route 17) just west of the Village Center. It is likely that further expansion within the VELCO transmission corridor from New Haven to Williston will be proposed at a future time.

In 2011, the PSB issued its approval for the construction of the 2.2MW Cross Pollination facility on Route 7 in New Haven. This was one of the first solar electric generation facilities constructed in the State. The Town accepted its role as host to this -- at that time -- unique and innovative energy development, but advocated strongly for substantive aesthetic mitigation to minimize the visual impact on project neighbors and travelers on Route 7. The Town worked closely with Addison County Regional Planning to improve on the project's proposed siting and screening designs. While the project was constructed employing some of these mitigation measures, such as siting the project further from the roadway than originally planned, and housing the inverters in small structures that appear to be barns or sugar shacks, as of this writing the landscaping screening has not been completely installed. The plantings that have been done have failed to thrive and are not currently serving the intended function.

Within a few years after the Cross Pollination project construction, Vermont adopted economic and regulatory incentives for solar development,

particularly net-metered projects, and New Haven was inundated with notices for proposed solar development. Unlike the long and engaging review process for Cross Pollination, the legislature had put solar development on a fast track. While many of these notices were for roof-top residential solar projects that did not cause public concern, the Town also received a rapidly increasing number of applications for ground mounted net-metered solar arrays covering more than an acre of land, and then for a Standard Offer project covering over 20 acres of farmland. The Town through the Planning Commission, and then the Selectboard, scrambled to find effective ways to participate in the PSB process for the new facilities.

Most of the ground-mounted net metering projects in Town serve customers outside of New Haven; most sell their renewable energy credits, and thus can not legally be deemed renewable energy.

While Townspeople recognize the necessity of utility infrastructure, it is evident that the Town is bearing a disproportionate share of the adverse impacts of utility development (overloaded distribution lines and substation infrastructure, degradation of nearby property values through inserting industrial facilities in residential zones, diminishment of cultural, environment and scenic resources including aesthetics and loss of open lands and farmlands, impact on wildlife habitat and critical agricultural economy, and potential impacts on the future of land use planning

and development patterns) designed primarily to serve development outside the Town, and in many cases outside the county or State. It is the Town's objective to ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to mitigate any further adverse impacts on the Town from utility and non-utility energy facilities, including

generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure, particularly with respect to protecting the high quality of the Town's scenic character.

24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3): Analysis Of Energy Resources, Needs, Scarcities, Costs, And Problems Within The Region, Across All Energy Sectors, Including Electric, Thermal, And Transportation

A. Electric

New Haven is rich in electric energy resources. Hydropower from the Belden Dam, and power from the Cross Pollination solar photovoltaic plant, together with numerous rooftop and ground mounted solar arrays, already produce far more power within the Town than is consumed within the Town.

New Haven's electricity needs, according to the Community Energy Dashboard, is 5,277,600kWh per year: 7200kWh year average Vermont household X 733 household units in New Haven (assuming 100% occupancy).

The Belden Falls hydropower facility produces 9,600,000kWh/year, and is slated for a substantial production expansion. This one facility alone produces nearly twice New Haven's electric consumption.

Four properties in New Haven generate power from wind, producing 36,724kWh per year.

New Haven is ranked second in the state for the quantity of ground-mounted solar electric generation facilities. There are 33 ground-mounted solar sites in New Haven, producing 5,620,134kWh/year -- also in excess of New Haven's electrical needs.

As of the writing of this Town Plan, 35 New Haven residents also have roof-mounted solar electric generation equipment, producing 301,714kWh of power per year.

TOWN ELECTRIC NEEDS: 5,277,600kWh

TOWN ELECTRIC GENERATION: 15,558,572kWh

The issue of scarcity and need for New Haven in regards to electricity is inverted: The challenge faced by the Town is that distributed generation has saturated local distribution lines. The primary need of the Town in terms of electricity is to strive to ensure that electric

GMP-owned low-impact certified hydropower facility (§8005(d)). The Town also hosts, at present, four small wind-power generation facilities for on-site use.

(4) meet the standards for issuing a determination of energy compliance included in the State energy plans.

