

**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**AGENDA**  
**Thursday November 12, 2020**  
**NOTE DATE & START TIME 6:30pm**

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Act 92 OML compliant Zoom meeting

Topic: Planning Commission

Time: November 12, 2020 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82768594832">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82768594832</a>  Meeting ID: 827 6859 4832  One tap mobile +13126266799,,82768594832# US (Chicago) +19292056099,,82768594832# US (New York)
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1. Approve Agenda
2. Meeting Objectives:
  - Appoint a member of the Planning Commission to the Green Fleet Working Group
  - Debrief on the Town Plan Process and future strategies
  - Update on Town Plan Action Items
  - Update on Village Designation
3. Comments from the Public
4. Review and approve Minutes October 22, 2020
5. Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence
  - Correspondence
  - Updates
6. Appoint a member of the Planning Commission to the Green Fleet Working Group
7. Debrief on the Town Plan Process and future strategies
8. Report on Town Plan action items (Jaci Allen)
9. Update on Village Designation (Rod Francis)
10. Other Business
11. Future Meeting Schedule & Agendas
12. Comments from the Public

**Future Meetings:**

**Thursday, December 10, 6:30pm Regular Meeting**

**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Thursday October 22, 2020 6:30pm**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

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Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86340389705>

Meeting ID: 863 4038 9705

Members Present: Melissa Horwitz (C), Brian Loeb, Jaci Allen, Jeff Goodrich, Jeff Lubell, Leah Romano, Ernie Ciccotelli  
Public Present: Stuart Richards, Linda Cook, Claudette Brochu  
Staff: Rod Francis

**Meeting Opened:** 6:32pm

1. Approve Agenda:

Allen moved and Romano seconded a motion to approve the Agenda.

Commissioners discussed the need to ratify, adopt and confirm the letter written on behalf of the commission by Chair Horwitz to Commissioner Ciccotelli and Messrs. Richards and Wilberding dated October 16, 2020.

Goodrich asked that there are several items that need to be addressed in future agendas, including the after-action review on the 2020 town plan, comments from Doug Wilberding with regard to conflict of interest involving him [Goodrich] and Brandy Saxton. And lastly, how the commission makes appointments given the agenda item for appointing a commissioner to the childcare committee.

Chair Horwitz acknowledged that this agenda changed greatly due to the circumstances the commission finds itself in and that it is hoped that these important agenda items will get picked up at the next regular meeting.

After discussion Francis suggested that the motion to ratify, adopt and confirm the letter could be discussed under item 7.

Loeb asked that items six and seven be reversed.

Allen, who moved and Romano, who seconded the motion, were agreeable to amending the motion such that items six and seven be reversed. Motion carried 6 – 1.

2. Meeting Objectives:

- o Follow up on response to allegations that the 2020 Town Plan is based on actions that violated the Open Meeting Law (OML) made by Commissioner Ciccotelli and Messrs Richards and Wilberding
- o Appoint a member of the Planning Commission to the Norwich Child Care Committee

3. Comments from the Public: Stuart Richards commented that the revised July minutes are better than the earlier draft and then requested that when a member of the public makes comments that are germane to items on the agenda that they be recorded, and further, each motion record the individual votes of commissioners.

4. Review and approve Minutes September 10, 2020 and October 16, 2020.

Allen moved and Lubell seconded a motion to approve the minutes of September 10, 2020. Motion carried 5–2.

Allen moved and Goodrich seconded a motion to approve the minutes as amended of October 16, 2020.

Goodrich asked that a sentence be inserted between the first and second paragraph of item four to read “Goodrich asked that if Ernie needs to recuse himself then why don’t I?”

Motion carried 7–0.

5. Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence
  - Correspondence: Stuart Richards
  - Updates: Francis introduced the meeting notes from the Village Center Designation walk which hosted Richard Amore that took place on October 16, 2020
6. Follow up on response to allegations that the 2020 Town Plan is based on actions that violated the Open Meeting Law (OML) made by Commissioner Ciccotelli and Messrs Richards and Wilberding.

Chair Horwitz signaled that entering executive session was again necessary and asked if commissioner Ciccotelli would recuse himself. Ciccotelli declined.

Chair Horwitz moved and Allen seconded a motion to enter into executive session where it can be established under:

- 1 VSA §313:
  - (1) that premature public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage:
  - (F) confidential attorney-client communications for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body
- And
- 1 V.S.A. § 313:
  - (6) [to consider] records exempt from access to public records provisions of section 316 of ...[Title 1]; provided, however, that discussion of the exempt record shall not itself permit an extension of the executive session to the general subject to which the record pertains.

Commissioners discussed the purpose and need for entering into executive session.

Motion carried 5–2.

At approximately 7:04PM the commission entered executive session.

At approximately 7:30PM the commission exited executive session.

Lubell commented that he was uncomfortable granting authority to Chair Horwitz to sign a letter because it will likely contain corrective action(s). He would prefer to discuss the possible corrective action(s) first, and then possibly authorize Chair Horwitz to sign a letter.

Lubell moved and Allen seconded a motion to ratify the letter of October 16, 2020 signed by Chair Horwitz. Discussion ensued.

Goodrich objected that this letter did not reflect his notes, his emails, or his knowledge of what occurred.

Lubell noted that the situation was made more difficult by being unable to receive the benefit of reviewing town legal counsel's work product because commissioner Ciccotelli would not recuse himself from executive session. He considered use of the term "working group" did not magically transform something into a series of actions that required application of the Open Meeting Law.

Ciccotelli commented that the letter suggests that the commission was subordinate to the Planning Director. This is inaccurate. No-one has ever discussed that this process would involve a lawsuit. This letter makes it almost certain that we are headed down the path of litigation. This letter does not conform to his recollection of events.

Allen commented on the apparent irony that the 2018 plan suffered withering criticism for a lack of public input. The commission conducted 28 interviews 13 public outreach sessions and posted all of this on our website, the commission included details of this in the plan. There was nothing that the commission was trying to hide. The commission was working with the rules as understood at the time. The commission are now working with a new understanding of OML and have committed to doing more training.

Romano said her reaction to the letter was that possible edits to the letter could have improved it, could the letter have been shorter?

Goodrich sought clarification that Horwitz wrote the letter versus signing it. Horwitz responded that she conferred with town legal counsel in the preparation of the letter.

Motion carried 4–2.

Stuart Richards commented that commissioners were acting without the benefit of reading the letter transmitted at 3:30pm today.

Horwitz confirmed that the letter was transmitted too late to be considered. Richards again urged commissioners to reconsider the direction of the response to the complaint of October 6, 2020 because it did not contain an acknowledgement that violations of the OML took place.

Goodrich repeated the suggestion that Stuart Richards could enter the concerns expressed in today's emailed letter into the record by reading it.

