



**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
AGENDA**

Thursday, January 16, 2020, Tracy Hall, Multipurpose Room, NOTE START TIME 6:30pm

Regular Meeting:

1. Approve Agenda
2. Meeting Objective:
 - o Review and approve draft Town Plan
3. Comments from the Public (topics not on the agenda)
4. Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence
 - o Correspondence
 - i. Letter from Stuart Richards re: Town Plan
 - o Announcements
 - o Updates
 - i. TRORC
 - o Reports
5. Review and approve draft Town Plan
 - o Review summary of all comments received during Public Comment period
6. Discuss draft of Planning Commission Action Items
7. Review and approve Minutes 12-6-19
8. Other Business
9. Future Meeting Schedule & Agendas

Future Meetings:

Thursday, February 27, 6:30pm Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 26, 6:30pm Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 23, 6:30pm Regular Meeting

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AMENDMENT FROM
STUART RICHARDS
12/18/19

Amendment to the Proposed Norwich Town Plan 12/18/19

We the undersigned request that the Norwich Planning Commission and Norwich Selectboard adopt the following Amendment to the Town Plan:

Notwithstanding anything in any current or future proposed or adopted Norwich Town Plan, or any Zoning/Bylaw Amendment subsequently adopted by the Town of Norwich, this amendment expressly prohibits any development and/or cumulative developments which impose any additional and/or related tax burden on Norwich taxpayers. Any such development(s) will require full disclosure, in advance of any expenditures, of all costs to the taxpayers of Norwich, and any such costs will not be implemented without vote by a majority of the legal voters of Norwich. Nor shall there be any development and/or cumulative developments which are larger than the size and scale of currently existing developments in Norwich as of 2019. This Amendment expressly intends that, for the financial and environmental health of the town, Norwich's population remains relatively stable at approximately 3,400 people. Further, any future development and/or cumulative developments within the Town of Norwich must be consistent with the historic and rural nature of the Town and Village of Norwich.

1-15-20

Hi Rod,

Thank you for sharing the planning commission's response letter to the TRORC review of the 2020 Draft Norwich Plan, and for the chance to talk about it this morning at the TRORC office.

The Norwich planning commission's responses to the six bulleted items are all satisfactory. In a formal review, TRORC staff would have identified these as areas for improvement in the next version of the plan, but still would have recommended approval to our board.

In its current state, and with the few minor text changes the planning commission included in the response letter, we would recommend that this draft plan be given regional approval from the TRORC board.

Thank you,
Kimberly

Kimberly Gilbert | Regional Planner
Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission
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TOWN OF NORWICH
PLANNING & ZONING

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

January 14, 2020

Dear Peter,

Town of Norwich draft 2020 Town Plan

Thanks to you, Kimberly and staff for this thoughtful review of the draft 2020 Norwich town plan. Below you will find responses to the six bulleted items identified as cause to conclude that, as currently drafted, the draft 2020 plan does not meet all required elements and goals of a municipal plan as stated in 24 VSA §§ 4302 and 4382. Our response includes three suggested minor text changes (for § 4382(a)4 and § 4302(c)(9)(C)) and responses to § 4382(a)8, § 4302(b)4, § 4302(c)3, § 4302(c)(6)(A). There was nothing inadvertent resulting in differences with the 2018 Norwich Plan. We believe the draft plan is consistent with these specific provisions of 24 VSA §§ 4302 and 4382. We look forward to discussing these items with you as the plan advances to the Selectboard adoption stage.

§ 4382(a)4 - A utility and facility plan

Recent Selectboard discussion is consistent with Chapter 3, Energy (Policy 3-2d, Action 3-3n, 3-3f) and Chapter 7, Facilities and Services (Action 7-3a). To implement these policies and actions may well require adjustments to the capital plan. At the time of writing the draft plan and most likely through the remaining adoption process (assuming the Selectboard commences the public hearing process prior to Town Meeting) **the voters' commitment to recent, suggested additional capital commitments is unknown.**

Suggested text change:

7.4 Town Government Facilities

As of the writing of the plan there were no planned major capital improvements to municipal facilities. [insert at end of para]

§ 4382(a)8 - A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas, and the region developed under this title

The review asks that this requirement be addressed in in three chapters Land Use, Housing, and Transportation (and calls out 'forest block' which is addressed explicitly in Land Use 2.6). The Land Use and Housing chapters address existing development patterns in detail. Together these chapters lay out policies and actions that will implement state and regional planning goals and policies.

Statute does not require statements throughout the plan. We believe we have addressed this requirement.

§ 4302(b)4 - To encourage and assist municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans.

There are several actions that specifically describe how Norwich will work with its neighboring municipalities and regional entities; see Land Use 2-3.b, Economic Development 5-3.d and

Transportation 6-2.i. These should provide adequate demonstration that the Norwich Plan is consistent with this goal.

§ 4302(c)3 - *To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.*

Discussion of vocational training opportunities is not a statutory requirement. Can the RPC demonstrate that the plan is not consistent with the statutory goal? To be found 'inconsistent' the plan must contain a statement that contradicts or rejects § 4302(c)3. As with most small towns in the region Norwich supports all residents accessing regionally provided vocational training along with providing direct support of local and school district provided pre-K through 12 education.

Suggested text change:

7-2.f Support the provision of quality childcare (pre-K through grade six), education, vocational training and recreation services.

§ 4302(c)(6)(A) *Vermont's air, water, wildlife, mineral, and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)*

Discussion of wildlife and mineral resources is not a statutory requirement. There is not a required natural resource element under 4382, only a statement of policies – see Land Use 2-2.b among others.

A plan *may* include specific policies to encourage the active management of those areas for wildlife habitat, water quality, timber production, recreation, or other values or functions identified by the municipality. [4382 a(2)(D) emphasis added]

§ 4302(c)(9)(C) *The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.*

Suggested text change:

5-1.e Encourage the manufacture, marketing and use of agricultural (especially locally grown food) and forest products and industries (24 VSA § § 4302(c)(9), (A), (B), (C)).

We welcome your response to the suggested edits laid out above and confirmation that our interpretation of 24 VSA §§ 4302 and 4382 is accurate. I want to be clear that we strived to be consistent with statute as *written*. Wherever the presence of something is required by statute you should find it present in this draft plan. We will respond immediately to any finding that a particular required map, statement or policy is absent. Where items are not required, we have generally declined to include it. It would be helpful to us if we knew that as reviewers your determination of "consistency with" doesn't also mean "discussion of" when no discussion is called for by statute.

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

Sincerely,



Rod Francis
Director of Planning & Zoning
Town of Norwich

MEMO

TO: Rod Francis and the Norwich Planning Commission
FROM: Kimberly Gilbert, Regional Planner
CC: Peter G. Gregory, Executive Director
DATE: January 9, 2020
RE: Review of Draft Norwich Town Plan

Thank you for asking us to take a quick look prior to your Planning Commission hearings and offer some comments on how the current draft addresses the statutory minimums. The 2020 Draft of the Norwich Town Plan has been reviewed by TRORC staff, and we offer the following notes. We are pleased to see the weak areas from the last plan, housing and land use have been addressed.

Staff review indicates that the 2020 Draft Plan does not meet all required elements and goals of a municipal plan as stated in 24 V.S.A. § 4302 and § 4382. We recommend the following be better addressed in the 2020 Draft Plan:

- § 4382(a)4 - *A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse disposal, storm drainage, and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs, and method of financing.* The plan does cover what facilities exist, and often has a short description of recent work, but should also have either a statement that no work is foreseen in the next eight years, or give some description of the planned work. For example, the Valley News reported that the town is considering a major energy upgrade to Tracy Hall. Such an effort should be in the plan, even if listed as a possible action.
- § 4382(a)8 - *A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas, and the region developed under this title.* This is only addressed for Land Use right now. Areas that would seem a logical choice also include housing, transportation facilities and forest blocks.
- § 4302(b)4 - *To encourage and assist municipalities to work creatively together to develop and implement plans.* This could likely be addressed in the same place as § 4382(a)8 above.
- § 4302(c)3 - *To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.* The plan notes that this is addressed on pages 37 and 45, but we do not see vocational training opportunities addressed there.
- § 4302(c)(6)(A) *Vermont's air, water, wildlife, mineral, and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a).* Mineral resources are not addressed at all. Typically a town addresses this when talking about sources for sand and gravel. Wildlife is only mentioned on two maps and in restating the goal on page 3. Adding in language on forest blocks also serving to protect wildlife habitat and as corridors, such as in 2-2.b, and the ability of connected forest to serve as migration corridors for species in 2-1.g would be a beginning in fully addressing this requirement.
- § 4302(c)(9)(C) *The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged.* This requirement could be addressed by adding it more explicitly to 5-1.e on page 37.

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Gerald Fredrickson, Chair
Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director

We also suggest these further recommendations to improve the 2020 Draft Plan, but they are not required for approval:

- Page 6: In the findings on Transportation, the plan notes it is “not feasible” to increase the schedule in the village, but the planning commission might note that increases in density in or near the village might make expanded transit feasible.
- Page 9 or 2-2.h on p 5: Note that the western and northern part of town has no conservation easements on the largest high priority forest blocks and call these out as priority conservation areas.
- Page 19: As a side note, the Resource protection polygons along roads might be hard to locate. When converting this to zoning, the planning commission may want to look at parcel boundaries, or a road buffer distance to “smooth” out some of these boundaries and make the areas easier for landowners and the ZA to find.
- Page 29: Given a recent solar project in Bradford, the Town of Norwich may want to have a policy against ground mounted solar above 150 kw in areas they would like to see more development that could be precluded by a large array.
- Pages 35 or 36: The impact of graduate students is mentioned on page 35 and Dartmouth’s plans to construct over a hundred units for graduate students might be noted in the larger context as being helpful, as well as expanded housing for medical professionals planned by DHMC.
- Pages 53-54: Note the number of homes in the “floodway”, and mention activities homeowners can take who are already at risk, such as backflow preventers on septic lines, installing floodproofing barriers and staying abreast of flood warnings so they can move items higher. The planning commission may want to include an action 8-3.f about the town monitoring flood forecasts and notifying residents to take action.

As mentioned above, we are pleased to see that Housing and Land Use issues from the 2018 Plan have been resolved in the 2020 Draft Plan.

Thank you again for giving us this opportunity to provide some feedback at this early stage. TRORC wants to help facilitate regional approval of this new Plan once locally adopted. We commend you for your efforts at clarity and conciseness in this draft Plan. During those efforts however, some minor areas of need were inadvertently removed from this Plan that were adequately addressed in the 2018 Plan. We stand ready to assist with language or examples for any of the issues that need attention.