It is unclear how the State legislature intended this Act 176 requirement of 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(4) to differ from the same requirement stated in 24 V.S.A. § 4348a(a)(3)(D), above. They appear to be identical -- compliance with State energy plans. As stated above, this New Haven Town Plan meets these standards.

Siting, Screening And Performance Standards Applicable To All Utility/§248 Projects In New Haven

The Town's experience with recent projects (further described in the Energy Plan section) has led to the following specific standards to be required of any utilities or other §248 developers, including energy, fuel, and communications project developers, to limit and mitigate impacts on the Town's health, safety and scenic character. The Town expressly intends these standards to reflect the position of the Town and to be given the maximum deference, weight and consideration in any proceeding before the Vermont Public Service Board or other regulatory agencies or courts. These standards are in addition to standards pertaining to ground-mounted solar development siting and screening contained in the Energy Plan section.

It is also the Town's policy to intervene in utility and other §248 project review processes for project proposed in other towns at locations near New Haven's borders, and to request that these same standards be applied to the extent that the proposed project would affect New Haven property, scenic views, historic and natural resources, or aesthetics from public roadways, recreational resources or New Haven residences.

- **Noise.** Strict noise limits must be imposed on any substations, converter stations, natural gas gate stations, generating plants, and any other utility or merchant §248 projects or infrastructure to avoid adverse impacts on the Town and its residents. To comply with this standard, noise levels at the property line, or the line of legal control for a project (whichever is lesser) cannot exceed 45dBa between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 40dBa at all other times. Such standards must be imposed in an enforceable manner requiring reasonable monitoring and timelines for compliance.

- **Aesthetics.** Utility and other §248 infrastructure must be sited in a manner that minimizes impacts on scenic views, public highways, and nearby property owners. Each project must incorporate screening that breaks up the visible area of the project in a manner that: prevents unobstructed views of the project; mitigates adverse aesthetic impacts on views from residences, public highways and recreation resources; and harmonizes the project with the character of the surrounding landscape and neighborhood including historic and scenic resources and natural areas. All projects must comply with the requirements of any duly adopted siting and screening bylaws or ordinances.
- **Health and Safety.** Utility and other §248 infrastructure must be developed and maintained with safeguards to preserve the health and safety of residents and visitors to New Haven. Developers of projects that pose unique or increased health or safety risks must provide public safety agencies serving the Town with training, equipment and compensation commensurate with the increased risks.
- **Landowner and Public Impacts.** Utility and other §248 projects must make full use of existing infrastructure before new infrastructure is built. Proposed utility infrastructure must be designed to provide substantive economic benefits to the Town and its residents. Developers of projects that impose significant adverse effects on New Haven or individual residents or landowners must provide compensation to the Town and affected parties.
- **Eminent Domain.** The use of eminent domain to take property or property rights in New Haven is strongly discouraged. Utilities and other §248 project developers must use all available measures to reach voluntary resolutions with property owners that do not require the use of eminent domain.
- **Electric Transmission Lines.** Electric transmission and distribution lines, including those used to service new development in the Town, must meet the following standards:
 - All transmission lines and infrastructure must be constructed underground.
 - If lines must be constructed above ground, single poles, as opposed to H-frame poles, will be used in all locations clearly visible from public vantage points.
 - In locations where the lines will be clearly visible from public vantage points, multiple lines shall be carried on a single set of poles where ever feasible to minimize visual clutter, with recognition that this will need to be balanced with the Town’s interest in avoiding excessively tall poles.
 - If new poles are proposed to be placed alongside existing poles, the new poles will be aligned with existing poles to minimize visual clutter and will not be located any closer to the highway than any existing pole.
 - Where above ground electric transmission lines cross state or Town roads, the distribution lines along those roads must be placed underground as needed to

Scenic Resources

Rainbow from South Street. Photo: Brad Bull



The mandate of New Haven's residents is clear: Protect the Town's scenic resources. The beauty of New Haven greatly enhances the quality of life for residents as well as anyone passing through the Town whether on a daily commute or a once-in-a-lifetime vacation.

