

DHCD Municipal Plan and Bylaw Intake

Submitted by: Anonymous user

Submitted time: Aug 12, 2025, 12:07:49 PM

Municipality Name

Ferrisburgh

Municipality

Ferrisburgh

County

Addison

Regional Planning Commission

Addison County RPC

Submitter Details

Submitter's Name

Jessica James

Submitter's Title

Town Clerk

Submitter's Email

townclerk@ferrisburghvt.org

Select your Submission

Municipal Plan

Type of Municipal Plan Submission

Proposed

Date of Public Hearing

Sep 17, 2025

Upload Public Hearing Notice

PDF TOWN PLAN Notice Public HearingSept17 2025.pdf
146.6KB

Upload Municipal Plan

PDF PLANAUG11JRDraft.pdf
31.8MB

Have you submitted the Municipal Plan to your Regional Planning Commission?

Yes

**TOWN OF FERRISBURGH
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Ferrisburgh Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday September 17, 2025, at the Town Offices at 6:00 pm to listen to public comment on proposed amendments to the Town Plan pursuant to 24 VSA 4384.

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of a Town Plan is to provide sufficient up to date data and information, policies, and recommendations, to guide orderly development within the Town. Town Plans should be updated every 8 years. The present Town Plan was last amended in August 2017.

Summary of Amendments:

The Plan includes updated maps and new maps with data from the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and from Addison County Regional Planning (ACRP). Maps include: Water Resources/Watershed; Wetlands and River Corridors; Significant Habitat and Forest Blocks; Primary and Statewide Soils; Conserved and Public Lands; Population Density; Transportation; Community Facilities; Transportation Safety Concerns; Present and Future Trails; Septic Suitability, Wells and Private Water Lines; Flood Hazard Areas.

The Planning Areas Map has been updated to create an area called Mixed Use, and to broaden the Lake Champlain Shoreland area.

A new section has been added on Flood Resilience. The updated Plan includes the most current demographic and housing data.

Policies and Recommended Actions have been updated in all sections of the Plan.

A copy of the Draft 2025-2033 Ferrisburgh Town Plan is available at the Town Offices during regular business hours and available on the Town Website. For more information contact the Town Clerks office at 802-877-3429

Zoom Meeting Information

Town of Ferrisburgh is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: TOWN OF FERRISBURGH Planning Commission NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Time: Sep 17, 2025 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84503157565?pwd=HuedKLqbqhNjBx0kbeNPNbduCmUzzM.1>

Meeting ID: 845 0315 7565

Passcode: 425628

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,84503157565#,,,,*425628# US

+13017158592,,84503157565#,,,,*425628# US (Washington DC)

Join instructions

https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/84503157565/invitations?signature=k0Y78_DDIDhrBI16KiTTP2TFodI7flrk4LDiQUc1UnE

RUN: Addison Independent

**DRAFT
FERRISBURGH TOWN PLAN
2025-2033**



CHARLOTTE

MONKTON

VERGENNES

WALTHAM

PANTAN

NEW HAVEN

DRAFT FERRISBURGH TOWN PLAN 2025-2033

This town plan was approved by the Ferrisburgh Planning Commission XXXXXXXXXX, and adopted by the Selectboard on XXXXXXXXXX.

Acknowledgements

A big thank you to the many citizens who answered the surveys and attended the community meetings, providing important guidance, facts, ideas and inspiration; and the Planning Commission members; the Selectboard; all the Town Staff; the Zoning Board; our Fire Chief and the Volunteer Fire Department; the Conservation Commission; Ferrisburgh Historical Society; Town Center Committee; Recreation Committee; Trails Committee; Climate and Energy Committee; Road Foreman, Road Superintendent and Road Crew; the Tree Warden; the Listers; the Farmers and other businesses in town; and those who edited sections of the plan, and provided information and ideas; the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum; the Rokeby Museum; Basin Harbor Resort; the Lewis Creek Association; The Vergennes Panton Water District; staff at the Agency of Natural Resources and VTTrans; the Vermont Land Trust.