Public Comments, PC Draft Plan Public Hearing, January 9, 2020

Comm. No.	Name	Chapter/Topic	Summary	Staff Response	PC Action
1	Sue Pitiger	General	Supportive & appreciative, think of the future	None	
2	Bob Haynes	Economic Development, Land Use, Housing	Supportive, we need growth, diversity, more housing stock to take advantage of Upper Valley economic engine	None	
3	Arline Rotman	Facilities and Services	Supportive, encouraged and pleased by thoughtful response to supporting access to childcare through scholarships	None	
4	Dean Siebert	Land Use, Housing	Critical, no expansion of senior housing contemplated, DC distorts rental market, mixed use and retail in Rte 5 S would be "dagger in the heart of village". Absence of muni wastewater "has saved us"	None	
5	Alyssa Close*	General, Land Use	Critical, densities should be specified in plan, anticipating the scale of development is hard because Norwich has no experience of serviced land. Need 'set asides' for open space	None	
6	Stuart Richards*	Land Use	Critical, development should be incremental, appropriate in scale (e.g. StarLake, Sen. Housing). Proposes amendment	See comments on written suggested amendment	
7	Linda Gray	Energy, Land Use	Supportive, nice job of integrating multiple themes into a coherent whole	None	
8	John Lawe	Land Use	The gravel eskar under the core of the village allows good drainage, question of expanding the village area has therefore always been a policy decision concerning commitment to more infrastructure	None	

9	Charlotte Metcalf	Land Use	Supportive. Concerned that we avoid developing Rte 5 S so it becomes like Rte 12 in Lebanon. TRORC Reg Plan does not give much guidance on conflict between ecological values and housing	None	
10	David Otto	Land Use/Housing	Supportive. Preserve rural by developing where appropriate/possible. Concerned Norwich isn't doing enough to accommodate housing demand	None	
11	Colin Calloway	Land Use	This plan 'targets' Rte 5 S as did the last plan, now the justification is Climate Change. But what about the wetlands?	Wetlands are mapped, not at risk from development, DEC permits are required	
12	Chipper Ashley	Land Use	Supportive. Plan is for the future, (not most of the people in the room). Young people seek compact living, walking/biking distance from work and services/retail. Can we get students to measure carbon sequestration?	None	
13	Nathan Margolis	Land Use/ Housing	ADUs are affordable housing option that is appropriate. Are they being tracked?	None	
14	Dean Siebert	Land Use	The whole planning paradigm is wrong, hamlets should receive more attention, consolidation is wrong, should be diversification	None	
15	David Otto	Land Use	Promoting compact development means ecological approach/ Promoting ADUs in remote locations is not a good climate crisis response	None	

* see written comments

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Public Comments, PC Draft Plan Public Hearing January 13, 2020

Comm. No.	Name	Chapter/Topic	Summary	Staff Response	PC Action
1	Jim Gold	Land Use/ Voting Process	Preserving the Village is important, inappropriate development in the village or along Rte 5 S could jeopardize Village. Concerned that just 1 vote on SB or even at town-wide vote could result in plan being adopted (or not). Recommends town-wide vote with 66% threshold or unanimous SB vote	No design controls for Village development now (new regs could remedy this). Statute sets procedures for voting (outside scope of plan).	
2	Alyssa Close*	General, Land Use	Critical. No vision, not enough info for new residents. Does not answer: Who are We? Equal space should be given to discussion of natural resources as housing and development	None	
3	Marcia Calloway*	Land Use/ Resilience	Critical. Concerned the plan lacks detail concerning sensitivity of Bloody Brook watershed, risk of flooding in the Rte 5 S area, and absence of River Corridor mapping.	PC and SB made decision last year to pursue Community Rating System (CRS) as a better alternative for Norwich to the River Corridor program	
4	David Otto	Land Use, Housing	Private septic systems are an expensive barrier to development, and community lacks control of them. Municipal wastewater is cost effective and provides better control. Vehicle trips in Norwich are reducing, takes this as a good sign that household behavior is changing. More multi-family and mixed use development including small-scale retail (similar to Hanover) could further reduce environmental impact.	None	
5	Tracey Hayes	Land Use, Housing	Encourages PC/ToN to pursue grant supported wastewater investigation ASAP (kids in school). Carpenter St has septic issues too. The wait list for Sen. Housing is 42, expansion constrained by septic availability	Grant lead times were explained to her in hearing.	
6	Sarah Reeves*	Land Use	Rte 5 is the CT River Scenic Byway. Norwich could be an enhanced 'green space' for surrounding more developed communities	Maybe include ID of Rte 5 as CT River Scenic Byway in Transportation and Land Use	

7	Alyssa Close*	Various	Dislikes the dedication because it is selfish with regard to other species, doesn't include the 'commons' concept. Septic systems can be shared, co-located	PC should decide whether to keep or change dedication. Septics are privately held and sharing is already common	
8	Sarah Reeves	Dedication	We can broaden the dedication to make it more inclusive!	None	

* see written comments

Written Comments, PC Draft Plan, 2020

Comm. No.	Name	Chapter/Topic		Staff Response	PC Action
1	Calli Guion	Land Use	Seeks answers to several questions on Act 250 jurisdiction, wastewater, and taxes	See written response to land use questions. No change recommended	
2	Elissa Close	Various	Critical. Would like to see more recommendations on protecting natural resources. Prefers co-located septic solutions to larger wastewater solution. Development in and around the Village should focus on housing, not Commercial. Emphasizes maintaining rural character. Objects to Dedication using text from the Brundtland Commission. Would like to include more about the history of Norwich and fewer maps. Provided feedback on items that relate to expected rewrite of zoning regs.	Consider deleting Brundtland quote and replacing with vision statement from the Introduction. "The Norwich Town Plan conveys a vision for thoughtful stewardship of rich cultural resources and natural resources, a commitment to address the climate crisis, and fostering housing development that is appropriate in scale and responsive to community needs."	
3	Chris Katucki	Energy	Critical. Suggests that the energy siting standards for solar projects should be site specific and strike a better balance between competing interests	The PC worked closely with the EEWG and discussed these policies at length. It is an important commitment to encouraging rapid transition by Norwich. Siting standards imposed by the PUC take Chris's concerns into account. The likelihood of large scale projects in sensitive locations is extremely low for technical and permitting reasons. Numerous controls are in place. No change recommended.	

4	Alexa Manning	Housing	Supportive. Sees ADUs as a good solution for affordable housing. Looking for action around wastewater	None	
5a	Marcia Calloway	Land Use, Resilience	Questions concerning flood hazard and Rte. 5 S	See written reply that responds to questions. No change recommended	
5b	Marcia Calloway	Land Use, Resilience	Requests that the PC review Blood Brook Watershed Study, revise plan to avoid development in sensitive Blood Brook watershed, consider added development for Rte. 5 N, include recommendations to Town to proceed with River Corridor Protection	The SFHA includes Blood Brook, nothing suggested or proposed in the draft plan poses a threat to the Blood Brook watershed. Rte. 5 N is also identified as an area worth exploring in land use regulation review. River Corridor has been rejected, CRS is being pursued which will give same ERAF benefit for less cost. No change recommended	
6	Stuart Richards	Land Use	Critical. Proposes amendment to prohibit any development and/or cumulative developments which impose an additional and/or related tax burden on Norwich taxpayers and requiring full advance disclosure. Maintain population at ~3400.	Text of suggested amendment should be reviewed by counsel, not sure a plan could impose such restrictions on private development. Not sure these requirements could be legally encoded in land use regulations. The sentiment could be read as hostile to newcomers. No change recommended	

7	Sara Reeves	General	Supportive. Commends analysis and thoughtful work to create a Plan that's consistent with the town character, historical resources, topography, and place in the region. Suggests the designation of Route 5 as The CT River Scenic By-way be included.	Include mention that Route 5 is the CT River Scenic By-way in the Plan [Note: the entire length of Route 5 in VT is the CT River Scenic Byway]	
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TOWN PLAN COMMENTS – TO PC 1/14/2020

From: Elissa Close
Partridge Hill, Norwich
802-649-7237

In no particular order of importance.....

1. Maps
 - a. Maps can be nice – helpful. Not sure that the number of maps included here are necessary. Some seem redundant. If you’re going to count pages, I’d opt for fewer maps and more text giving ‘air space’ and clarity to some of the comments that follow.
 - b. The one map I might add, just for history and perspective/ interest sake is FW BEERS Atlas map of Norwich from 1800s.
2. **Add INTRODUCTION** that would contribute to clearer Norwich-based identity and applicability.
 - a. In a few paragraphs ‘paint a picture’ of our town and broad history
 - i. A second attachment is text from which I read at the 1/13/20 PC meeting. Not intended as any specific recommendation, but just an example to help give context to **our** town. Some of this pulled verbatim from previous Norwich Plans, some from other sources as noted, informally, within the text.
 - b. Introduction should touch on how Norwich is different from AnyTown USA.
 - i. Personally, I see it as opportunity to share something of natural and cultural history of the place – found this lacking elsewhere in the Plan.
3. Would like to see more specific recommendations centering **natural resources**
 - a. Identify what they are
 - b. Identify ways in which we will protect and enhance them
 - i. Examples
 1. Norwich has a great deal of forested land
 2. Most of woodland is in Current Use
 - a. Add language that specifically supports Use Value Appraisal/ CU: (suggestion follows – pulled from another town plan in VT)
 - i. *Roughly ½ of the land in Norwich is enrolled in CU. This program helps to reduce the property tax burden of forest landowners and ensures these lands are managed responsibly. The Town should support this program.*
 - c. Norwich’s forestland appears to be largely untapped resource.
 - i. Conserve forest health and then, if appropriate, promote careful cultivation of those forests for community benefits, such as firewood, saw logs, maple syrup, harvesting of other forest products (ie mushrooms, or wild leeks, etc)
 - ii. Build a community-shared land ethic
 - d. Build job/ income opportunities ‘close to home’ by researching ways in which forest resource could be managed in a manner that provides some of these opportunities. Such a program, a collaboration of landowners, is testing this resource plan with some success in another part of Vermont.
4. **Growth and Development**

- a. **Development in Norwich should be proportional in scale to size of town** ie: small town = small scale development. Provides opportunity to tweak problems or opportunities that arise over time and adapt as town changes. Lg development, in addition to being out of character with town's pattern of development and pace of development over time, may well have outcomes that we did not foresee – the law of unintended consequences – starting small allows for changes to improve as we move forward.
- b. **Regarding wastewater plan:** I am **opposed to wide-scale septic** for the town. I find nothing to indicate that Town (downtown) wide plan is necessary. Language exists, based on an earlier Soil and Conservation Service study, that suggests much of the 'downtown' area has "sandy" soils that can accommodate septic.
 - i. There are a couple of exceptions to this
 - 1. The MCS and Carpenter Street area – both in dire need of septic attention
 - 2. This was further validated by the town Health Officer (I think he was?? Mr. Lawe at public hearing) who spoke on the overall adequacy of soils to accommodate septic in town w/o need of massive expansion.
 - ii. Norwich should take advantage of state incentives to share and co-locate WW systems in the town area.
 - 1. This would decrease potential for runaway development that would likely piggy-back onto large scale, town-wide septic.
 - 2. Would reduce the complexity of huge septic system for "town" that has mired process for years. Might make the solutions small enough that they can be managed in a timely manner.
 - a. *Suggesting that these select few critical areas with inadequate septic capacity be held 'captive' by the inflated size/ cost/ complexity of town wide septic is unacceptable.*
- c. Limit growth to a rate that does not negatively affect the sense of community, economic well-being, fiscal condition, existing infrastructure, or environmental; quality and natural resources of Norwich.
- d. While Norwich has evolved into a bedroom community, much of the town remains rural. Open land, forested land, rivers/ streams, dirt roads, scenic views are all important elements of Norwich character. Low density of development in much of town, open land, ability to enjoy nature, wildlife, dark(ish) night skies (vanishing quickly as UV develops and this, plus noise, has negative health consequences for humans and creatures), privacy, the quiet of rural settings are highly valued.
- e. To maintain rural character, important that Plan address both density of development and impacts of a variety of natural and cultural resources
 - i. Inventory Norwich's natural resources and work with neighbor towns to assure continuity of critical areas protected across town boundaries.
 - ii. Inventory cultural resources and add language to assure their protection
- f. There is much language and space given to 'development' in the Plan.
 - i. This can be good if it defines and limits development to right-size it to the town. I'm not convinced this plan adequately does that – though it's a fair start.