In assessing New Haven's landscape in the face of the VELCO line expansion project in 2005, then-Chairman of the Public Service Board Michael Dworkin, stated this:

The view eastwards is sustained and includes farms and villages, backed by the broad sweep of our Green Mountains, including the Bristol Cliffs Wilderness Area and the cliffs themselves. The view westwards shows the farmland of the Champlain Valley, backed by open lake and 5,000 feet of rise to the Great Peaks of the Adirondacks. These views are not just beautiful; they also epitomize the Champlain Valley's motto of 'a land of milk and honey' – a working landscape surrounded by natural beauties that refresh us as we work and live. Here we see the balance that Vermonters have inherited, preserved and created.

...[W]hile we can glimpse a balanced landscape in many places throughout Vermont, the New Haven views, even more than others, shows that balance to us all.

Farmland plays a significant role in New Haven's scenic richness. Town residents recognize the value of not only protected the scenic qualities of farmland, but in ensuring the economic viability of local farms. Residents have proposed a variety of possible economic approaches to protecting the Town's cultural heritage farming landscape, while also supporting farm families.



Much of the Town's most valuable scenic resources are located within the Rural Planning Area, and more specifically within the RA Zoning District. New Haven's density-based zoning and preclusion of most non-agricultural commercial and industrial uses within the RA Zoning District provides significant protection to these scenic resources. Design and siting standards, as discussed in the Rural Planning Area segment of this Town Plan, as well as the siting and screening standards delineated in the Energy Plan segment of this Town Plan, also help to protect the Town's substantial aesthetic assets. The Town's dark sky policy will help protect night time aesthetics as well.

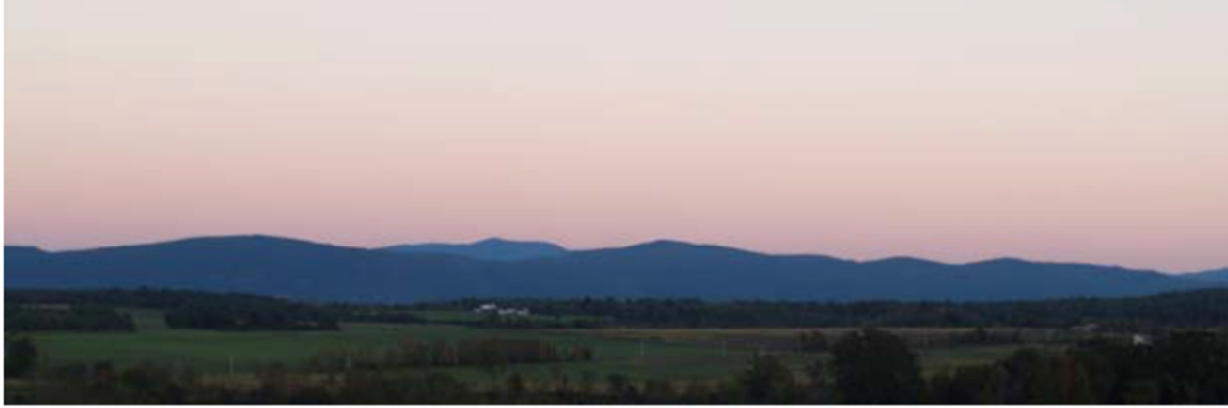


Photo: Mike Lawrence, Landscape Architect

Several local and state resources form the foundation for future planning for protection of New Haven's rich aesthetic resources. These include: a scenic viewsheds map developed by two former members of the planning commission, which is available at the Town Offices; a Route 7 corridor study done in conjunction with the Planning Commission, also available at the Town Offices; an extensive statewide visual resource guide developed by T.J.Boyle for the Vermont Public Service Board in the 1970s (utilized by several towns in Vermont such as Whiting to define their scenic areas; the book is out of print, and attempts will be made to ensure a copy is available at the Town Offices); and the 1991 Vermont Agency of Natural Resources publication, *Vermont's Scenic Landscapes: A Guide for Growth and Protection* by Elizabeth Courtney (also out of print, and attempts are being made to secure a copy for the Town Offices). Other resources include the National Park Service guidance documents for identifying and preserving cultural landscapes.