Lubell suggested two corrective actions i) in the future the commission should not use working groups or subcommittees without adhering to OML notice and minute-taking requirements and ii) commissioners should participate in the forthcoming town OML training.

Allen and Romano expressed agreement.

Stuart Richards commented that undertaking to do things differently in the future is different from correcting violations in the past. These two things are different. He encouraged commissioners to think again and contemplate amending the town plan to include findings from the 2005 and 2018 survey.

Lubell moved and Goodrich seconded a motion that the Norwich Planning Commission take a corrective action to discontinue the use of working groups and subcommittees unless they are prepared to warn their meetings in compliance with OML. Motion carried 6–0.

Lubell moved and Allen seconded a motion to encourage commissioners to participate in the upcoming OML training. Motion carried 4–0–2.

Lubell asked if the draft letter could be circulated among commissioners for comment.

Goodrich offered the view that this would contravene OML, but that circulating the letter (that Horwitz did not write) in the packet for the next meeting and then having a public discussion about its content and revision would be acceptable.

Horwitz repeated that this would make her uncomfortable because it would be a breach of attorney client privilege.

Goodrich stated that he wanted time to reflect on any letter we are asking the Chair to sign.

Lubell asked Ciccotelli if he would withdraw his formal complaint. This would then possibly allow him to participate in privileged communication with legal counsel moving forward.

Horwitz again expressed her concern, suggesting that if Ciccotelli were to withdraw this would not prevent potential litigation on the complaint, and that this suggestion did not avoid a breach of attorney client privilege.

Ciccotelli responded to Lubell that the whole goal for him was to make the planning commission a real planning commission again, make it better, more responsive to the actual majority of people in the town. Removing his name from the complaint would not change that. His goal is to make things better, not litigation. He didn't think it was a good idea to take his name off the complaint.

Lubell asked that Chair Horwitz and Francis seek clarification from town legal counsel on his point with regard to protecting attorney client privilege by considering Ciccotelli no longer a party to the complaint.

Horwitz brought commissioners back to consideration of the next steps, noting an apparent impasse.

Lubell stated that he was not comfortable authorizing a letter that promised actions without reviewing it first.

Francis reminded commissioners that the original complaint received on October 6, 2020 included allegations that OML was violated through the use of 'working groups' and that therefore the 2020 town plan was invalid. The commission had complied with OML by responding within 10 days on October 16, including the suggestion that in the future the commission would only use working groups or subcommittees where they complied with the provisions of OML. However, the second point, that the plan was invalid is awaiting a response in the second letter (not able to be reviewed tonight) and that this matter was also subject to attorney client privilege.

Goodrich stated that he thought that the town plan is valid, that it was duly adopted by the selectboard and approved by the TRORC. But that he could not comment on the questions raised by Francis concerning a response from the commission on the claim that the plan was invalid.

Ciccotelli asked for confirmation that the October 16 letter was ratified. Commissioners affirmed that it was.

Lubell moved and Goodrich seconded a motion that considering the allegations contained in the complaint of October 6, 2020 the planning commission nevertheless affirms the validity of 2020 town plan. Motion carried 5—1.

Commissioners discussed the date for setting a Special Meeting 6:30pm Thursday October 29.

7. Appoint a member of the Planning Commission to the Norwich Child Care Committee: Allen moved and Ciccotelli seconded a motion to appoint Loeb to the Norwich Childcare Committee. Motion carried 6—0.
8. Other Business: None
9. Future Meeting Schedule & Agendas

**Special Meeting October 29, 2020 6:30PM**

Ciccotelli raised again the need to discuss the need for debriefing on the town plan and making the commission a deliberative body.

Goodrich repeated his earlier request that agenda setting be discussed and that conflict of interest following comments from the public concerning his firm, him and Brandy Saxton.

Horwitz encouraged commissioners to email her and Ciccotelli suggested agenda items

10. Comments from the Public: Stuart Richards asked for confirmation (again) that commissioners had received communication dated October 22, at 3:30pm via email. He then asked commissioners to remember that they needed to look back as well as forward

Meeting adjourned 8:34pm

**Future Meetings:**

**Thursday, November 12, 6:30pm Regular Meeting**

**Thursday, December 10, 6:30pm Regular Meeting**

Respectfully submitted,  
Rod Francis

- What were we trying to accomplish?
- What was supposed to happen? What did happen? Why was there a difference between what we expected to happen and what did?
- What organizational constraints or barriers did we face?
- Did the team work productively together? Why or why not?
- Could we have taken another approach to reach our goals more efficiently and effectively?
- How can we do better next time? (remember most of us won't be on the planning commission the next time a town plan is written—so this could be helpful for others).

# TOWN OF NORWICH PLANNING & ZONING

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BY EMAIL AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Richard Amore, PLA/AICP  
Planning & Outreach Manager  
Community Planning + Revitalization  
Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development  
1 National Life Drive, Davis Bldg, 6th Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

October 30, 2020

Dear Richard,

## **Town of Norwich Application to Village Center Designation Program**

Norwich joined the Village Center Designation program in 2006 and last applied for renewal in 2012. Now that we again have a duly adopted and approved plan Norwich is eligible to apply for Village Center Designation.

This cover letter contains responses to each of the elements identified in the Application Guidelines New Checklist, commencing with item two.

- 2. Authorization from Town Selectboard:** The Selectboard discussed this application in the context of the 2020 Town Plan adoption process earlier this year and then on October 14, 2020 at their regular meeting. Our village walk although rainy was well attended and town officials and the public appreciated your efforts. At the October 28 regular Selectboard meeting you made a presentation on program benefits and requirements. At this meeting the Selectboard unanimously agreed to sign the resolution.
- 3. Notification to Regional Planning Commission and Regional Development Corporation:** I have been working closely with Bob Haynes, Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation (GMEDC) and Peter Gregory and team, at Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) to pull this application together and will be working with them as we plan village district projects and access needed benefits to keep Norwich village viable. See attached notification letters.
- 4. Confirmed Planning Process:** Norwich received plan approval and planning process confirmation (24 VSA §4350) on April 22, 2020. See attached confirmation letter.
- 5. Village Center Designation Boundary Map:** We worked with TRORC to capture a little more territory than the previous boundary provided for (2006 to 2018). After consulting with you on the walk we are asking that the St Barnabas church and parsonage on the south end of the village be included, as well as the grand brick homes immediately opposite on Route 5. These properties look across the town green which also is part of the Marion Cross School schoolyard. Other additions include the Senior Housing community on Dorrance Drive built in 1981 and three homes opposite the Norwich Public Library on Main St. The character and functional use of these proposed additional properties are consistent with the village and the program guidance. Images of these properties are included in the application and all images are indicated on the map submitted. Additional maps include the Zoning Map and the Historic District boundary map.
- 6. Photographs:** Thirteen images have been provided and are shown on the submitted Village Designation map. These images include: the new properties suggested to be included in the boundary, key features of the village including the small-scale and secluded open-space behind the bookstore, the provision of key services such as childcare, examples of substantial public investment such as the Police Fire complex and Public Library, and the iconic town green in winter. A list of images and their location is included.
- 7. Municipal Plan Integration:** At the time of preparing and adopting the 2020-Town Plan the Village Center designation for Norwich had lapsed. The 2020 plan identifies the need to apply again and describes the potential benefits that would flow from participation. Re-applying is a key recommendation of the Land Use Chapter. See attached excerpts from the 2020 Town Plan.