Technical assistance provided by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission and Jen Labie, Leaning Tree Studios

Ferrisburgh Planning Commission:

- Bob Beach, Chair
- Bonnie Barnes
- Gail Blasius
- Anne Cohn
- Carl Cole
- Mike Quinn
- Walter Reed
- Jean Richardson
- Bessie Sessions

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INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. General Description

The Town of Ferrisburgh, Vermont, comprises roughly 61 square miles or 39,000 acres of land in the Lake Champlain Valley. It is ranked as Vermont's ninth largest town in area. Like much of the Champlain Valley, the town's landscape is generally flat to rolling, with few hilly areas, some fine forestlands and extensive areas of excellent, productive agricultural soils. Ferrisburgh is well watered by the Lewis, Little Otter, Dead and Otter Creeks; it also has large areas of ecologically significant wetlands.

Ferrisburgh has the longest shoreline frontage (21 miles) of any Vermont town bordering Lake Champlain. This has resulted in considerable shoreline development of summer camps and homes, the nationally renowned Basin Harbor Resort, and two State Parks: Button Bay and Kingsland Bay, plus a Town Beach.

Many of the earliest European settlers still have descendants living and working in town or in neighboring communities. Farming, forestry and sugaring are still significant land uses in Ferrisburgh.

The busy, north-south U.S. Route 7 highway corridor bisects the town. The communities of Burlington and Middlebury lie roughly 15 miles north and south, respectively. Ferrisburgh's nearest commercial and service center is the City of Vergennes, about 2.5 miles south of the Ferrisburgh Town Clerk's Office.

2. Purpose of a Town Plan

Since the late 1960s, the citizens of Ferrisburgh have regularly assessed the natural and human resources in town and updated their town plan and the associated zoning bylaws and other regulations. The statutory authority for this planning work can be

found in Chapter 117 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated (V.S.A.). Under state law, town plans must be updated every eight years. The statutes of Chapter 117 can be found online at Vermont Statutes Online: <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/statutes>. As per Chapter 117 it is the responsibility of the town planning commission to update the town plan. The plan is then adopted by the planning commission and selectboard via a public hearing process.

A successful town plan mirrors the needs and desires of the residents of the town and establishes clear non-regulatory and regulatory policy directives, based on a shared vision for the town. Goals and policies guide future growth, development of land, provision of public services and facilities, and protection of the environment.

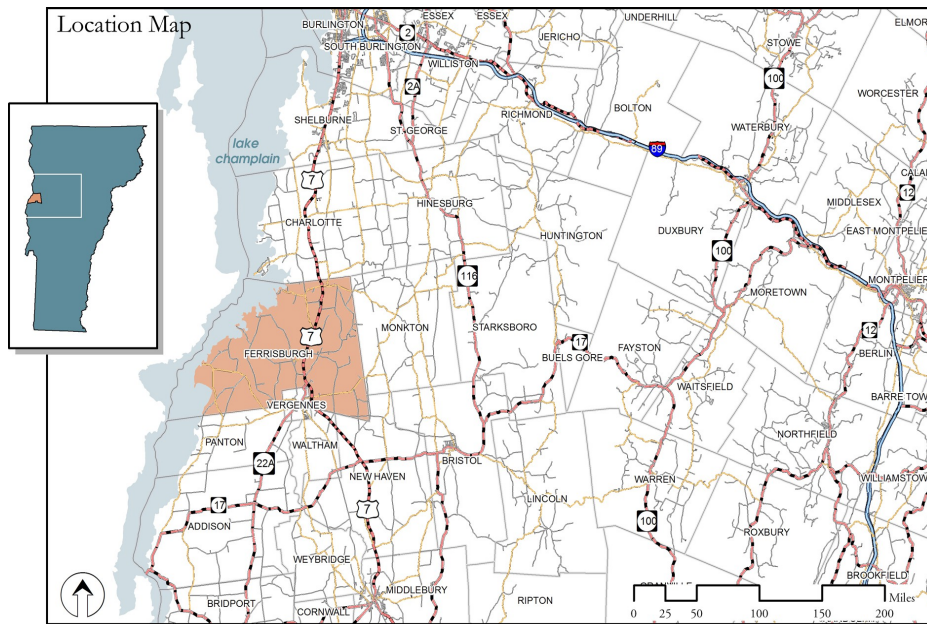
Goals are long-range objectives that serve as a broad planning and development guide. A goal describes the end condition that is sought.