- ii. Language of the Brundtland Commission ‘...ability of future generations to meet their own needs,’ needs greater clarity, specifically reference to a **responsibility to protect and preserve ‘the commons’ for future generations, ie, that which we collectively hold and value, including wild places, clean water, clean air and other natural resources, access to healthy food (locally sourced means jobs and businesses), recreation, dark night skies, quiet, privacy, diversity of the natural world around us, and so forth.**
 - iii. As an aside, I’d say Norwich has sufficient “structured” recreation
- 5. Am concerned that Plan **defaults to development** as a means to address too many issues
 - a. **School population** (“we need 100 more MCS students” was a comment at one public session)
 - i. This assumes that adding more housing will actually bring in more students. With decrease in birthrate, I’m not sure we can assume that any longer (praise be).
 - 1. There are however opportunities to better utilize MCS space
 - 2. Consideration of creative alternatives to underutilized space should occur regardless of housing focus. Norwich is not alone in ‘underutilized space issue’. Examples of other ideas with which I’ve been involved in past:
 - a. Open MCS to meeting/ conference/ adult classroom space off-hours
 - i. Locate a town health clinic in the school – maybe tied to School Nurse role. There are models for this elsewhere in VT and U.S.
 - ii. Locate small dental clinic in school (for preventive care only)
 - 1. 2 dental chairs and equipment to conduct dental exams and cleanings
 - a. Either limited to pedi population
 - b. Or any town resident
 - 2. Due to cost of dental care and poor funding by insurance, this would both improve dental for our population and be like putting money in pockets of or more needy townspeople who cannot adequately afford this care and education.
 - b. Open nursery/ pre-K school in underused rooms.
 - i. Provides MUCH needed support to parents of parents with kids on waiting lists for child care
 - ii. Supports kids readiness for school
 - iii. Puts \$\$ in pockets of low income parents as both can return to work knowing they have reliable, high quality child care/ early ed for their kids. (Rebecca Holcombe

can speak more specifically to this topic – it has worked elsewhere in the state)

3. If school population rebounds, these functions could be limited/moved elsewhere in town, but the school would serve as ‘incubator’ space that supports townspeople’s health while allowing lower cost start up.
- b. Also heard a comment regarding **dwindling population of Congo Church**. Appeared to suggest that increase development that increases population would be solution to this issue.
- i. Heartily disagree, if that was what was intended.
 1. With census far less than 1950s and 1960s, there was still strong attendance in church when I grew up here.
 - a. I’d suggest that population has little to do with who attends church.
 - i. Frequent mention in media of how young people of today do not find formal religion ‘relevant’ to their needs
 - ii. How congregation is led and by whom also have a great influence
 1. Witness recent climate change meeting of >100 people at Unitarian church
 - a. Obviously not all members, but such dynamic topics and attention to that which holds relevance to population will surely draw in some
- c. As with school population, I’d advocate for **greater creativity** in solving these issues and not just defaulting to the perceived easier solution of “development” so to add more bodies to the mix.
- i. Development will increase taxes and render less land available for food, natural areas, addressing climate change (ie solar and CO2 sequestration) No household with 2 kids actually covers the cost of kids’ education and the infrastructure that accompanies development – development is more money-pit than panacea.
- d. Commercial/ Retail development
- i. Norwich is surrounded by a lot (and growing) commercial/ retail development
 - ii. Public transportation grows stronger each year with access to Hanover, Lebanon, WRJ.
 - iii. Bringing more commercial/ retail development to Norwich could well undermine housing (and would certainly contribute to traffic congestion already existing)
 1. Goal of plan since its inception in the 1960s (which I support) is to focus development in/ near the Town center that is already developed.
 2. There is limited land available in this area
 - a. Priority should go to housing
 - b. Secondarily to business development

- i. Given compact nature of retail/ comm/ health care/ College development in UV area, all of which seem to be seeking workers, and
 - ii. Given that retail/comm development is often redundant and such development here would only undermine existing business by dividing customer base
 - iii. Suggest adding language to plan that identifies/targets **small business, not already existing in the area, which bring clear value-added service to Norwich and the area.**
 - 1. Would seek to encourage home occupation (with 6 or fewer employees) that could be located in one of the hamlets as well as “downtown Norwich”
 - 2. **Businesses should be in keeping with town character (no box stores, no mini-marts, no McBusiness, etc)**
 - 3. *Our VERMONT brand is **important** to economy. Norwich, as elsewhere, has a responsibility to manage development in such a way as to enhance, not undermine, rural character, natural areas, existing attractiveness and welcoming nature of the town.*
- 6. Inventory and create map that identifies groundwater supplies and potential for future public water supply areas
 - a. This is particularly important in hamlet areas if we elect to encourage some development in these areas – which I would support.
 - b. Use land use regs to protect these water recharge areas
- 7. More and specific language related to “offsite impacts”
 - a. Minimize offsite impacts from traffic, light, noise, odor, etc
 - i. Exterior lighting
 - ii. Light trespass
 - iii. Prevent light spill into night sky
 - iv. Prohibit backlit/ internally illuminated signs (think I saw this someplace in regs already???)
 - b. What’s our policy on telecommunications towers? (did I miss that??)
 - c. Didn’t notice anything on extraction policy – but maybe overlooked???
- 8. Natural Resources – specifically FOREST LAND
 - a. Support language regarding new resource protection district to better protect forests.
 - i. And addition of CU language, as above
 - b. Restrict openings in forest canopy for construction of roads, structures or power lines
 - c. Maintain and enhance forest health
 - i. Match management to parcel size

1. small scale management that is light on the land can work well (if not better) than large scale operations
2. "The ultimate soul-restoration is that which is undertaken on behalf of the land" (Celtic saying to which I'd also add..."and on behalf of the creatures and natural systems with whom we share the land.")

Thank you for your efforts and for the opportunity to have input on this Plan.

Elissa Close

Example of some possible text for an INTRODUCTION to TOWN PLAN

This is not intended to be any sort of 'finished product', but just serve as an example of some topics that would add interest, context, and focus to the Plan as it stands. (portions read at public hearing 1/13/20)

E. Close

Partridge Hill

In the time before the Connecticut River served as a boundary between Vermont and New Hampshire, the Abenaki people were "indigenous to the abundant interales and forested mountains of the Kwanitekew, [the Connecticut River's original Abenaki name]. For these early people, "the "long river" has always been a center of adaptation, subsistence, and exchange. The Kwanitekew served as a major trade corridor, travel route, and gathering place for indigenous families." (p 133, Where the Great River Rises, R. Brown, Ed)

In the years prior to 1760, the upper Connecticut River Valley was home to fewer than a thousand Euro-Americans. By the early 1760s, however, the population of Connecticut had exceeded agricultural carrying capacity and thus provided the bulk of the potential migrants to this Upper Valley area. (p 138, Where the Great River Rises, R. Brown, Ed)

The governor of New Hampshire assumed jurisdiction over all of what is now Vermont and the Granite State and began the process of establishing townships and assigning the land within townships to the settlers. In 1761 Governor Wentworth made land grants to 63 residents of Mansfield Connecticut and nearby towns. Actual settlement apparently began in 1765 and by 1771 the Town of Norwich was home to more than 200 residents, at least one sawmill and a gristmill. (from Norwich Plan 1967)

The Town is located the northeastern corner of Windsor County, bordered on the east by the Connecticut River and neighboring Hanover, NH; to the north by Orange County and the Town of Thetford; Sharon lies to the west of Norwich; and Hartford to the south. The Towb comprises about 45 square miles and is home to approximately 3400 residents (2000 survey). Norwich remains closely related to the three towns with which it was chartered, all on the same day, July 5, 1761, by Governor Wentworth: Hartford, Hanover, and Lebanon (from Comprehensive Plan of Norwich VT 1967).

When the glacier retreated, it left a sharp pattern of brook valleys and ravines in this part of New England. Land at the north end of the Town drains into the Ompompanoosuc River, the largest of the Connecticut River tributaries in this immediate reach of the river. Blood Brook and its tributaries, New Boston and Charles Brown brooks form the drainage system for most of the rest of the Town, flowing into the Connecticut River at Lewiston. Until 2018, when it was removed, the Norwich Reservoir Dam was located on the Charles Brown brook. The brook "is one of the best trout streams in this part of the state, and removing the dam and replanting the streambank to provide cooling shade for the stream has been critical to restoring habitat for aquatic creatures. Between the various brooks is high and sometimes rugged land which reaches elevations of 1200-1600 feet. Norwich village is located on the only sizeable plain within the Town at an elevation of 500 to 600 feet. An area of sandy soils covers most of Norwich Plain, where the village is located. Much of this is well drained and suited to the compact development which has taken place. (1967 Plan)

The westerly edge of the Town is separated from the rest by high land forming a continuous ridge, which attains elevations of 1300 to 1600 feet. This ridge is traversed by only one travelled highway, Beaver Meadow Road. West of this ridge the land drains into the basin of the White River. (1967 Plan)

The importance which the village had in development is shown by the fact that all of the principal highways which give access to the various parts of the Town radiate from this center. This is reflected in

the character of so many of the buildings in the village. The existence of the many fine examples of the architecture of the federal period and early 19th century is an economic asset which is related to property values all over the Town.

There are traces of former farm houses in the forest areas of town, where cellar holes point to what was once the center of a tract of open land. There were once numerous roads throughout the area, but many of them are now merely foot paths. The famed Appalachian Trail crosses the southerly part of Town where the Dartmouth Outing Club maintains certain trails. The whole area is a great recreational asset for the local community and for the large numbers of AT hikers, visitors to our area, who pass through in boots and packs during hiking season each year. (Town Plan 1967)

“The Connecticut River Valley is an important route in the Atlantic Flyway, one of the four great bird migratory flyways of North America. Each spring millions of birds...travel north from their wintering grounds toward their summer breeding areas. In the fall, the migratory birds leave or pass back through the watershed on their way to wintering areas.” (p 106, Where the Great River Rises, R. Brown, Ed)
ETC,...ETC....

From: [Calli Gujon](#)
To: [Planner](#)
Subject: Town Plan
Date: Friday, January 10, 2020 2:22:51 PM

Good Morning Rod,

I attended the meeting last night. I have lived in Norwich since 1996 on Hopson Lane.