**8. Other Required Information:**

Municipal Infrastructure

*Water Supply:* Norwich has a Fire District which supplies potable water to properties in the village center as delineated on the Village Designation map.

*WasteWater:* Norwich does not have a wastewater system. There has been considerable discussion concerning an ongoing wastewater failure at the Marion Cross School. The 2020 Town Plan identifies the need for studies to better understand the current wastewater situation in the village which is solely dependent on on-site wastewater systems operated by property owners.

*Sidewalks:* The village enjoys an extensive sidewalk network which connects to sidewalks across the Ledyard Bridge and Hanover, NH. This connection between Norwich village and Hanover, NH enables a high level of bike pedestrian traffic in both directions. The Norwich Fire District is responsible for the sidewalk network in the village, although the Norwich Department of Public Works (DPW) provides winter maintenance. There is a feasibility study underway to extend the existing sidewalk out along Beaver Meadow Rd and integrate a bike-pedestrian trail bridge improving access to the Huntley Meadows playing fields owned by the town (just northwest of the proposed village center). Completing an inventory of sidewalks and trails is an action item in the 2020 Town Plan.

*Police Fire Complex:* The Town reaffirmed its commitment to the village by investing in a new energy efficient facility behind the firehouse in the village. The building was commissioned in 2018 and features a large training room and universal access.

Zoning district map

Please see both the zoning map and regulation language (see item #5 above)

National Register Historic District

Please see map\_(see item #5 above)

**Previous and Current Revitalization Activities:**

- The Norwich Winter Farmers Market has been holding the market in the municipal building in the center of the village for several years, it is hoped that covid-19 safe arrangements can be made so this local shopping activity remains supported
- The town fair continues to be held on the town green each summer
- The town recreation department has forged close ties with the Marion Cross School and local childcare providers to operate summer camps and after school programs centered on the village green and Tracy Hall (municipal offices) which was originally a gymnasium
- The Norwich Historical Society located in the Lewis House (c. 1807) on Main and Elm St offers access (including digital) to significant research collections and hosts programs that include contemporary community conversations informed by our past.
- The Norwich bookstore continues to foster local authors and brings them together with their readers through imaginative programming
- Dan and Whit’s general store has become the center of a covid-19 community response working with Fire Department volunteers to deliver groceries to vulnerable population residents and other in need
- The Norwich Public Library has recently installed a pergola, outdoor seating and a bicycle repair station while providing a wide range of services and programming responsive to the community

**Document List**

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Cover Letter                        | 8. Zoning Map                      |
| 2. Municipal Resolution                | 9. Zoning Regulations              |
| 3. Notification to TRORC               | 10. Historic District boundary map |
| 4. Notification to GMEDC               | 11. Photographs                    |
| 5. TRORC Planning Process Confirmation | 12. 2020 Town Plan Excerpt         |
| 6. Village Designation Map             | 13. GMEDC support letter           |
| 7. List of Images                      |                                    |

As demonstrated above, the village remains the center of civic life in Norwich, affording visitors and residents an opportunity to experience the pleasures of Vermont village life. We are very eager to rejoin the program and are keen to support efforts such as assisting Dan and Whit's general store meet the challenges of upgrading fire and life safety systems, improving sidewalk conditions, and resolving longstanding wastewater problems at the school.

Please be in touch with any questions you may have, I am at [norwichvtplanner@gmail.com](mailto:norwichvtplanner@gmail.com).  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rod Francis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Rod Francis  
Director of Planning & Zoning

Resolution authorizing the application for Village Center Designation for  
the Town of Norwich

WHEREAS, the State of Vermont, Division of Community Planning and Revitalization establishes a program entitled Village Center Designation whereby the state will recognize the local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Norwich is committed to the continued preservation and rehabilitation of our historic structures and revitalization of our village center; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Norwich has a confirmed planning process and support of the Regional Planning Commission and Economic Development Corporation in regard to this application as required by Village Center Designation application procedures;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that on this 14th day of October 2020, the Town of Norwich Selectboard has hereby voted to support the application for Norwich in accordance with the requirements of the Village Center Designation application,

SIGNED:

Claudette Brochu, Chair

Roger Arnold, Vice Chair

John Langhus

Mary Layton

Robert Gere

TOWN OF NORWICH  
PLANNING & ZONING

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Peter Gregory, AICP  
Executive Director  
TRORC  
128 King Farm Road  
Woodstock, VT 05091

October 29, 2020

Dear Peter,

**Town of Norwich Application for Village Center Designation**

As you know, we now have the 2020 Town Plan approved and planning process confirmed as stipulated under 24 VSA §4350 by Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission.

Our first task is to submit an application to re-instate the Village Center Designation for Norwich. This letter is to formally notify you of our intent to make application to the program, as required by item 3 in the application guidelines.

I want to thank you again for your support in the adoption and approval of the 2020 plan and thank you in advance for GIS support and other work provided in support of our application.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Rod Francis  
Director of Planning & Zoning  
Town of Norwich

TOWN OF NORWICH  
PLANNING & ZONING

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Robert E Haynes Jr  
Executive Director  
Green Mountain Economic  
Development Corporation  
35 Railroad Row, Suite 101  
White River Junction, VT 05001

October 29, 2020

Dear Bob,

**Town of Norwich Application for Village Center Designation**

As you know, we now have the 2020 Town Plan approved and planning process confirmed as stipulated under 24 VSA §4350 by Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission.

Our first task is to submit an application to re-instate the Village Center Designation for Norwich. This letter is to formally notify you of our intent to make application to the program, as required by item 3 in the application guidelines.

I want to thank you again for your support and strong interest in our application and your enthusiasm for economic development of an appropriate scale and type for Norwich village. In particular your support for Dan and Whit's needed fire and life safety upgrades

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Rod Francis  
Director of Planning & Zoning  
Town of Norwich

October 28, 2020

Richard Amore  
Planning and Outreach Manager  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
One National Life Drive, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620

RE: Confirmation of Norwich Planning Efforts

Dear Richard;

This letter serves to notify you and the Downtown Development Board that the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission voted on April 22, 2020 to confirm the planning process of the Town of Norwich, as stipulated under 24 VSA. 4350. The Norwich Town Plan was also approved on that same date.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this letter or our action.