Over the next few years, the Town will study these resources and engage the community to develop a scenic resource protection plan. Potential tools to be considered will include economic incentive and support measures.

In the meantime, the Town has long designated three roadways in the Town as scenic corridors: the Otter Creek Highway (Route 17 west of New Haven Junction); Main Street (Route 17 east of New Haven Junction); and the Ethan Allen Highway (Route 7, excluding the highway commercial and industrial zones). The vistas from these scenic corridors are scenic viewsheds and must be maintained and preserved.

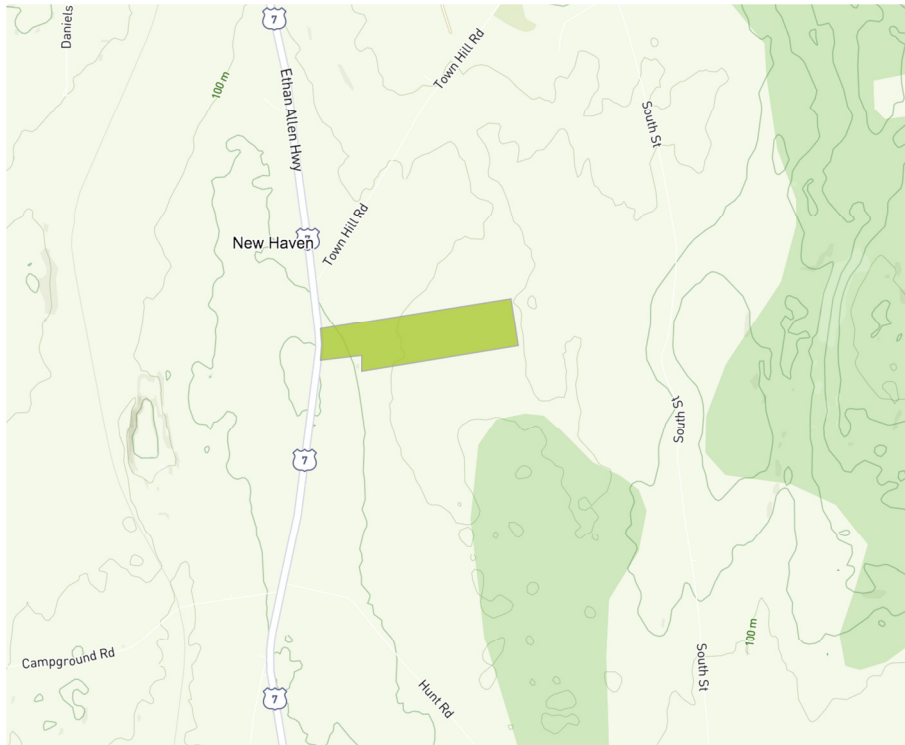
Due to the cultural, economic, agricultural and aesthetic significance of the Addison County Farm and Field Days, and the role the intact cultural landscape surrounding that location plays in the value of the Field Days site, the views from Otter Creek Highway and Field Days Road are designated as scenic viewsheds and must be maintained and preserved.

In 2004, New Haven Valley View, a joint project of the Champlain Valley Greenbelt Alliance and the MALT, was conserved to maintain a sweeping vista along Route 7 in New Haven of the Bristol Cliffs and Green Mountains. The 60-acre property was slated for development

until MALT and CVGA raise the necessary funds to protect it and help keep Vermont, and New Haven, open and scenic.

Seven million people travel Route 7 each year. This view, along with one in Shelburne preserved by the Dexter Fund were noted as two of the most important individual vistas seen from Route 7 between Burlington and Middlebury.

MALT conservation property, Route 7, New Haven Vermont. Source: MALT website.



The views from Main Street (Route 17) are those specifically referenced by PSB Chairman Dworkin in the VELCO case, quoted above.

South Street, running parallel to Route 7 and connecting the Village Center with River Road, is also designated a scenic corridor. The view from South Street which looks back to the New Haven Valley View is also designated a scenic viewshed.



View southward along South Street from the Village Green.