I understand how much work goes into managing an edit of a very complicated and comprehensive plan as required by the organization of a town. I had not and have not yet read the plan, so did not feel qualified to comment last night, but rather came to listen to those who have remained more closely involved than I. It seems there is considerable change in the cohesiveness of the current plan as compared with the former plan which I was more familiar with. It seems there is most generally appreciation for the concision, clarity and thoroughness of the new plan. Many thanks.

I have primarily questions.

It is my understanding that the extension of the town center will void any act 250 restrictions and requirements. Is this accurate?

I heard a number of references to the Forest Block in association with climate control, but nothing of wetlands, and the watershed of the Connecticut River, nor of the ridge lines. Is the Forest block considered the most important? How does the planning commission see/address our community responsibility to the Connecticut River watershed and its intimate relationship with wetlands and ridge lines? I understand this relationship to be a critical part of climate/flood mitigation and water quality management. How does the new plan address this responsibility, particularly as we share this river with Hanover, NH where development is continual.

<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed>

<https://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/WetlandProjects/default.html>

Within this context, I do not see Route 5 South as meeting responsible sustainable development criteria.

The question of septic management has been a longstanding debate in the town. Who will pay Hartford for septic? How will installation be determined? My understanding is that installation cannot be done piecemeal by varying contractors.

Once we open zoning to mixed use with an enhanced town designation, what kind of controls will the town have on the kind of retail and corporate businesses that will be allowed to develop there? Will big box stores be acceptable? Is there thought given to how to support and preserve current businesses downtown that have offered so much to the social fabric and commercial aspects of town living?

In terms of infrastructure like roads, sidewalks and lighting, who will be responsible for those expenses? Again, until contractors step up, these necessary aspects of town living cannot be piecemeal. What part does Norwich play in the bridge accessibility to Hanover, as that has been cited as the biggest employer in the area?

Current residents, overwhelmingly interested in generating affordable housing, currently carry a heavy tax load that has had a steep climb in the 25 years that I have been here- and we have what was considered an affordable house within a development when it was built in the 80's. How can we stabilize taxes for the existing community and achieve sustainability, climate response readiness without driving people out of town with taxes?

Thank you for your consideration,

Calli

Calli Guion
PO Box 1021
Norwich, VT 05055
802 649 9052

From: [chris_katucki](#)
To: [Rod Francis](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Renewable Energy Project Siting Standards in Town Plan
Date: Monday, January 13, 2020 5:03:29 PM

Hi Rod:

Please include this email as public comment to the Renewable Energy Project Siting Standards in the Planning Commission's public hearing draft of the Norwich Town Plan dated December 9, 2019.

As I read the Renewable Energy Project Siting Standards at pages 28 and 29 of the Town Plan, nearly all land in Norwich is fair game for commercial solar development. As a result,

- farmland can be covered,
- forests can be clear cut, and
- scenic areas despoiled.

I don't think such development is consistent with the land use values set forth in other parts of the Town Plan. Climate change is real. However, Norwich can meet its renewable energy target for year 2050 with "about 160 acres total, or about 0.5 percent of the town's total land area," based on "current solar technology." Town Plan at 26. Plus, Norwich has "81 times more 'suitable land' than is needed to host such renewable energy projects (primarily for solar)." Town Plan at 28. In light of these facts, there is no need to give carte blanche to solar panel farms when other kinds of development are prohibited or dissuaded.

Solar panel farms are permanent structures that can cover acres of land. Even the useful life of an individual solar panel is 25 to 40 years, that does not mean the project is decommissioned after that time frame. The need for renewable energy sources is not going away. With the racking and electrical systems already in place, the likely scenario is that old panels will be swapped out with a new and improved versions, rather than the site being dismantled.

Preferred site status

All of Norwich is given preferred site status except in areas "mapped as Ridgeline Protection overlay Area, the shoreline Protection overlay Area, and the designated village center." This standard strikes me as overbroad and contrary to the spirit of the PUC Rule allowing municipalities to designate preferred sites.

The preferred site criteria was intended by the Vermont PUC to spur solar development on already developed land, such as parking lots, commercial rooftops and landfills, and away from undeveloped fields and forests which were cheaper to develop. See [Vermont rules spur solar development on landfills, brownfields](#) (Energy News Network, May 2019). By declaring nearly all of Norwich a preferred site, the Town Plan undercuts the purpose of the PUC rule.

Although [PUC Rule 5.103](#) allows a town plan to designate a "specific location" as a preferred site, the reference to "specific location" suggests a searching inquiry rather than a blanket designation of all land in Norwich as "preferred". According to the publication [Vermont Solar Market Pathways](#), the

Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) "produced a map of 'prime solar' land near existing power lines and away from floodways, wilderness areas, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, wetlands, agricultural soils, and other constraints." I don't know if such such mapping is possible for the Planning Commission, but it seems like an approach worth considering rather the blanket designation.

Moreover, the PUC rule allows for ad hoc determinations of preferred site status by the Selectboard after a town plan is adopted. That ability to designate preferred sites on a case by case basis suggests an under inclusive, rather than over inclusive, listing of preferred sites in the Town Plan is a better approach.

Projects larger than 500kW

For solar projects larger than larger than 500 kW, the Town Plan allows any land to be used for solar farms, even if not a preferred site. The primary protection regarding land use is that "the land will be returned to its prior condition when no longer actively used for renewable energy generation." That sounds good on paper but seems to ignore that these installations are permanent. Once that farmland is covered, once that forest is clear cut, once that viewshed is spoiled, it is gone.

In sum, as drafted, the Town Plan favors commercial solar development over and above all other land use considerations. Because only "about 0.5 percent of the town's total land area" needs to be dedicated to solar to meet year 2050 renewable energy target, the plan does not strike a proper balance among competing concerns.

Thank you in advance for considering my views on the above matter.

Sincerely,

Christopher Katucki
47 Old Coach Road
Norwich, VT 05055

I read with interest the Proposed 2020 Norwich Town Plan with its focus on affordable housing. My family moved to Norwich in August of 2018, and are of low-to-moderate income, so we have recently personally experienced the challenge of finding either an affordable rental or home to purchase in Norwich.

We moved from Manchester, Vermont, which experiences many of the same challenges and has been working on methods to address them, with varied levels of success, for decades. Manchester is much more of a "resort" town, so its challenges come from second-home-owners and wealthy early retirees driving up home prices so that those who work in town and would like to live there -- primarily those who serve the tourist economy working at hotels, restaurants, and retail establishments -- cannot afford to live in or even near town.

I fully support efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing in Norwich. Based on my previous experience in Manchester, as well as my recent experience moving to and living in Norwich, I respectfully submit the following questions and concerns. May I also take a moment to comment that many of my initial concerns were addressed upon a detailed reading of the entire plan and appendices, so my thanks to those who worked to produce this comprehensive document.

- 1) Regarding ADU's. I think ADU's are a wonderful thing. They play a dual role in the affordable housing problem by both providing small, affordable units for renters, and allowing buyers more opportunity to purchase existing housing stock because they are able to offset some of their housing expenses by renting out their ADU.
In the past (but not currently) we have owned a home with an ADU. One significant barrier to the creation of legal ADU's is the strict requirements for the dwelling, including ADA accessibility, double egress, appropriate egress windows, width of staircases, and the list goes on and on. In many instances, these regulations, while well-intended, create a situation where a homeowner cannot legally rent out a lovely, clean, cozy ADU because it is not financially and often physically possible to meet all of the requirements. In addition, homeowner's insurance cannot be obtained to cover the ADU if the ADU does not meet all applicable regulations. If one is building a new ADU as part of this plan, it is important to know these significant restrictions up front and the town must plan to partner with homeowners to make sure their new ADU will meet the regulations. If one is attempting to convert an existing above-garage or similar space to an ADU, will the town be able to provide guidance and (hopefully) funding to assist moderate income homeowners in needed renovations to meet rental regulations?
- 2) Regarding Wastewater. I realize wastewater/septic/municipal wastewater is discussed in the document and was studied in 2005 (before I lived in Norwich), but it clearly none-the-less remains a very important, front-and-center issue. It seems to me that the town would be putting the cart before the horse to agree to the goals in the plan without first addressing the significant elephant in the room of the lack of municipal wastewater facilities in town. My understanding is that the vast majority of existing in-town dwellings

currently exist on grandfathered, undersized, under-engineered septic systems that are "waiting to fail". Adding additional capacity through ADU's, duplex-triplex housing, or other increases in housing density will only exacerbate this problem. As we know, Marion Cross School is experiencing a septic "crisis" right now, and one look at that challenge will make clear what a complex and expensive problem this is.

Thank you for your time. And I thank those who have clearly worked tirelessly on addressing the challenge of affordable housing in Norwich.

Sincerely,
Alexa Manning
442 Main Street
Norwich, VT 05055

January 13, 2020

To the Planning Commission

Re: The Proposed Town Plan.

Thank you for your thorough analysis and thoughtful work to create a plan for our town as it moves into the future which is consistent with its character, its historical and cultural resources, its topography and natural resources, its place in our Upper Valley region, and the requirements of the State of Vermont and the Twin Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission.

Our Upper Valley region is growing, with opportunities for employment, especially in NH towns of Lebanon and Hanover, which are now stepping up to accommodate more housing for the growing student and work force population. Hartford has been developing in ways consistent with its own diverse character.

In considering the role of Route 5 South in Norwich, I hope the the Planning Commission takes into account its designation as The Connecticut River National Scenic By-way. It is the only national scenic by-way in the state. It's one of the assets Norwich offers to our region and nation, as well as our own townspeople.

I quote: : * The Connecticut River National Scenic by-way, . . . is over 500 miles of state roads bordering the Connecticut River in both Vermont and New Hampshire. The Byway links the two states, **focusing on the authentic New England experience - historic villages, mountain views, working farms, home grown crops and crafts, and outdoor pastimes like fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and hiking.** <http://www.crjc.org/pdffiles/Nat'l%20scenic%20byway.pdf>

Right now, Rte 5 South in Norwich offers resources and attractions compatible with that designation.

- A scenic drive. One noted as part of the Connecticut River National Scenic By-Way,
- It's part of the national Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, protecting the entire watershed of the Connecticut River.
- The river is designated an American Heritage River.
- King Arthur Flour - A popular destination for us residents, our neighbors throughout the region, and visitors from throughout the nation. and beyond. The King Arthur Trail links it to the Dresden Fields and the Farmers' Market.
- Norwich Farmers' Market -Where we shop for local fruits, veggies, flowers, and crafts, where neighbors throughout the region come, as well as visitors from other states and countries.
- Crossroads Farm Stand--Again a place for us and many throughout the region, looking for fresh produce, picked today-corn, flowers, bedding plants, pots, etc.

The Guests' legacy continues under Tim and Janet Taylors' ownership and stewardship.

- Dresden Athletic Fields - Open fields which are mainly athletic fields and a trail to King Arthur Flour. A place for our kids from Norwich and Hanover, as well as all the competing teams to practice and play soccer, baseball, softball, for hikers and dog walkers, too. Consistent with an open, rural landscape.
- The Unitarian/Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley, with its handsome meeting house and trails linking to other local trails.
- Other buildings of value to various constituents of the region, such as the Family Place and Events Center.