Sincerely,

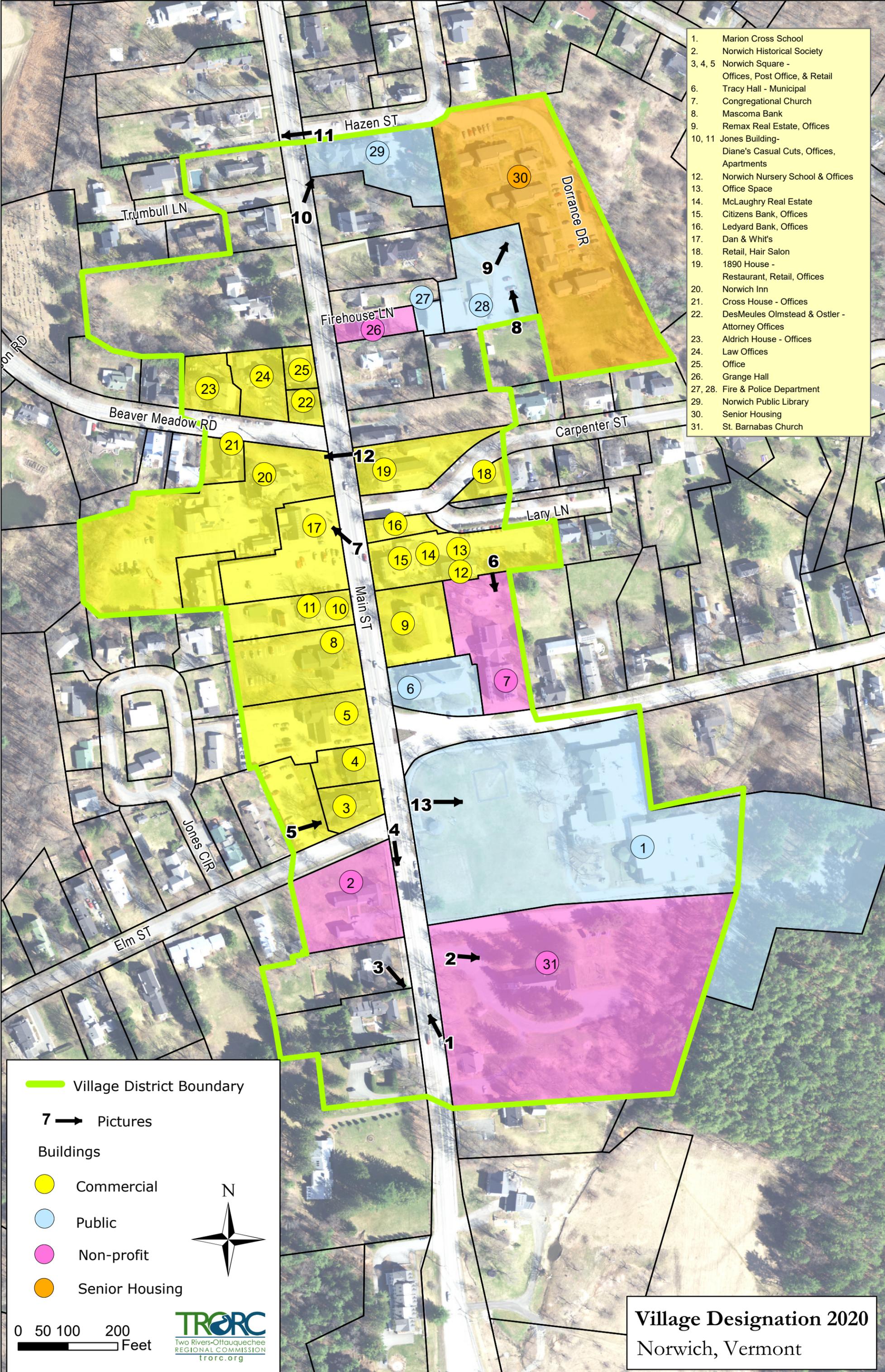


Peter G. Gregory, AICP  
Executive Director

cc: Rod Francis, Director of Planning and Zoning  
Herb Durfee, Town Manager  
Jeff Lubell, Regional Commissioner

Gerald Fredrickson, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director  
128 King Farm Rd. Woodstock, VT 05091 ~ 802-457-3188 ~ [trorc.org](http://trorc.org)

1. Marion Cross School
2. Norwich Historical Society
- 3, 4, 5 Norwich Square - Offices, Post Office, & Retail
6. Tracy Hall - Municipal
7. Congregational Church
8. Mascoma Bank
9. Remax Real Estate, Offices
- 10, 11 Jones Building- Diane's Casual Cuts, Offices, Apartments
12. Norwich Nursery School & Offices
13. Office Space
14. McLaughry Real Estate
15. Citizens Bank, Offices
16. Ledyard Bank, Offices
17. Dan & Whit's
18. Retail, Hair Salon
19. 1890 House - Restaurant, Retail, Offices
20. Norwich Inn
21. Cross House - Offices
22. DesMeules Olmstead & Ostler - Attorney Offices
23. Aldrich House - Offices
24. Law Offices
25. Office
26. Grange Hall
- 27, 28. Fire & Police Department
29. Norwich Public Library
30. Senior Housing
31. St. Barnabas Church