Policies are specific, required actions that, when followed, will result in attainment of a goal. Policies are to be strictly adhered to in all regulatory actions and decisions involving development.

Recommended Actions are specific tasks that the planning commission, the selectboard, residents and/or town staff can take to address identified opportunities or challenges, to meet goals and better implement policies.

Definitions.

Definitions that apply to this town plan can be found at 24 VSA 4303.



3. Guiding Principles

Goal A: To ensure and protect an active, working agricultural and historic rural landscape with a strong, diverse local economy, which also supports a tourist economy.

1. Support and promote agriculture of all types, and encourage preservation of farm and forestlands for future generations through conservation easements and other mechanisms.
2. Minimize loss of Prime and Statewide agricultural soils.
3. Promote development that directly supports farming, strengthens the capacity of agricultural services and supporting businesses.

4. Promote and support home occupations and accessory uses of private property for small business growth, especially as it relates to the agricultural and rural nature of the local economy.
5. Promote local-grown food and fiber, farmers' markets and expanded market opportunities for value-added agricultural products and organic food.
6. Promote the preservation of historic areas, public and private historic structures, agricultural structures, and adaptive reuse of vacant buildings whenever possible.
7. Promote rural and agricultural tourism.

Goal B: To preserve and protect significant natural areas, habitats, ecological corridors, forest blocks, wetlands, shorelines and historic features; protect the environment; and provide for recreation.

1. Work with groups – such as the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission, Lewis Creek Association, Lake Champlain Trust, and the Vermont Land Trust – to protect natural resources, open space, forestland and farmland.
2. Work with the State to maintain an inventory of critical habitats, wildlife corridors, areas with state rare or endangered species or ecological communities, deer wintering yards and wetlands, and establish policies for their protection.
3. Protect wetlands, rivers, watersheds, aquifers and Lake Champlain shorelands; and maintain capacity studies on aquatic systems and wetlands.
4. Encourage opportunities for recreation in town, including public access to Lake Champlain, Otter Creek, Little Otter Creek and Lewis Creek, walking trails, cross country skiing,

snowshoeing, snowmobile trails, bicycle paths, boating and parks.

5. Limit development in areas of town where significant environmental and natural resources are located, while promoting development in clearly identified areas away from those critical areas.

Goal C: To provide and plan for present and future infrastructure needs, including adequate and safe transportation facilities, utilities, public facilities, community facilities and services and flood resilience.

1. Develop a Capital Budget Plan
2. Maintain and improve town roads to high levels of safety, including pedestrian pathways and bicycle lanes where feasible.
3. Work with the Agency of Transportation (AOT/VTrans) to limit new highway accesses onto US Route 7, and actively encourage development around transportation hubs.
4. Work with VTrans to ensure safety at road intersections, especially those that intersect with US Route 7.
5. Work with the City of Vergennes to promote and encourage walking paths, trails and development around the Amtrak Station.
6. Support public transit, car-pooling, and park-and-ride facilities.
7. Plan for future needs through ongoing capacity studies and development policies, including working with the Vergennes Pantown Water District (VPWD) and Vergennes on future potential needs for water and sewer services
8. Improve and maintain all public buildings and facilities.
9. Support Ferrisburgh's Volunteer Fire Department and the Vergennes Area Rescue Squad.

10. Work with Regional Planning and the State on Flood Resilience Planning.

Goal D: To plan for a diversity of housing types and densities that promote walkable, safe communities within a rural agricultural setting.