These offerings are consistent with historic and cultural attractions right around a corner:

- Follow Rte 5 into town, regional neighbors and national visitors find an historic village, the Norwich Historical Society, the Green, often with kids playing, The Norwich Square with the Café, Bookstore, Wine and Spirits, Zuzu's etc., and Post Office; further on, Dan & Whit's, and The Norwich Inn, offering food and drink and lodging.
- Nearby, the Montshire Museum of Science offers us and the nation an outstanding place to explore science inside and outside with 100 acres along the Connecticut River.

The current offerings on Rte. 5 South contribute significantly to our region and nation, and to us. They support farms; they offer cultural attractions consistent with its location; these bring Norwich residents, regional neighbors and visitors from the nation and beyond to our part of a national scenic by-way. Let us not view them as constraints to what we want to become, but as contributors of natural and cultural treasures that all enjoy.

While our region grows in density and population, Route 5 South that is scenic and rural may become even more appreciated.

As we consider changes in designation, taking careful zoning and design requirements into consideration, let's be careful not to lose the scenic and cultural resources that are part of us.

Sincerely,

Sarah Drew Reeves

AMENDMENT FROM
STUART RICHARDS
12/18/19

Amendment to the Proposed Norwich Town Plan 12/18/19

We the undersigned request that the Norwich Planning Commission and Norwich Selectboard adopt the following Amendment to the Town Plan:

Notwithstanding anything in any current or future proposed or adopted Norwich Town Plan, or any Zoning/Bylaw Amendment subsequently adopted by the Town of Norwich, this amendment expressly prohibits any development and/or cumulative developments which impose any additional and/or related tax burden on Norwich taxpayers. Any such development(s) will require full disclosure, in advance of any expenditures, of all costs to the taxpayers of Norwich, and any such costs will not be implemented without vote by a majority of the legal voters of Norwich. Nor shall there be any development and/or cumulative developments which are larger than the size and scale of currently existing developments in Norwich as of 2019. This Amendment expressly intends that, for the financial and environmental health of the town, Norwich's population remains relatively stable at approximately 3,400 people. Further, any future development and/or cumulative developments within the Town of Norwich must be consistent with the historic and rural nature of the Town and Village of Norwich.

To: Norwich Planning Commission, Select Board, Norwich Residents
From: Marcia Calloway, 17 Hopson Lane
Date: January 13, 2020 – second Planning Commission Hearing
Re: Concerns about Draft Norwich Town Plan dated 12/09/2019

BLOOD BROOK WATERSHED

In 2007 and 2008, Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission, the Town of Norwich Conservation Commission, and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources/Dept. of Environmental Conservation River Management Program undertook a Geomorphic Assessment of the Blood Brook Watershed culminating in a Watershed Corridor plan dated 03/27/2008.

The Blood Brook Watershed encompasses much of Norwich and all drains from northwest to northeast to Route 5 South and the Connective River/Corridor.

The recommendations in the 2008 document include:

* page 137 " Fluvial erosion hazard (FEH) mapping offers a science-based approach that uses the geomorphic data collected in Phase 1 and 2 to rate erosion hazards in the zone along the river based on the predicted movement of the river. Flash flooding is more common in Vermont than inundation flooding, particularly in watersheds such as Blood Brook where historic floodplain access has been limited. The FEH approach is highly recommended for Norwich for its more refined delineation of belt-width corridors and added measure of protection. Model ordinances, guidance documents and information about both the NFIP and FEH programs in Vermont is available through the VT ANR River Management Program (http://www.vtwaterquality.org/rivers/htm/rv_floodhazard.htm)." (Emphasis added.)

* page 139 " However, the critical issues for long-term stability in the Blood Brook watershed will involve identifying and protecting key attenuation assets that allow for floodplain access and reestablishment of river meander patterns to facilitate diffusion of stream power under high flow conditions as well as sediment and nutrient storage within the watershed." (Emphasis added.)

* page 139 "Passive restoration [is recommended which] allows the stream to return to a natural equilibrium primarily by the removal of human constraints within the river corridor. Over an extended time, the stream will regain meanders and access to its floodplain by use of its own energy and watershed input. Active buffer re-vegetation is essential to this approach, along with long term protection of the river corridor. This alternative is less expensive than active restoration, but often requires a longer time period to achieve equilibrium conditions." (Emphasis added.)

* page 140 "Bridge and Culvert survey data collected by TRORC as well as the inventory maintained by the town road crew have much of the information needed to prioritize and implement recommendations that come out of these efforts, and options might be explored to restore connectivity with the Connecticut River that appears significantly disrupted by the structures under Rte. 5 and Interstate 91 at the base of the watershed." (Emphasis added.)

The lead scientist on this study has told me that my concerns for flooding in the Route 5 South area are valid and that the 300 foot Blood Brook culvert under the raised portion of Route 5 South near the Co-op is too small and will not contain a major flood event.

The Draft Plan mentions the Blood Brook Watershed only once and does not address the need to protect that watershed to avoid flooding in any part of the watershed. Rather, the Plan proposes development to occur along Route 5 South at the mouth of that Watershed which impact the surface water and the river corridor.

The Draft Plan does not look at the portion of Route 5 – Route 5 North – which is not in the Blood Brook Watershed.

RIVER CORRIDOR PROTECTION

The State of Vermont Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) rating for Norwich is 7.5 percent. This appears to be because Norwich has not taken any action for River Corridor Protection. Were that to be done, the rating would be 12.5 percent. According to the Floodready Vermont website, a town with a 7.5 percent ERAF rate the cost of damage for a \$1,000,000 loss would be \$750,000 Federal share; \$75,000 state share; \$175,000 municipal share. At 12.5 percent ERAF the state and municipality share equally \$125,000 each and at 17.5 percent ERAF, the municipal share is reduced to \$75,000.

The Draft Plan does not mention the River Corridor Protection at all nor the additional loss that Norwich is responsible for as a result of that omission.

REQUEST

1. Review the recommendations of the Blood Brook Watershed study.
2. Revise the recommendations of the Draft Plan to avoid development which will affect that sensitive area of the Watershed.
3. Consider alternative recommendations for development to the size and scale of Norwich on other areas not within the sensitive Watershed such as Route 5 North.
4. Include recommendations that the town proceed with River Corridor Protection to avoid environmental and fiscal and property damage as climate change causes more storms and higher waterflow down the Watershed to the Connecticut River.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A Phase 1 Stream Geomorphic Assessment (SGA) was completed in the summer of 2006 by Two Rivers –Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC). The Phase 1 report identified priority reaches for Phase 2 assessment. Fieldwork for the Phase 2 assessment was conducted by Elisabeth McLane and Daniel Ruddell of Redstart Consulting (Redstart) with the help of Pete Fellows and Sally Mansur (TRORC), Ben Machin (Redstart), and volunteers Jonathan Frishtick of the Norwich Conservation Commission, Lelia Mellen, Bill Bridge, Anna Mulligan, Mani Kehler, Virginia Barlow, and Jenna Dixon. The Phase 2 assessment was completed in the fall of 2006.

The Blood Brook Watershed has a watershed size of 18.6 square miles and lies almost entirely within the Town of Norwich in east central Vermont, draining the central portion of the town from the hills to the north and west to the confluence of Blood Brook and the Connecticut River in the southeast corner of the township. The Phase 2 study focused on 7 mainstem and 7 tributary reaches of Blood Brook, with a combined length of approximately 14 miles for the assessed reaches. Watershed (Fig. 1) and reach location (Fig. 2) maps are included for reference.

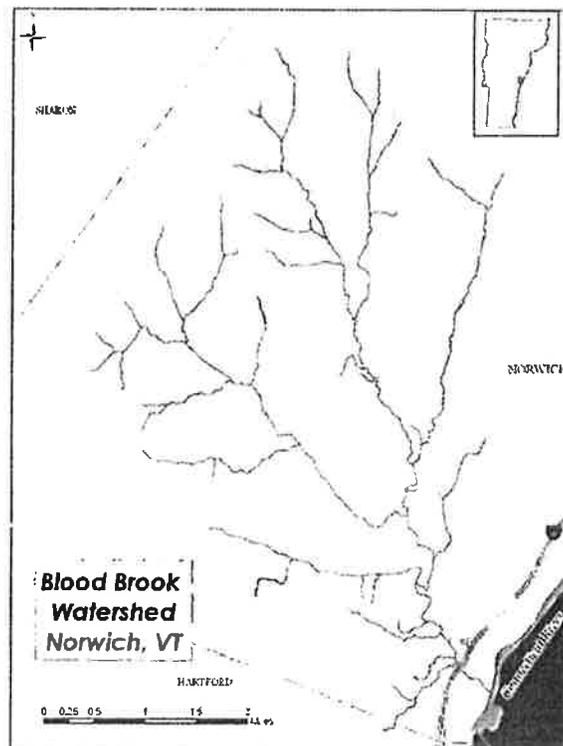


Figure 1. Watershed location map

Municipality | Norwich

[View Report](#)

1 of 1

Find | Next

Expanded Community Report for Norwich

1/13/2020
4:46:56 PM

Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) - State Post-Disaster Funding

Flood Hazard Mitigation Actions	Action Dates	Responsible	ERAF Status
1. Road and Bridge Standards		Norwich	No
2. Local Emergency Management Plan	05/08/2019	Norwich	Yes
3. National Flood Insurance Program	06/15/1988	Norwich	Yes
4. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan	08/04/2015	Norwich	Yes
5. River Corridor Protection			No
ERAF Rate for Actions 1 - 4:12.5%, Actions 1 - 5: 17.5%		ERAF Rate for: Norwich	7.5%

56	Buildings in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) (estimated from e911 sites).
14	Flood Insurance Policies in SFHA (Zone A, AE, AO, A 1- 30)
25%	Percent of buildings in the SFHA with flood insurance in force.
0	Critical or public structures in SFHA or 0.2% flood hazard area (est. from e911 sites.)
4%	Percent of buildings in the SFHA.
06/15/1988	<u>National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) (Enrollment Date)</u>
<u>DFIRM</u>	<u>Flood Insurance Rate Map Standard (Digital FIRM (DFIRM), Rough Digital, Paper)</u>
Norwich	NFIP Status: Regular Program
0	<u>Community Rating System (CRS) Class</u>
Yes	<u>Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) ERAF Status valid for Norwich?</u>
05/08/2019	LEMP - annual update after Town Meeting and before May 1.
Yes	<u>Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) ERAF Status valid for Norwich?</u>
08/04/2015	LHMP - Valid for 5 years from FEMA final approval date
FEMA Formal Approval	LHMP - Status of review (Plans currently in review are valid for ERAF).
No	<u>River Corridor Protection in Norwich?</u>
	<u>River Corridor Interim Protection Status for ERAF valid for Norwich?</u>
07/26/2018	<u>Municipal Plan - Valid for 8 years from adoption date</u>
11/12/2008	Zoning Adoption / Amendment Date
	Hazard Area Regulation Adoption / Amendment Date
No	<u>Road and Bridge Standards</u>
94.900	Town Highway Mileage in Norwich
	<u>Norwich Road and Bridge Standards and Adoption Date</u>
1/8/2014	<u>Norwich Certificate of Compliance with Road and Bridge Standards and Date</u>
	Town Highway Network Inventory Date
80%	<u>Town Highway Structures Grant Rate (State match 80% or 90%)</u>
70%	<u>Class 2 Roadways Grant Rate (State match 70% or 80%)</u>
<u>District 4</u>	<u>Project Manager email for VTrans Maintenance District 4</u>

Pam Mullen

From: Rod Francis
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 12:16 PM
To: Pam Mullen
Subject: FW: Watershed
Attachments: #4_PCMinutes 2018-8-23.pdf; PlanningCommissionQ12019ReporttoSB_4-3-19.pdf; #6_PC Report for Selectboard 9-17-18.pdf; 5d_2018NFIP_CRS_Brochure_June_2018_508OK(1).pdf; #4_PCMinutes 2018_7-26.pdf

Please save this email as a pdf and print all attachments. Make the pdf of the email correspondence and attachments part of the packet.