**Village District Boundary**

**7 → Pictures**

**Buildings**

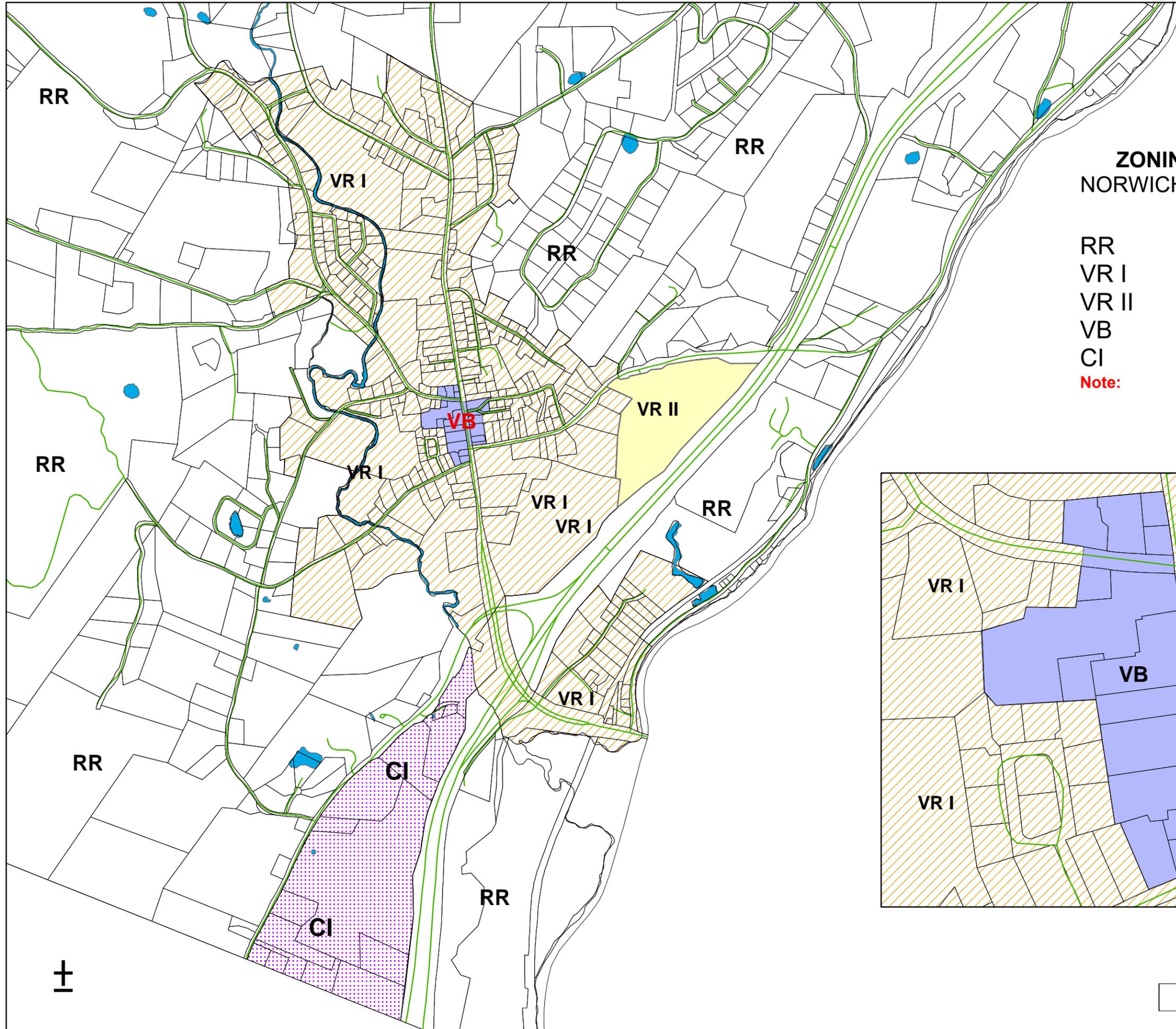
- Commercial
- Public
- Non-profit
- Senior Housing

N

0 50 100 200 Feet

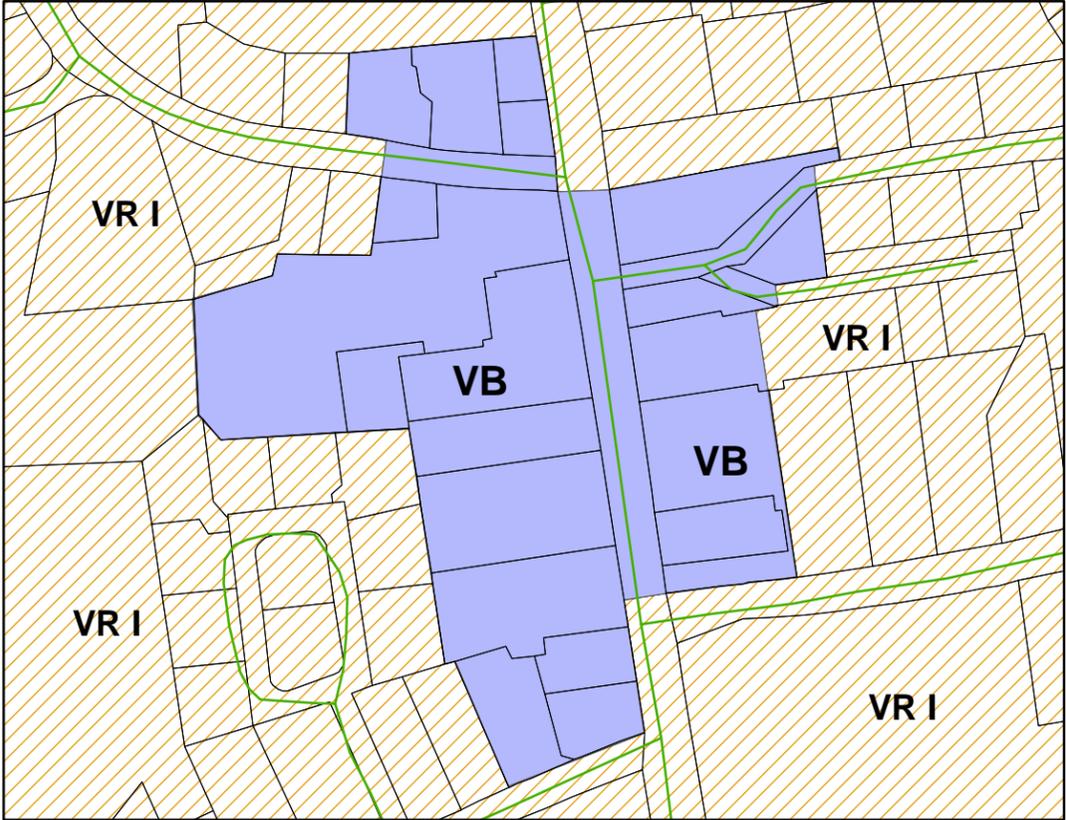
**TRORC**  
 Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee  
 REGIONAL COMMISSION  
 trorc.org

**Village Designation 2020**  
 Norwich, Vermont



**ZONING DISTRICTS: MAP 1**  
**NORWICH ZONING REGULATIONS**  
 Approved: July 1, 2009

- RR Rural Residential
  - VR I Village Residential I
  - VR II Village Residential II
  - VB Village Business
  - CI Commercial/Industrial
- Note:** Unmapped Area = RR



**Table 2.2**  
**Village Residential I (VRI) District**

(A) **Purpose:** The purpose of the Village Residential District is to provide for medium density residential development in a compact, neighborhood setting which is near municipal services and which is serviced or may be serviced in the future by community water and/or sewer facilities. While the primary permitted uses intended are residential dwellings and associated home-based uses, other types of residential accommodations, related service enterprises and public facilities are allowed in a manner which protects the residential character of neighborhoods within the district.