Photo: Mike Lawrence, landscape architect



Views along South Street epitomize New Haven's rural landscape and diversity of agricultural economy. Photo: Mike Lawrence, landscape architect.

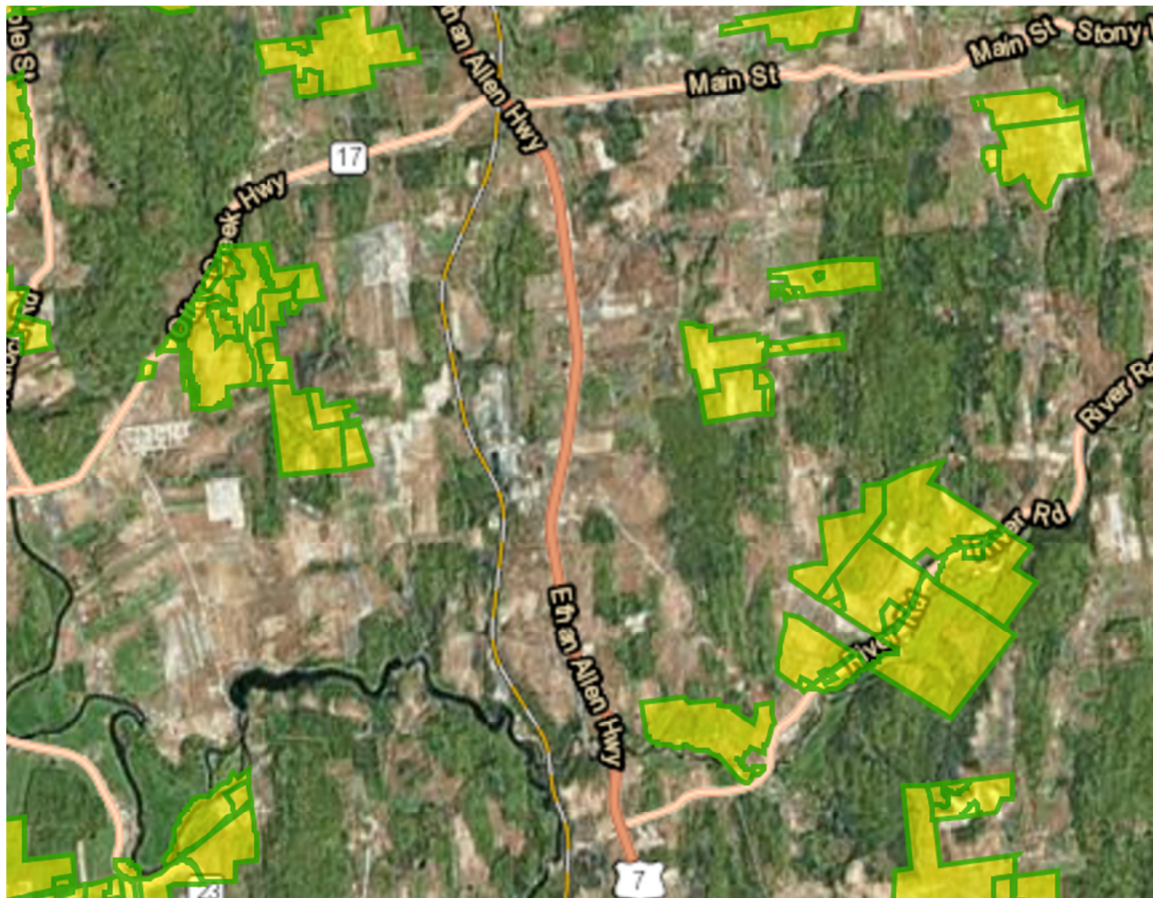
These designated scenic viewsheds are to be maintained and preserved. This does not mean that development within these viewsheds is prohibited; it means that development within these viewsheds must be appropriately sited and scaled, and if necessary augmented with visual mitigation such as landscaping in a naturalized style that

harmonizes with the hedgerows, forest blocks or other landscape features in which it is to be located.

The Town shall amend its zoning bylaws to implement this designation of scenic viewsheds. The Town will also explore additional measures for scenic viewshed protection including economic incentive and support measures.