Thanks,
Rod

Planning & Zoning
Town of Norwich, VT

Planning & Zoning
Town of Norwich, VT

----- Original message -----

From: Rod Francis <RFrancis@norwich.vt.us>
Date: 1/14/20 5:26 PM (GMT-05:00)
To: Marcia Calloway <msbcalloway@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Watershed

Marcia,

In the 2020 Draft Plan the Map at p17 titled Water Resources includes the Bloody Brook Watershed. Watersheds within Norwich are not individually identified on this map. The digital mapping sources for this map are listed in the bottom left corner. Discussion of water quality matters is undertaken primarily in chapter 2 Land Use. Discussion of flooding risks is undertaken in Chapter 8 Resilience. There is some overlap between these chapters.

The Planning Commission and I consulted with TRORC and the ANR River Management Program between July and December of 2018 with regard to the River Corridor mapping and 'model language' (for an amendment to the zoning regulations) that the River Management Program had provided.

After reviewing the mapping and language provided, receiving public comment and considering the effort required to amend the Norwich Zoning Regulations (NZR) it was decided that pursuing membership in the Community Rating System (CRS) was a better alternative to achieving maximum ERAF benefit. This outcome was discussed with the Selectboard in a regular update in late 2018. I have been coordinating with TRORC on this task.

We do not have the higher ERAF share because we have not been admitted to the CRS yet.

As a member of TRORC Norwich participates in the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC), which is hosted by TRORC. Norwich has lands in two River Basins (9 — White River basin and 14 — Ompompanoosuc, Stevens, Wells, Waits and Connecticut River). See <https://vtwatershedblog.com/2019/11/01/basin-14-watershed-plan-public-discussion-to-be-held-in-bradford/>

The Bloody Brook is in Basin 14. These plans are a requirement of Act 64 the Clean Water Act, and are also part of the state's commitment to US EPA obligations. Norwich continues to support the work of our partner organizations including the Connecticut River Conservancy. Any review of land use regulations or commitments to study wastewater (as proposed in the 2020 Draft Plan) will be cognizant of and responsive to the findings and recommendations of the respective Basin Plans in effect.

Please let me know if you any further questions.

From: Marcia Calloway <msbcalloway@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 11:42 AM
To: Rod Francis <RFrancis@norwich.vt.us>
Subject: Watershed

Rod,

Can you please cite me to (1) the map you say identifies the Blood Brook watershed and (2) the agreement or other form of action which you say supplants the River Corridor Protection which is listed as the 5th **Flood Hazard Mitigation Action** on the state website and which provides the same level of ERAF rate as if we have the River Corridor Protection. Can you also answer why, if we have signed on to some alternative agreement, do we not have a higher ERAF rating?

Marcia Calloway

**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
PRELIMINARY DRAFT
Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, August 23, 2018, Tracy Hall

This set of minutes has not been reviewed or approved by the Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

Members Present: Jaci Allen (Chair), Jeffrey Lubell, Melissa Horwitz (Clerk), Susan Brink, Jeff Goodrich, Chris Brien, Steve Thoms. **Members absent:** None

Staff: Rod Francis **Public:** Linda Cook, Frances Jordan, Colleen Fox, Laurie and Charlie Welch, Watt Alexander, Laurence Babcock, Jim Faughman, Cody Williams, Amanda Kievet, Allan Froehlic, Mary Brownlow, Anne Foley and John Carroll

Note: This meeting was videoed by CATV and is available to view at
<http://catv.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/show/7621?channel=1>

Jaci Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1. Approve Agenda

- a. Approved

2. Meeting Objectives:

- a. Review feedback on River Corridor regulations and define next steps.
- b. Review process for Town Plan action item review.

3. Comments from the Public

- a. None

4. Review Minutes 8-9-18

- a. Table the approval of minutes

5. Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence

- a. Correspondence
- b. Announcements
 - i. Mr. G. celebration Saturday
- c. Updates
 - i. Affordable Housing -Lubell
 - 1. Next educational session is on Sept. 17, 2018 at 7:00 PM at Tracy Hall. Speakers: Lynn LaBombard, Steve Malone.
 - 2. Affordable Housing Committee approved suggested language for an Article on the November ballot reinstating an Affordable Housing fund. The selectboard approved a resolution that will be on the ballot.

6. Proposed River Corridor Regulations- Francis

- a. Francis opened the item with a review of Google Earth maps portraying 248 parcels impacted by the River Corridor boundary (there are 45 E911 locatable addresses in the River Corridor but NOT in the existing Shoreline Buffer or SFHA) and a comparison with Norwich's existing stream buffer overlay district.
 - i. The existing shoreline buffer was adopted in 2009 to address Water Quality and Fluvial Erosion hazard concerns. All mapped water bodies are protected by either i) a 50ft or ii) 100ft buffer (established from top of bank)
 - ii. In contrast, the proposed River Corridor overlay is a modified Fluvial Erosion delineation (as mapped by VT DEC) that adds 50ft to the stream meander (mapped by reach).
 - iii. Property owners may be subject to Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), Norwich Shoreline Overlay *and* the Proposed River Corridor Overlay. The most restrictive regulations would apply.
 - iv. Both the Norwich Shoreline Overlay and the Proposed River Corridor effectively prevent further development.
 - v. With the Norwich Shoreline Overlay there is no need for a map amendment process
 - vi. With the River Corridor Overlay there is a need for a map amendment process, but, unlike SFHA and FEMA there is no VT DEC procedure for amendment of the River Corridor delineation
 - vii. The River Corridor Overlay is already in effect for properties under Act 250 permit. Due to the Act 250 database being out-of-date it is not possible to determine how many Norwich properties have Act 250 permit *and* would be affected by the River Corridor rule.
- b. Questions and comments from the audience centered on:
 - i. Scope of impact of the proposed River Corridor rules
 - ii. In what ways the River Corridor Overlay differs from the existing shoreline and SFHA overlays
 - iii. What if any potential financial benefits could follow from adopting the River Corridor rule?
(The municipality would gain a further 5% reduction in emergency relief cost-sharing between Norwich with the state).
- c. Next Steps: The mapping analysis will continue as well as the analysis of the consequences of adopting the river corridor regulations.

7. Process and schedule for Town Plan action item review (10 minutes)

- a. Planning Commission members will meet with groups/individuals that may have information on the specific goals that the town plan is trying to achieve.
- b. Due Date: October 23, 2018

8. Other Business

- a. None

9. Future Meeting Schedule & Agendas

- a. No September 13, 2018 meeting

10. Comments from the Public

11. Adjournment at 8:23.

Melissa Horwitz, Clerk

Future Meetings:

Thursday, September 13, 6:30pm, No Regular Meeting

Monday, September 17, 7pm, Affordable Housing Education Series

Thursday, September 27, 6:30pm, Regular Meeting

Thursday, October 11, 6:30pm, Regular Meeting

Planning Commission Agendas & Minutes available at:

<http://norwich.vt.us/planning-commission/>

Planning Commission Q1 2019 Report to the Selectboard

4-3-19

Commissioners: Jaci Allen, Chair, Jeff Goodrich, Vice Chair, Susan Brink, Melissa Horwitz, Jeff Lubell, Steve Thoms, Leah Romano, Brian Loeb, Ernie Ciccotelli

Affordable Housing Sub-committee (AHSC): Creigh Moffatt, Paul Manganiello; Kathleen Shepherd, Ralph Hybels, Jeff Lubell (PC Member), Jeff Goodrich (PC Member), Brian Loeb (PC Member)

Enhanced Energy Planning Work Group (EEWG): Linda Gray (Energy Committee chair), Melissa Horwitz (PC Member), Lynnwood Andrews (Conservation Commission), Aaron Lamperti (EC), Susan Hardy (EC)

Committee/Commission/Appointee Charge (including subcommittees and workgroups): Preparing a town plan, and preparing zoning and subdivision regulations based on the town plan. The commission also studies other planning issues and makes recommendations to the Selectboard.

Current Projects (including work by subcommittees) with proposed deadlines:

Town Plan Rewrite

- The Table of Contents for the new Town Plan (attached) has been developed based on Vermont statutes (24 VSA VT §4302 and 4382), which detail the required plan elements and goals. A Resilience chapter has been added in support of Article 37. Strategies to foster climate protection will be included throughout the plan.
- Outlines for each chapter are in draft, and Planning Commission work groups are targeting April-May 2019 for meetings with local subject matter experts to review and gather feedback. Input from these experts will be used to revise draft chapters.
- Public workshops to discuss draft content are targeted to for June.
- The Commission has committed to producing a concise, readable document, and gathering input from a wide variety of stakeholders throughout the process.

Enhanced Energy Plan

- On March 28th, the Planning Commission reviewed a draft of the Enhanced Energy Plan, which was developed in collaboration with TRORC. The process to gather input from additional experts and the public will begin this month. The Enhanced Energy Plan will be included in the Town Plan as the Energy chapter.

Affordable Housing

- The Affordable Housing Fund Policy has been amended by the Affordable Housing Committee, approved by the PC on March 28th, and forwarded to the Selectboard for review and approval.
- The Affordable Housing Sub-committee is now working on a draft of an affordable housing strategy.

Emergency Relief Assistance Fund (ERAF)

- TRORC has been engaged to support implementation of the Community Rating System (CRS) to qualify for an additional 5% reimbursement from the State in the event of another flood disaster. (17.5% total)
- CRS recognizes communities that are doing more than the minimum National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements to help citizens prevent or reduce flood losses.

Future Projects:

- Solicit expert input on draft chapters of the Town Plan, revise chapters, and conduct public workshops. April-June 2019
- Gather input from town experts on draft of the Affordable Housing Strategy. April-May
- Work with TRORC on the CRS qualification process.
- Participate in the revisions to the TRORC Regional Plan, especially Land Use where the Interstate Interchange Policy is under consideration.