(B) **Permitted Uses:** The following uses are allowed with approval of the Zoning Administrator in accordance with Section 6.01:

1. One-Unit or Two-Unit Dwelling
2. Accessory Use or Structure (to a permitted use)
3. Agriculture
4. Bed & Breakfast (1 to 3 Guest Bedrooms)
5. Group Home (8 or fewer residents; see Section 7.02)
6. Home Business (see Section 4.08(B))
7. Home Day Care (see Section 4.03)

(C) **Conditional Uses:** The following uses are permitted with the approval of the Development Review Board in accordance with Section 5.04:

1. Accessory Use/ Structure (to a conditional use)
2. Accessory Dwelling Structure
3. Bed & Breakfast (4 to 6 Guest Bedrooms)
4. Day Care Facility (see Section 4.03)
5. Group Home (more than 8 residents)
6. Home Industry (see Section 4.08)
7. Nursing Home/Residential Care Facility
8. Public Facility (see Section 4.11)
9. Private Club
10. Cultural Facility (see Section 4.13)

(D) **Dimensional Standards:** See Table 3.2

(E) **Planned Unit Developments (PUD) (See Section 5.06):**

(1) Planned Unit Developments (PUD) are permitted in this district with the approval of the Development Review Board in accordance with Section 5.06.

(2) Multi-unit dwellings. A multi-unit dwelling may be permitted as a PUD and is limited to the maximum number of units allowed for a PUD on the same property. (See Section 5.06(D)(4)). Density bonuses are available for affordable housing and moderate income housing.

(3) Mobile Home Parks are only allowed within a PUD in accordance with Section 5.06. Density bonuses are available for affordable housing and moderate income housing.

**Table 2.4**  
**Village Business (VB) District**

(A) **Purpose:** The purpose of the Village Business District is to maintain the traditional village core as the social, commercial, cultural and civic center of the community while protecting and enhancing the area's pedestrian scale, historic character and economic vitality.

(B) **Permitted Uses:** The following uses are allowed with approval of the Zoning Administrator in accordance with Section 6.01:

1. Accessory Structure/Use (to a permitted use)
  2. Bank\*
  3. Group Home (8 or fewer residents; see Section 7.02)
  4. Home Day Care (see Section 4.03)
  5. Home Business (see Section 4.08)
  6. Home Industry (see Section 4.08)\*
  7. Office\*
  8. One-Unit or Two-Unit Dwelling
  9. Restaurant (see Subsection (E))\*
  10. Retail\*
- \*Requires Site Plan Review in accordance with Section 5.03.

(C) **Conditional Uses:** The following uses are permitted with the approval of the Development Review Board in accordance with Section 5.04:

1. Accessory Structure/Use (to a conditional use)
2. Accessory Dwelling Structure
3. Bed & Breakfast (see Section 7.02)
4. Cultural Facility (see Section 4.12)
5. Day Care (more than 6 children; Section 4.03)
6. Inn
7. Light Industry
8. Mixed Use (see Section 4.09)
9. Parking Facility
10. Private Club
11. Public Facility
12. Recreational Facility, Indoor
13. Mixed Use (see Section 4.09)

(D) **Dimensional Standards.** See Table 3.2.

(E) **District Use Standards.**

Restaurants shall not include drive-through lanes and/or drive-up windows.

(F) **Planned Unit Developments (PUD) (See Section 5.06):**

(1) Planned Unit Developments (PUD) are permitted in this district with the approval of the Development Review Board in accordance with Section 5.06.

(2) Multi-unit dwellings. A multi-unit dwelling may be permitted as a PUD and is limited to the maximum number of units allowed for a PUD on the same property. (See

Section 5.06(D)(4)). Density bonuses are available for affordable housing and moderate income housing.

(3) Mobile Home Parks are only allowed within a PUD in accordance with Section 5.06. Density bonuses are available for affordable housing and moderate income housing.

**Table 2.5**  
**Commercial Industrial (CI) District**

(A) **Purpose:** The purpose of the Commercial Industrial District is to promote a mix of residential, commercial and appropriate industrial uses in an area of town with good highway access and limited potential to adversely impact historic neighborhoods or important natural or cultural resources.

(B) **Permitted Uses:** The following uses are allowed with approval of the Zoning Administrator in accordance with Section 6.01:

1. Accessory Structure/Use (to a permitted use)
2. Agriculture
3. Bed & Breakfast (see Section 7.02)\*
4. Day Care (more than 6 children; Section 4.03)\*
5. Group Home (8 or fewer residents; see Section 7.02)
6. Home Day Care (see Section 4.03)
7. Home Business (see Section 4.08)
8. Home Industry (see Section 4.08)\*
9. Multi-Unit Dwelling (see Subsection (E)(2))\*
10. One-Unit or Two-Unit Dwelling

\*Requires Site Plan Review in accordance with Section 5.03.

(C) **Conditional Uses:** The following uses are permitted with the approval of the Development Review Board in accordance with Section 5.04:

1. Accessory Structure/Use (to a conditional use)
2. Accessory Dwelling Structure
3. Bank
4. Contractors Yard
5. Community Center
6. Cultural Facility (see Section 4.12)
7. Funeral Home
8. Inn
9. Light Industry
10. Nursing Home/Residential Care Facility
11. Office
12. Parking Facility
13. Public Facility
14. Private Club
15. Recreational Facility, Indoor and Outdoor
16. Research & Development Facility
17. Restaurant (see Subsection (E)(1))
18. Retail
19. Mixed Use (see Section 4.09)

# NORWICH VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

## KEY

-  CONTRIBUTING BUILDING
-  NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDING
-  CONTRIBUTING OBJECT
-  NONCONTRIBUTING OBJECT
-  CONTRIBUTING SITE
-  NONCONTRIBUTING SITE
-  DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

APPROXIMATE SCALE: 1" = 200'