These scenic viewsheds are primarily located within the Rural Planning District; specific design standards relative to that district for the purpose of maintaining New Haven's scenic beauty are contained in the Rural Planning District section of this Town Plan.

Vermont Land Trust conservation properties in New Haven, Vermont, help protect the Town's scenic resources and rural landscape while supporting the local agricultural economy. Source: Vermont Land Trust website.





The heart of Addison County: View of the Field Days Road valley from the Addison County Fair and Field Days ferris wheel. Field Days celebrates Addison County's rural heritage in the context of a cultural heritage landscape reflecting New Haven's centuries of local farming. Photo: Melissa Plouffe

The preservation of agriculture, and protection of the natural, cultural, historic and aesthetic resources that create the town's unique character and sense of identity are evident in Field Days as they have been since its inception. It is the focal point of the Addison County farming community, and many New Haven residents as well as people throughout the county plan their yearly calendar around Field Days, preparing livestock for show or intricate handicrafts and artworks for the home and garden competitions. Children from farm families or participating in 4H and scouting groups spend weeks learning to lead their animals for show and learn to carry on our local farm-based culture.

Non-farm children and other visitors are introduced to Vermont's agricultural traditions in the petting barn. Antique farm implements are housed at the site and used for demonstration purposes. One of the highlights has been the hand-scythe mowing competition, which could become a lost art.

The view of this pastoral landscape from this highly public location of the Field Days fairgrounds, as well as along Route 17 -- the Otter Creek Highway -- approaching and leaving the fair, is an iconographic reflection of the cultural heritage of the Town of New Haven and of the farmlands of Addison County. The valley that comprises this viewshed is characterized by the 1971 TJ Boyle inventory as highly scenic as well as fragile -- intrusion of elements inconsistent with the rural character of this landscape will significantly degrade its quality as an intact rural landscape. New Haven supports and will continue to support the presence of the Addison County Fair and Field Days fairgrounds as well as the Field Days event and additional agriculture-related events in this location. The scenic viewshed surrounding the Field Days fairgrounds shall be preserved. No uses other than farm and related residences shall be permitted within this viewshed, and these uses shall be sited and designed to minimize visual impact from the fairgrounds and Route 17 to the greatest extent feasible.

Historic Resources

The State Register of Historic Places presently lists the New Haven Village Historic District as well as 72 other sites in the Town. Four sites are listed on the National Historic Register. The Town encourages the preservation, renovation and restoration of existing structures and the maintenance of historic districts. The Town supports adaptive reuse of existing historical structures. The New Haven Historical Society (formed 1996) provides educational programs about the Town's past and works to conserve valuable reminders of our heritage.



Land Use Plan 24 VSA §4382(a)(2)

Land Use and Rural Character

The primary land use goal of this Town Plan, which is widely supported by residents, is the protection of New Haven's rural character, including its agriculturally-based cultural heritage landscape, agriculture and other local business based economy, and the high quality of intact scenic landscape and viewsheds that exist and are maintained by these factors. The large box-store suburban sprawl ubiquitous to many urban shopping zones is incompatible and undesirable to New Haven residents and the Town. Maintaining rural character is a multi-faceted challenge, but this Plan and the zoning and subdivision regulations that implement it are tools by which the Town accommodates growth and change while remaining a vital, livable community.

Traditional rural development patterns are diverse and complex, arising organically from the evolution of historic uses of the land. Rural areas are distinguished from suburban areas by more than simply lower densities. Unlike the consistent pattern of land use, lot size, setback, building types that are characteristic of suburban landscapes, variety and diversity characterizes rural landscapes. There are, however, important common themes: The rural cultural heritage landscape, natural elements like wetlands and forest blocks, and terrain factors like rolling hills, vistas

and ridgelines, dominate the views and the development patterns throughout New Haven -- the built environment is not the dominant element in all but some very small tight segments of the town such as the Village Center, and in such areas, the human scale and historic architectural elements help tie that built environment to the surrounding landscape.