Support Needed from the Selectboard:

- Ongoing communication and collaboration on key matters

**Planning Commission Work Plan
Q2-Q3 DRAFT**

Area	Q2			Q3		
	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Town Plan	PC members meet with town experts to review draft of chapter outlines	Incorporate expert feedback into chapter drafts	Review revised drafts with town experts and begin community outreach	Community outreach	Revise chapter drafts	Community outreach
Enhanced Energy Plan	Review Draft 1 and commence community outreach	Develop Draft 2	Community outreach			
TRORC Interstate Interchange Rev.	Provide input to TRORC	Provide input to TRORC				
Affordable Housing	Revolving fund criteria considered by SB	Community outreach on draft of Housing strategy	Revise Housing strategy	Community outreach		
ERAF Qualification	Work with Two Rivers to achieve CRS status	Work with Two Rivers to achieve CRS status	Community Outreach	Implementation planning	Implementation planning	

Chapter	Statutory Requirements	Related Chapters
1. Introduction §4382 Elements	<p>(1) A statement of objectives, policies, and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services, and facilities, and to protect the environment.</p> <p>(8) A statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas and the region developed under this title.</p>	
2. Land Use §4302 Goals	<p>(2) A land use plan, which shall consist of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses...</p> <p>(5) A statement of policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources.</p> <p>To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban centers separated by rural countryside.</p> <p>To identify, protect, and preserve important natural and historic features</p> <p>To maintain and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife, forests, and other land resources.</p> <p>To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.</p>	All other chapters relate to Land Use
3. Housing §4382 Elements §4302 Goals	<p>(10) A housing element that shall include a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning commission pursuant to subdivision 4348a(a)(9) of this title. The program should account for permitted accessory dwelling units, as defined in subdivision 4412(1)(E) of this title, which provide affordable housing.</p> <p>To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters.</p>	4, 5, 6, 7, 8
4. Economic Development §4382 Elements §4302 Goals	<p>(11) An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth.</p> <p>To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.</p> <p>To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries.</p>	3, 5, 6, 7, 8

5. Utilities, Facilities and Services §4382 Elements	(4) A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse disposal, storm drainage, and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs and method of financing.	3, 6, 7, 8
	(6) An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of present and projected uses and the local public school system.	
5. Utilities, Facilities and Services §4302 Goals	To plan for, finance and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs.	
	To broaden access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters.	
	To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development.	
	To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors.	
6. Transportation §4382 Elements	(3) A transportation plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective transportation and circulation facilities showing existing and proposed highways and streets by type and character of improvement, and where pertinent, parking facilities, transit routes, terminals, bicycle paths and trails, scenic roads, airports, railroads, and port facilities, and other similar facilities or uses, with indications of priority of need.	7
	To provide for safe, convenient, economic and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment, including public transit options and paths for pedestrians and bicyclers.	
§4302 Goals		

7. Energy	§4382 Elements	(9) An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs and problems within the municipality, a statement of policy on the conservation of energy, including programs, such as thermal integrity standards for buildings, to implement that policy, a statement of policy on the development of renewable energy resources, a statement of policy on patterns and densities of land use likely to result in conservation of energy.	3, 4, 5, 6, 8
	§4302 Goals	To make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.	
8. Resilience	§4382 Elements	(12) A flood resilience plan	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
	§4302 Goals	To encourage flood resilient communities.	
9. Implementation	§4382 Elements	(7) A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan.	

Selectboard Quarterly Report DRAFT-September 2018

Commission: Planning Commission

PC Members: Jaci Allen, Chair, Jeff Goodrich, Vice Chair, Chris Brien, Susan Brink, Melissa Horwitz, Jeff Lubell, Steve Thoms.

Affordable Housing Sub-committee Members: Creigh Moffatt, Paul Manganiello; Kathleen Shepherd, Ralph Hybels, Jeff Lubell (PC Member), Jeff Goodrich (PC Member)

Committee/Commission/Appointee Charge (including subcommittees and workgroups): Preparing a town plan, and preparing zoning and subdivision regulations based on the town plan. The commission also studies other planning issues and makes recommendations to the Selectboard.

Current Projects (including work by subcommittees and work groups) with proposed deadlines:

- The Planning Commission is in the process of developing an **inventory of action items under the newly adopted 2018 Town Plan**, including current status, next steps, and level of priority. A 2019 work plan for the Planning Commission and timeline for developing the next Town Plan will be created from the output. Target date for completion-December 2018
- The Planning Commission is researching the possibility of adopting **River Corridor regulations** (as developed by VT ANR River Management Program [RMP]) in addition to the existing Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and the Shoreline Protection Overlay (SPO). Included in our activities is meeting with members of the public to discuss how the regulations would affect them and solicit input. The Commission is considering potential direct and indirect costs of implementation, as well as any potential benefits. The Commission has not yet set a formal target for sending a recommendation to the Selectboard, but expects to make substantial progress toward a recommendation this fall.
- As part of the process of developing an affordable housing strategy for the town, as specified in the 2018 Town Plan, the Planning Commission completed five Affordable Housing Listening Sessions during the first part of 2018. The next step is conducting an **Affordable Housing Education Series** to continue dialog on topics of interest identified during the Listening Sessions. The first session was held in August on Tapping Federal and State Resources for Affordable Housing. A session on Facilitating the Development of Lower-Cost Housing by the Private Sector, is scheduled for September 17th. Future sessions on Expanding the Stock of Accessory Dwelling Units and Alternative Septic Solutions are in the works. The purpose of these activities is to gather input and grow consensus on an affordable housing strategy for the town.
- The **Affordable Housing Sub-committee** drafted a proposed ballot measure to reestablish a revolving reserve fund for affordable housing projects, and forwarded this on to the Selectboard. They also drafted the following goals for their work plan for the coming year, which the Planning Commission will finalize this fall:

- Educate the public about the need and possible solutions to maintaining a stock of affordable housing for the town of Norwich
- Recommend procedures for the use of the Revolving Affordable Housing Loan Fund
- Help identify opportunities to realize the creation of affordable housing for the town of Norwich, VT, including any obstacles in zoning or other town policies, and make recommendations for how to overcome.
- Conduct outreach to developers and other housing professionals to ensure they are aware of Norwich interest in affordable housing.

Future Projects:

- Analyze feedback from Town Survey results on the ‘top 5’ town priorities and issue report. **Target date Oct-Nov 2018**
- Draft 2019 Planning Commission work plan, based upon Town Plan Action Item Review and survey input. Draft a timeline for the next version of the Town Plan. **Target December 2018**
- Review and Approve 2019 Affordable Housing Sub-committee Goals and recruit additional members of the committee. **Target date Dec 2018**
- Develop a recommendation for the Selectboard on River Corridor regulations. Progress expected in fall. **No target date set yet.**

Support Needed from the Selectboard:

- Provide **Town Survey** results after survey closes.
- If the **Affordable Housing Revolving Fund** question passes in November, timely review, feedback and action on recommendations from the Affordable Housing Sub-committee and Planning Commission. This may happen in the 4th quarter of 2018 or the 1st quarter of 2019.
- After the Planning Commission passes along a recommendation related to the **River Corridor regulations**, timely review, dialog, and feedback on the recommendation.



National Flood Insurance Program
Community Rating System

A Local Official's Guide to
Saving Lives, Preventing Property Damage, and
Reducing the Cost of Flood Insurance

FEMA B 573 / 2018



FEMA



The Community Rating System Works

Every year, flooding causes hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of damage to homes and businesses around the country. Standard homeowners and commercial property insurance policies do not cover flood losses. To meet the need for this vital coverage, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

The NFIP offers reasonably priced flood insurance to all properties in communities that comply with minimum standards for floodplain management.

The NFIP's Community Rating System (CRS) credits community efforts beyond those minimum standards by reducing flood insurance premiums for the community's property owners. The CRS is similar to—but separate from—the private insurance industry's programs that grade communities on the effectiveness of their fire suppression and building code enforcement efforts.

CRS discounts on flood insurance premiums range from 5% up to 45% (see Table 1), based on CRS credit points that are awarded to

communities. The discounts provide an incentive for communities to implement new flood protection activities that can help save lives and property when a flood occurs.

The CRS provides credit under 19 public information and floodplain management activities described in the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*.

You're probably already doing many of these activities. To get credit, community officials will need to prepare documentation that verifies these efforts.

The CRS assigns credit points for each activity. Table 2 lists the activities and the possible number of credit points for each one. The table also shows the average number of credit points communities earn for each activity. These averages may give you a better indication than the maximums of what your community can expect.

To be eligible for a CRS discount, your community must do Activity 310, Elevation Certificates. If you're a designated repetitive loss community, you must also do Activity 510, Floodplain Management Planning. All other activities are optional.



Based on the total number of points your community earns, the CRS assigns you to one of ten classes. Your discount on flood insurance premiums is based on your class.

For example, if your community earns 4,500 points or more, it qualifies for Class 1, and property owners in the in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) get a 45% discount on their insurance

premiums. If your community earns as little as 500 points, it's in Class 9, and property owners in the SFHA get a 5% discount. If a community does not apply or fails to receive at least 500 points, it's in Class 10, and property owners get no discount.

Table 1, below, shows the number of points required for each class and the corresponding discount.

Table 1.
How much discount property owners in your community can get

Rate Class	Discount for SFHA*	Discount for Non-SFHA**	Credit Points Required
1	45%	10%	4,500 +
2	40%	10%	4,000–4,499
3	35%	10%	3,500–3,999
4	30%	10%	3,500–3,499
5	25%	10%	3,000–2,999
6	20%	10%	2,500–2,499
7	15%	5%	1,500–1,999
8	10%	5%	1,000–1,499
9	5%	5%	500–999
10	0	0	0–499

* Special Flood Hazard Area

** Preferred Risk Policies are available only in B, C, and X Zones for properties that are shown to have a minimal risk of flood damage. The Preferred Risk Policy does not receive premium rate credits under the CRS because it already has a lower premium than other policies. Although they are in SFHAs, Zones AR and A99 are limited to a 5% discount. Premium reductions are subject to change.

Table 2.

What You Can Do to Get Credit

The CRS grants credit for 19 different activities that fall into four series:

Series 300	Public Information	Maximum Points*	Average Points *
	<p>This series credits programs that advise people about the flood hazard, flood insurance, and ways to reduce flood damage. The activities also provide data insurance agents need for accurate flood insurance rating.</p>		
310	<p>Elevation Certificates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain FEMA elevation certificates for new construction in the floodplain. (At a minimum, a community must maintain certificates for buildings built after the date of its CRS application.) 	116	38
320	<p>Map Information Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Flood Insurance Rate Map information to those who inquire, and publicize this service. 	90	73
330	<p>Outreach Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute outreach projects with messages about flood hazards, flood insurance, flood protection measures, and/or the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains. 	350	87
340	<p>Hazard Disclosure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate agents advise potential purchasers of flood-prone property about the flood hazard. • Regulations require notice of the hazard. 	80	14
350	<p>Flood Protection Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public library and/or community's website maintains references on flood insurance and flood protection. 	125	38
360	<p>Flood Protection Assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give inquiring property owners technical advice on how to protect their buildings from flooding, and publicize this service. 	110	55
370	<p>Flood Insurance Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess flood insurance coverage within the community and implement a plan to promote flood insurance. 	110	39
Series 300	Total	981	3448

*Maximum and average points are subject to change. See the current *CRS Coordinator's Manual* for the latest information.