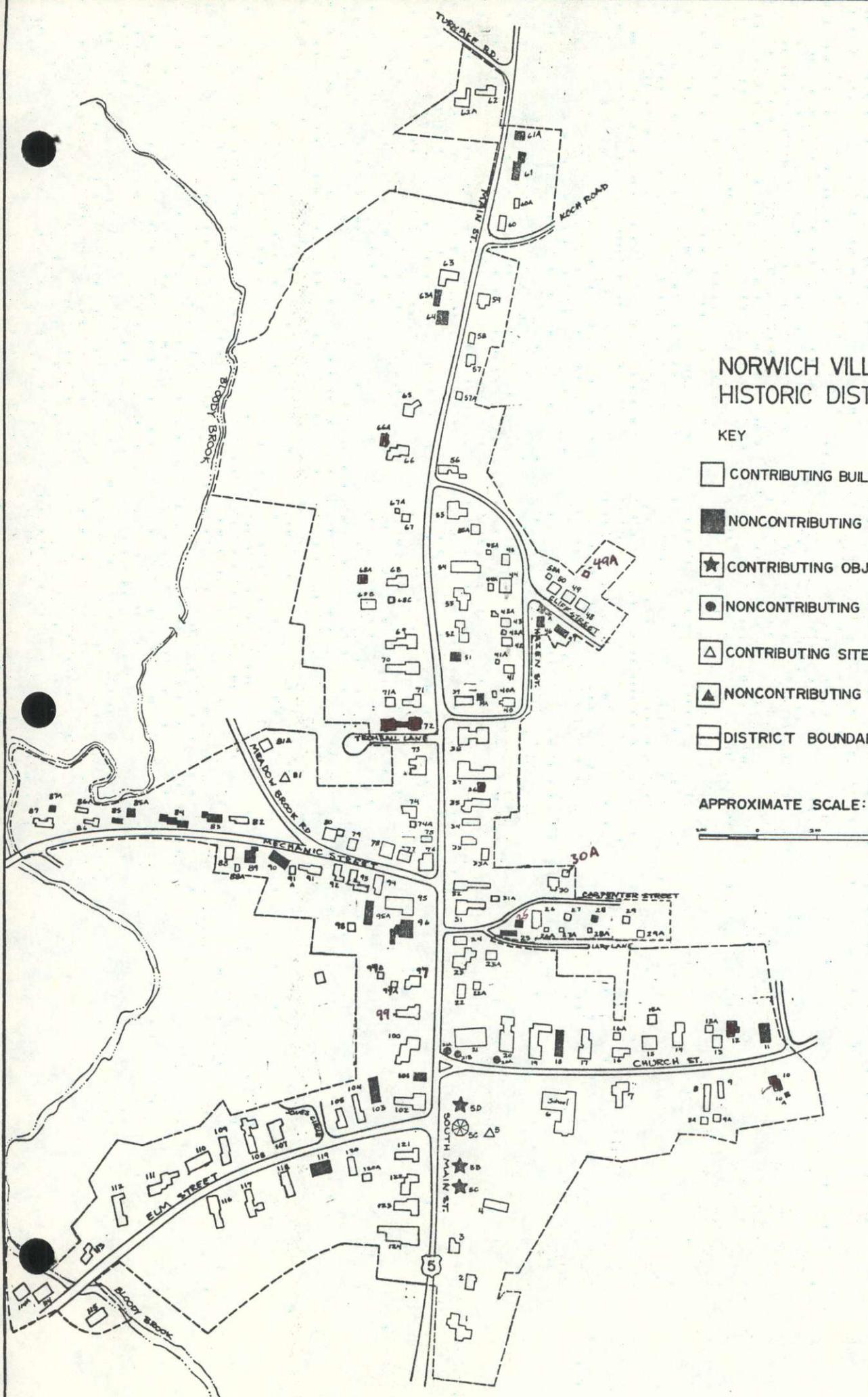
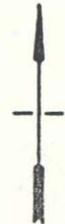


Image #	Location	Description
1	253, 261, 267 Rte 5	south village looking northwest across Rte 5 to brick dwellings*
2	254, 262 Rte 5	south village St Barnabas Church Rte 5
3	254 Rte 5	south village looking southeast to St Barnabas parsonage
4	277 Rte 5	south village Historical Society Elm St
5	291 Main St	central village looking east rear of Norwich Book Store open space
6	15 Rte 5 N	central village looking south Village Nursery School (rear of Congretational Church)
7	319 Main St	central village looking northwest to Dan and Whit's and Norwich Inn
8	10 Firehouse Ln	northern village looking north to Norwich Police Department, Fire Department
9	Dorrance Dr	northern village looking northeast to Norwich Senior Housing
10	368 Main St	northern village looking northeast to Norwich Public Library
11	351, 357, 363 Main St	northern village looking northwest across Main st to dwellings
12	325 Main St	northern village looking west at Norwich Inn (image: Michael Loveday)
13	306 Main St	south village looking east northeast winter panorama (image: unkown)
		* all images R Francis unless otherwise noted

## 2.7 Village Center Designation

Norwich's village center designation expired in 2018 (see [Figure 10](#)). It cannot be renewed until Norwich has a duly adopted plan subsequently approved by TRORC.

Village center designation supports the town's land use policies preserving the historic scale and pattern of development, while encouraging private investment in historic buildings. Participation in the designation program promotes infill and improves the walkability of the village. The program offers both the town and property owners within the designated area benefits including:

- ▶ Owners of income-producing buildings can access tax credits for eligible improvements;
- ▶ Land in or within ¼ mile of the village center could be eligible for the state's Neighborhood Development Area program;
- ▶ The town is more competitive when seeking state grant funding for projects in the village center.

## 2.8 Compatibility

Norwich is part of the Claremont-Lebanon micropolitan area (as defined by the US Census Bureau) which takes in Grafton and Sullivan counties in New Hampshire and Orange and Windsor counties in Vermont. The town is a member of the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORC) which comprises 30 towns in Orange and Windsor counties in Vermont. The history of Norwich is tied closely with Hanover and Lebanon, NH. Norwich is part of a bi-state school district, and Norwich residents depend on Hanover, Lebanon and Hartford for employment

opportunities and access to retail and service functions. Many planning issues including housing supply and transportation (including bike-pedestrian accommodations) will involve a regional response.

**NEIGHBORING TOWNS.** There are no proposed changes to zoning districts or land use policies that will affect the neighboring towns of Thetford or Sharon. This plan identifies constraints to development in the Route 5 South Commercial-Industrial district, which borders Hartford to the south, caused by the need for on-site potable water and wastewater systems. The development potential of this district could change if municipal wastewater was provided. This plan is recommending that wastewater options for the village, adjacent areas and the commercial-industrial district be explored.

**TRORC LAND USE AREAS.** In previous regional plans the area east of I-91 (Lewiston neighborhood and lands to the east of Route 5 South) were identified as an 'interchange area'. In the 2019 TRORC [regional plan](#), this designation has been dropped for Norwich and been replaced with mixed use and rural land use areas. Other adjustments were made, including defining principal retail, and allowing for mixed use development with some retail when combined with housing. These amendments followed discussion with Norwich. There is now a greater degree of compatibility between this plan and the regional plan. Norwich appreciates the greater flexibility and an application of regional land use areas that more closely resembles current land use patterns.