The National Park Service has developed guidance for identifying and protecting cultural landscapes. According to the NPS, cultural landscapes can vary in size from a small homestead to a region of thousands of acres, and are important due to how they reveal the history of residents' evolving relationship with the natural world. A **cultural landscape** is defined by the NPS as "a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values." There are four general types of cultural landscapes, not mutually exclusive: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

While there are historic sites, structures and districts within New Haven, the Town is primarily composed of an **Historic Vernacular Landscape**—a landscape that evolved through use by the people

The other commonly used option is the planned unit development (PUD), which encourages the allowable development on a property to be grouped together on smaller lots with a significant amount (usually at least 50%) of the original parcel set aside as open space or productive land.

The “view from the road” is extremely important in establishing the Town’s rural character. Together with scenic viewshed protections, subdivision review, PUD and conditional use review, which can require screening and design elements to mitigate visual impact, density-based residential zoning and the prohibition of incompatible uses from the RA zone helps preserve New Haven’s visual and cultural heritage landscape. As new development occurs in New Haven’s rural areas, this Plan and the land use regulation tools that implement it shall be employed towards maintaining or enhancing the Town’s rural character as described in this Plan and that view from the road to the greatest extent feasible. For example, where development is proposed on open land, new residences or farm buildings can be placed along the edges of fields or woodlands to reduce their visual impact and conserve productive farmland with less fragmentation.

New Haven’s land use regulations will be revised to implement density-based zoning in the rural parts of Town. The Town’s planned unit development (PUD) provisions, conditional use and subdivision regulations will also reflect

appropriate standards and incentives to achieve development patterns appropriate to their surroundings in conformance with the goals of this Plan. The Town needs standards that respond to the unique character and special concerns of the areas described in this land use plan. Incentives should be considered for projects that promote low-income or senior housing development, or projects that create a positive dramatic scenic impact.

Signs and Junk

Inappropriate signs as well as ‘junk’ such as garbage or excessive numbers of unregistered vehicles diminish the aesthetic beauty, quality of life and property values of the Town. During the planning process for this Town Plan, several residents encouraged the Town to clarify and bolster enforceability of zoning regulations in regards to both junk and business signs, particularly lighted signs and mobile signs. It is the Town’s policy to protect the aesthetic elements of the community in all zones, and not only in designated scenic viewsheds or noted scenic resource areas. The Town will revisit its zoning regulations regarding signage and junk to bolster this protection.

Lighting: Dark Sky Policy

The Town hereby adopts a Dark Sky policy to support the rural nighttime environment. Dark skies create a restful nighttime environment conducive to human health and the natural nocturnal ecology. Dark skies at night play a

State Designations. The state has recognized a portion of the Village Center Planning Area as a historic district and has inventoried its contributing historic structures. The importance of these historic resources are critical components of the character of this area and the Village Center's sense of place. Town regulations shall ensure that they provide flexibility for the ongoing use of historic structures and discourage demolition or inappropriate renovations.

The Town's Village Center designation

New Haven Mills Village Planning Area

Character. Historically, New Haven Mills was one of several distinct centers in Town and it was focused around the waterpower resources of the New Haven River. Currently, this area is primarily residential, with a core of historic homes on small lots.

Density and Uses. There is limited potential for additional development within the core and this Plan envisions continued moderate density uses, primarily residential in this area. Higher density zoning standards will be implemented in this area, with consideration of incentives for clustered, energy-efficient, affordable or other types of residential development that further the goals of this plan.

Rural Planning Area

Character. The rural planning area is the heart of New Haven's scenic and cultural resources. This area defines the cultural heritage and quality of life of the Town, and contributes immensely to the Town's

has made income-producing properties eligible for state tax credits, which should be used to support maintenance and appropriate rehabilitation of historic structures. Village Center designation has also enhanced the Town's ability to obtain grant funding for public improvements in this area. The Town will make all reasonable efforts to maintain its Village Center designation and to remain abreast of, and take advantage of, potential grant programs or other opportunities to enhance and maintain this Village Center.

agricultural economy and robust property values. The character of this area is agricultural and rural residential with relatively low- to medium-density residential development typically sited close to Town roads or on private roads. Flexible, density-based residential development standards in this area, together with preclusion of non-compatible land uses, will be implemented through subdivision and zoning regulations to preserve farm land and scenic viewsheds. In general, this would not constitute a change in overall density, but allows flexibility to place house lots as best suits the individual property. Clustering of homes on smaller lots, rather than dispersed development, is encouraged in order to conserve larger areas of productive or open space land.