Series 400	Mapping & Regulations	Maximum Points*	Average Points *
	This series credits programs that limit floodplain development or provide increased protection to new and existing development.		
410	Floodplain Mapping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new flood elevations, floodway delineations, wave heights, or other regulatory flood hazard data for an area not mapped in detail by the flood insurance study. • Have a more restrictive mapping standard. 	802	60
420	Open Space Preservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantee that currently open public or private floodplain parcels will be kept free from development. • Zone the floodplain for minimum lot sizes of 5 acres or larger. 	2,020	509
430	Higher Regulatory Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit new buildings and/or fill in the floodplain. • Require freeboard. • Require soil tests or engineered foundations. • Require compensatory storage. • Require coastal construction standards in AE Zones. • Have regulations tailored to protect critical facilities or areas subject to special flood hazards (for example, alluvial fans, ice jams, subsidence, or coastal erosion). 	2,042	270
440	Flood Data Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep flood and property data on computer records. • Use better base maps. • Maintain elevation reference marks. 	222	115
450	Stormwater Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulate new development throughout the watershed to ensure that post-development runoff is no greater than pre-development runoff. • Regulate new construction to minimize soil erosion and protect or improve water quality. 	755	132
Series 400	Total	5,841	1,086

Series 500	Flood Damage Reduction	Maximum Points*	Average Points *	
This series credits programs that reduce the flood risk to existing development.				
510	Floodplain Management Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare, adopt, implement, and update a comprehensive flood hazard mitigation plan using a standard planning process. • Prepare an analysis of the repetitive flood loss areas within the community. <p><i>Note: category C repetitive loss communities must receive credit for either the floodplain management plan or the repetitive loss area analysis, above.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare, adopt, implement, and update a plan to protect natural functions within the community's floodplain. 	622	175	
520	Acquisition and Relocation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire and/or relocate floodprone buildings so that they are out of the floodplain. 	2,250	195	
530	Flood Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect existing floodplain development by floodproofing, elevation, or minor flood control projects. 	1,600	73	
540	Drainage System Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a program for and conduct annual inspections of all channels and detention basins; remove debris as needed. 	570	218	
Series 500		Total	5,042	661

Series 600	Flood Preparedness	Maximum Points*	Average Points *
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This series credits flood warning, levee safety, and dam safety projects.

610	Flood Warning and Response	395	254
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide early flood warnings to the public, and have a detailed flood response plan keyed to flood crest predictions. 		
620	Levees	235	157
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually inspect and maintain existing levees; have a system for recognizing the threat of levee failure and/or overtopping, disseminating warnings, and providing emergency response; and coordinate with operators of critical facilities. 		
630	Dams	160	35
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a high-hazard-potential dam that could affect the community; have a system for recognizing the threat of dam failure, disseminating warnings, planning and practicing emergency responses; and coordinating with operators of critical facilities. 		

Series 600	Total	790	446
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All Series	Total	12,654	2,537
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Additional Credit

Your community can get additional credit for regulating development outside the SFHA to the same standards as development inside the SFHA. There is also credit for assessing future flood conditions, including the impacts of future development, urbanization, and changing weather patterns. See the *CRS Coordinator's Manual* for full details.

Many communities can qualify for what the CRS calls "state-based credit," based on the activities or regulations a state or regional agency implements within communities. For example, some states have disclosure laws eligible for credit under Activity 340 (Hazard Disclosure). Any community in those states can receive the state-based credit.

Your community may want to consider floodplain management activities not listed in the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*. You should evaluate these activities for their ability to increase public safety, reduce property damage, avoid economic disruption and loss, and protect the environment. In addition, you can request a review of these activities to determine whether they could be eligible for CRS credit. FEMA welcomes innovative ways to prevent or reduce flood damage.



How to Apply

Participation in the CRS is voluntary. If your community is in full compliance with the rules and regulations of the NFIP, you may apply. There's no application fee, and all CRS publications are free.

Your community's chief executive officer (your mayor, city manager, or other top official) must appoint a CRS coordinator to serve as the liaison between the community and FEMA. The coordinator should know the operations of all departments that deal with floodplain management and public information. And the coordinator should be able to speak for the community's chief executive officer.

To begin the application process, your community submits a letter of interest to your FEMA Regional Office and documents that you are implementing floodplain management activities that warrant at least 500 CRS credit points. On the [CRS Resources website](http://www.CRSresources.org) (www.CRSresources.org) you can find a sample letter; the CRS Quick Check, a tool that helps you assess your community's possible credit points; and further instructions.

You may also want to download from that website a copy of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*, which describes the program in full and provides specific information, including eligible activities, required documentation, and resources for assistance.

Help is also available through the contact information below.

CRS-related materials and many more resources are available at the [CRS Resources website](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system) and on [FEMA's website](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system) (<https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system>).

After your community applies for a CRS classification, the CRS will verify the information and arrange for flood insurance premium discounts.

For more info, write, phone, or fax:

NFIP/CRS

P.O. Box 501016

Indianapolis, IN 46250-1016

(317) 848-2898

Fax: (201) 748-1936

e-mail: nfipcrs@iso.com

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NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
PRELIMINARY DRAFT
Meeting Minutes

ITEM #4

Thursday, July 26, 2018, Tracy Hall

This set of minutes has not been reviewed or approved by the Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

Members Present: Jaci Allen, Jeffrey Lubell, Steve Thoms, Melissa Horwitz (Clerk), Susan Brink, Jeff Goodrich (Showed up at the meeting as a member of the audience--first ten minutes)

Members absent: Chris Brien

Staff: Rod Francis

Public: Linda Cook and Hope Charkins

Jaci Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1. Agenda – Approved by Consensus

2. Meeting Topic and Goals

- a. Resolve PC questions and Two Rivers Ottaquechee feedback on the draft of River Corridor regulations, and outline next steps.
- b. Review inventory of Town Plan action items and assign owners and partners
- c. Agree on speaker for Affordable Housing Education Series Part 2 and communication plan to promote series.

3. Comments from the Public

- a. Jeff Goodrich—Has concerns about the drafting of the flood regulations by the State. He will edit the document with specific suggestions on how to improve and provide this before the next meeting.

4. Minutes – 7-12-18 –Minutes approved

5. Announcements, Reports, Updates & Correspondence

- a. Updates
 - i. PC quarterly report to Selectboard—PC will provide quarterly. Allen will develop draft.
 - ii. Town Survey status—Keep encouraging people to fill it out

6. Discussion of River Corridor regulations

- a. National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) administered by FEMA—provides property owners with subsidized private insurance for properties located in the flood fringe (also referred to as 100 year floodplain) and the floodway (that area of the stream occupied by water under bank-full conditions).
- b. For Norwich property owners to receive NFIP-backed insurance we need to be a member of NFIP and regulate land use through use of the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) overlay.
- c. For flooding and natural disasters events for which a Presidential Declaration is issued (where damage across the county exceeds \$1m) Norwich is eligible to receive 75% cost reimbursement through FEMA and 12.5% cost reimbursement from VT. The 12.5% reimbursement requires: i) A duly adopted and approved Town Plan, ii) NFIP membership, iii) Current Road and Bridge standards iv) Local Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and v) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). To obtain a further 5% reimbursement the Town must participate in the Community Rating System (CRS) (attached to the NFIP) OR protect river corridors from further encroachment
- d. River Corridor regulations restrict development and apply additional safety standards along designated River Corridors. (e.g. no expanded building footprints into flood plains,) The purpose of

these regulations is to limit loss and increase safety. Since 2008 Norwich has regulated development and applied safety standards along all streams and waterways in town.

- e. The River Corridor overlay is mapped by VT DEC. Some properties are impacted by this proposed overlay that are currently NOT in the SFHA or the Town of Norwich (ToN) river buffer overlay.
- f. Property owners potentially affected by the expanded River Corridor designation have been notified by the Town Planner. Public hearings will be held to educate the community on these proposed regulations.
- g. Action Items for next meeting:
 - i. Francis will discuss current Norwich regulations with VT DEC to determine the interplay between existing ToN stream buffer requirements and the 'model' River Corridor regulations.
 - ii. PC will continue to review proposed River Corridor language.
 - iii. Jeff G. will provide additional suggested language.

7. Follow up on Town Plan Action Items and Assignments

- a. Actions for next meeting:
 - i. PC members selected specific chapters to review current action items and recommend an appropriate operational owner. Ideally one operational owner per chapter will be identified. Some chapters may require more than one. (e.g Natural and Historic Resources)
 - 1. Allen-Town Profile, Community Facilities and Services
 - 2. Lubell-Housing
 - 3. Brink-Economic Development, Natural and Historic Resources
 - 4. Thoms—Education, Transportation
 - 5. Horwitz—Energy
 - 6. Francis-Land Use

8. Affordable Housing Education Series

- a. Andrew Winter and Martin Hahn will speak on 'Tapping Federal and State Resources to Develop Affordable Housing' on Tuesday, Aug 7th at 7:00pm, in the Tracy Hall meeting room.
- b. Francis will publicize through list serve, town email, and sandwich board
- c. Lubell will finalize date and speaker for September program

9. Adjournment at 8:11

Melissa Horwitz, Clerk

Future Meetings:

Tuesday, August 7, 7pm Affordable House Education Series Part #1
Thursday, August 9th, 6:30pm Regular Meeting
Thursday, August 23, 6:30pm Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 13th, 6:30pm Regular Meeting

Planning Commission Agendas & Minutes available at: <http://norwich.vt.us/planning-commission/>

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES

Friday, December 6, 2019, 3:15PM
Norwich Historical Society

Members Present: Jaci Allen (Chair), Melissa Horwitz (Vice Chair), Brian Loeb, Leah Romano, Ernie Ciccotelli, Jeff Goodrich, Jeff Lubell, Susan Brink
Public: Linda Cook, Stuart Richards, Charlotte Metcalfe
Staff: Rod Francis

Chair Allen called the meeting to order at 3:23pm

Agenda: Goodrich moved and Horwitz seconded a motion to approve the Agenda. Motion carried 8 — 0.

Comments from the Public: Stuart Richards made comments reminding Commissioners that the time of day set for this meeting made participation by working people difficult.

Announcements, Reports, Updates and Correspondence: None.

2020 Town Plan Public Hearing Draft: Lubell moved and Brink seconded a motion to approve this draft (as revised) of the 2020 Norwich Town Plan for the purpose of Planning Commission public hearings, posting, publishing and mailing. Motion carried 6 — 2.

2020 Town Plan Public Hearing Dates: Horwitz moved and Loeb seconded a motion to hold Planning Commission public hearings on the draft 2020 Town Plan at 6:30pm on January 9, and 6:30pm, January 13, 2020. Motion carried 7 — 0.

2020 Town Plan Planning Commission Report: Goodrich moved and Ciccotelli seconded a motion to approve the Planning Commission Report for Municipal Plan Adoption. Motion carried 7 — 1.

Minutes of 11-14-19: Brink moved and Horwitz seconded a motion to approve the minutes of 11-14-19. Motion carried 7 — 0.

Minutes of 11-21-19: Horwitz moved and Ciccotelli seconded a motion to approved the minutes of 11-21-19 as amended. Motion carried 6 — 0 — 1.

Adjournment: Horwitz moved and Brink seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried 7 — 0.

Future Meetings:

- Thursday, Jan 9, 6:30 pm Town Plan Public Hearing**
- Monday, Jan 13, 6:30 pm Town Plan Public Hearing**
- Thursday Jan 16, 6:30 pm Regular Meeting**