Figure 1. Future Land Use Recommendations

Land Use Type	Recommendation
Village	1 Reapply for Village Designation
	2 Assess Current Wastewater conditions
	3 Improve public infrastructure to enhance walkability, access management and stormwater management
Mixed Use	1 Explore changing Commercial-Industrial to a mixed use zoning district with performance and design standards governing scale of development, site plan etc. to mitigate impact
	2 Ensure adequate provision for housing is made in this new district
Residential	1 Assess Current Wastewater conditions
	2 Explore creating a new residential zoning district (dependent on wastewater assessment)
Rural	1 Review effectiveness of subdivision regulations in limiting rural sprawl
Resource Protection	1 Explore creation of a new zoning district that would take in lands with forest blocks of 500 acres or more to reduce possibility of fragmentation



**Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation**

35 Railroad Row, Suite 101  
White River Junction, VT 05001

*Board of  
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*Joe Boyd,  
Chair*

*Ken Cadow*

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*Steve Reid*

*Cathy Tempesta*

*Jay Zanleoni*

October 8, 2020

Town of Norwich Select Board  
Tracy Hall  
Norwich, VT 05055

Re: Vermont Designated Village Center Program

Dear Select Board Members,

I am writing to express GMEDC's strong support for Norwich's intention to re-apply for enrollment in the program above. Herb and Rod are intimately familiar with its benefits and role in preserving the state's village centers as viable, attractive and enjoyable places for their residents, employees and visitors. The brief summary attached explains this nicely. The benefits are significant and varied, to the municipality and also private landowners in several ways.

Please be aware that time is of the essence with respect to Dan and Whit's concerning their need for financial assistance available through this program. It would be for code improvements, including installation of a sprinkler system and other emergency modifications. We are working closely with Dan Fraser and Architect Jay Barrett who is preparing plans and recommendations for consideration by the VT Fire Safety Division. Following their approval, bids will be sought, the work scheduled, etc. This is an unanticipated and expensive proposition for D&W, and we are trying our best to help them lessen the cost, disruption to their business and the associated aggravation. I will note that enrollment in the Village Center Program by the town is an absolute necessity for them to apply for help.

As you probably know from Rod and Herb, the staff at Housing and Community Development are well aware and pleased to know of Norwich's desire to be enrolled again.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you.

Very best regards,

Robert E Haynes Jr  
Executive Director

Cc: Richard Amore  
Dan Fraser

# Application Guidelines

## New Checklist

### 1. Cover Letter, including:

- Name of the Municipality.
- Brief narrative of why you seek village center designation and a list of previous and current revitalization activities.
- Name, address, daytime phone number and email address of the primary contact person for application.
- A list of documents included in application.

### 2. Authorization from Town or Village Selectboard or Trustees

- Minutes from publicly held meeting, showing that the application for village center designation has been authorized by the town or village (if separately confirmed municipality).
- Or municipal resolution from majority of selectboard/trustees authorizing application.

### 3. Notification to Regional Planning Commission and Regional Development Corporation

- Letters notifying the regional planning commission and regional development corporation of the application. The application must include copies of the letters to each of these organizations notifying them of the intent to apply.

### 4. Confirmed Planning Process

- A letter from the municipality's regional planning commission must be included in the application, stating that its planning process is "confirmed" under 24 V.S.A. §4350 by the commission. Confirmation means that the adopted municipal land use plan and planning process, have been reviewed and approved by that regional commission.

### 5. Village Center Designation Boundary Map

- A color map must be included, clearly delineating the boundary of the proposed village center district, showing the buildings and properties that are within the district. See page example map on page 10. In most cases, an orthophoto should be used as the base map with the information below superimposed over it:
  - Clearly delineates the proposed designated boundary.
  - Streets identified by name.
  - Significant buildings and all businesses indicated by number with a separate key identifying each number and name of the building/business – see example map.
  - Photograph locations identified and keyed on the map. See Item 6 below and example map.
  - Land/building use identified with colors that clearly indicate the various land uses.
  - North arrow, scale and current date.
  - Property lines should be shown, but if not available, are not required.
  - Zoning district boundaries, if applicable, should be included on the map or on a separate map.
  - Historic district boundaries, if applicable, should be included on the map or on a separate map.
  - Once designated, work with your regional planning commission to provide DHCD a digital GIS shape file of the boundary map.

### 6. Photographs

- Color photographs are required showing key areas of the village center district, particularly at the edges and other areas where there may be questions about consistency with the definition of a village center. Photographs should show the streetscape rather than just individual buildings, giving a sense of the context of the area. Photos should be clearly keyed on the map to identify the location of where the photographs were taken. See example map.

### 7. Municipal Plan Integration

- Evidence that the municipal plan includes the intention to apply for village center designation and the municipal plan explains how the designation would further the plan and statewide goals (include municipal plan excerpts).

### 8. Other Required Information

- Municipal Infrastructure: Does the municipality have a water system? Does the municipality have a wastewater system? YES NO
- Zoning district map with corresponding bylaw language should be submitted, but if not available or there is no adopted zoning, is not required.
- National or State Register Historic District boundary map should be submitted, but if not available, is not required.

## Program Benefits

The Vermont village center designation program supports local revitalization efforts across the state by providing technical assistance and state funding to help designated municipalities build strong communities. Once designated, the community will be eligible for the following benefits:

### Technical Assistance

- Technical assistance provided by the state to support local village revitalization and planning efforts.

### Downtown and Village Center Tax Credits

#### 10% Historic Tax Credits

- Available as an add-on to approved Federal Historic Tax Credit projects.
- Eligible costs include interior and exterior improvements, code compliance, plumbing and electrical upgrades.

#### 25% Historic Tax Credits

- Eligible facade work up to \$25,000.

#### 50% Code Improvement Tax Credits

- Available for up to \$50,000 each for sprinkler systems; up to \$75,000 for elevators; and \$12,000 for lifts.
- Eligible code work includes ADA modifications, electrical, fire safety, or plumbing up to \$50,000.

### Priority Consideration for State Grants

- Priority consideration for various ACCD, VTrans and ANR grants and incentives including, ACCD's Municipal Planning Grants, State Historic Preservation grants, Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) grants, VTrans Bike/Ped and Transportation Alternatives grants, Northern Border Regional Commission Grants, ANR Water and Wastewater subsidies and loans, and various other state grants and resources.

### Priority Consideration by State Building And General Services (BGS)

- Priority site consideration by the State Building and General Services (BGS) when leasing or constructing buildings.

### Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) Eligibility

- Communities may also designate Neighborhood Development Areas within 1/4 mile from the designated village center. Qualified projects are:
  - Exempt from Act 250 regulations for [Priority Housing Projects](#) and projects not qualifying for the exemption receive a 50% discount on application fees.
  - Exemption from the land gains tax for housing units sold.
  - Eligible for reduced state permit fees.



For more information, please contact:

Richard Amore: [richard.amore@vermont.gov](mailto:richard.amore@vermont.gov) or 802.585.0061

Website: <http://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/designation-programs/village-centers>