Development. This planning area includes most of the Town's productive agricultural land. All available and feasible means shall be used to preserve prime agricultural farmland and

limit development that is out of character with the traditional landscape. For example, large-scale, fragmentary, and sprawling residential development in this area is prohibited. Commercial and industrial development is prohibited with the exception of agriculture, forestry, a limited number of specific outdoor recreation uses, and appropriately sized and located home businesses and home occupations. Over all, density of development must remain low, with any additional non-farm residences carefully sited to minimize impacts on quality farmland and scenic and natural resources.

Specific design standards shall apply to new development in the Rural Planning Area in recognition of the existence of a concentration of agricultural and forest lands to protect the extraordinary scenic resources such lands and uses provide. Any land use in this area, including single-family dwellings, shall require approval under those regulatory guidelines. Development other than agricultural structures or single family residences developed on lots existing as of January 1, 2017 in this area shall not be sited in prominently visible locations on hillsides or ridgelines, and shall, at a minimum, utilize earth tone colors and non-reflective materials on exterior surfaces of all structures, and must minimize clearing of natural vegetation. Agricultural structures and single family residences shall be encouraged to follow the same guidelines, and/or to harmonize

the structure with the surrounding built and natural environment.

Conservation and Resource Protection. As illustrated on the resource maps included in this plan, New Haven has significant natural areas with characteristics that seriously constrain development. The Town's zoning and subdivision bylaws shall protect the Town's wetlands, flood hazard areas, riparian areas, important habitat, areas with shallow soil, and other natural areas. Such lands should be kept in active agricultural or forestry use, or in their natural state.

Land uses permitted in these areas must be compatible with the limitations of these areas, such as agriculture, forestry and low-impact outdoor recreation. Uses allowed in such areas are severely limited in order to conserve these important agricultural and natural resources. Development proposals in these areas are reviewed to determine potential impact on sensitive natural resources, access and scenic considerations.

Buffers of land must be retained to minimize the impacts of any development on sensitive resources. This is particularly important along streams and wetlands, where poorly planned development can result in reduced water quality, and increased flood and erosion hazards. The Town's land use regulations will include provisions for creating riparian buffers when development may affect water quality.

Recommended Actions

Implementation 24 VSA §4382(a)(7)

New Haven sets ambitious goals for itself in the coming years to implement the ideas, policies and goals set out in this plan.

- Action 1.** The Town's zoning and subdivision regulations need to be updated by the New Haven Planning Commission. This Town Plan specifically speaks to a need for the following:
- A. Review and, if necessary, revise the Town's zoning and subdivision bylaws to promote compact village growth, cluster development and encourage settlement patterns that reduce travel requirements for work, services, shopping and recreation; adopt density-based zoning.
 - B. Revise the Town's zoning and subdivision bylaws to include incentives for creation of well-constructed, affordable, energy-efficient, low-maintenance and/or smaller homes for singles, young couples and elders whose needs are not well met by New Haven's existing housing stock, including attached and rental units.
 - C. Require thoughtful planning and design of development to protect designated scenic views of open land and mountains so valued by residents of successive generations and by visitors.
 - D. Consider the fiscal impact on municipal finances and the Town's taxpayers of proposed projects as part of the development review process.
 - E. Consider the impact of new or expanding businesses on the existing transportation network as part of the development review process.
 - F. Prepare and adopt guidelines for all new driveway and road construction to ensure the adequacy and safety of emergency vehicle access.
 - G. Adopt subdivision regulations relative to development of subsized and lawfully sized lots by lease or easement, consistent with this Plan.
 - H. Adopt commercial and energy siting and solar screening and setback bylaws consistent with this Town Plan, and adopt provisions as necessary to ensure that no §248 facility shall have the effect of