1. Permit and encourage density bonuses and other mechanisms in those subdivisions or PUDs that include affordable housing.
2. Encourage more attractive landscaping around buildings, especially along Route 7 and in the Town Center.
3. Encourage footpaths or sidewalks in the Town Center, the North Ferrisburgh Village, around the Amtrak Station, and in medium and large Planned Unit Developments (PUD)
4. Permit accessory dwelling units, multi-family housing, manufactured houses and other similar modular homes.
5. Encourage a diversity of housing (size, form, affordability).
6. Modify the Land Use Regulations to comply with changes in State Law as they arise.
7. Work with Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) to regularly assess housing needs.

Goal E: To Encourage energy conservation.

1. Encourage homes and businesses to conserve energy, reduce waste and recycle.
2. Encourage commercial uses that are low impact and compatible with the rural character of the town.
3. Ensure Town-owned buildings are designed, built and maintained to maximize energy conservation and minimize long-term operating costs.
4. Promote clean commercial development in clearly defined areas of town while protecting agriculture.

SETTLEMENT HISTORY

1. First Settlers

Spearheads and arrow points found along the Lewis, Otter and Little Otter Creeks indicate the presence of Native Americans in Ferrisburgh as the ice retreated from glacial Lake Champlain between 8,500 and 5,000 B.C. A significant archeological site, dated at about 3,000 B.C. has been identified near the confluence of Otter Creek and Dead Creek. This settlement has yielded bones and pottery fragments, in addition to spearheads, arrowheads and a range of other artifacts. Of the roughly 1,000 Native American archeological sites in Vermont, about 300 are found along the Otter Creek, a name from the Abenaki who used the river as a major transport route.

At the time of European contact, both the Algonquian and Iroquois considered Ferrisburgh part of their territory. In 1609, Samuel de Champlain was the first of the European explorers to travel down the lake that came to bear his name. Jesuit priests and trappers, who traveled largely by water, passed through what would become Ferrisburgh. Permanent European settlement did not take place until after the French and Indian War ended in 1759. Settlers began to arrive in Ferrisburgh primarily from older settlements in New England, and also from England and Lower Canada.

Ferrisburgh was chartered on June 24, 1762 (the same day as neighboring Charlotte, Hinesburg and Monkton). The town was surveyed in 1763. By 1790 there were about 480 people living in town. More than half of Vergennes was carved out of Ferrisburgh in 1788. The first Town Clerk was Jonathan Saxton. The first grist mill

in was built by Robert Hazard in 1792 at the Falls on Lewis Creek in the North Ferrisburgh Village.

Early records of Lot ownership indicate that the following were some of the earliest European settlers: Benjamin, Joseph, Zebulon, Samuel and Zach Ferris; Peter, Anthony, William, Thomas and John Field; Benjamin and Asa Carpenter; Ashbel Fuller, Wing Rogers, Simeon Miller, Obadiah Walker, Cornelius Hurlburt, Samuel and Ira Tupper; Joseph Burroughs, Stephen Fish, John Frazier, William Walker, Archibald Collins, Theophilus Middlebrook, Joshua, Joseph, Benjamin and Lewis Barnes. Prior to the close of the eighteenth century, Robert Hazard and Rowland and Thomas Robinson had settled in the North Ferrisburgh area.

The name Ferrisburgh: There are several variations on the spelling of the town's name in historic records: At first, the name was "Ferrissburgh" or "Ferrissborough". Over time most of the Ferris family dropped the extra "s" and so did the town name. The Society of Friends, in 1792, used the spelling "Pharisburg" when they established their first Meeting in town. In 1892 the postal service decided that communities should simplify the spelling of their names by dropping silent letters like Ferrisburgh's final "h." The name thus became Ferrisburg. Today the correct spelling is Ferrisburgh.

2. Agricultural Heritage

Starting in the 1790's through to today, agriculture has been the driving force in creating and maintaining the landscape and settlement patterns which we see today in Ferrisburgh. Historic records show that in 1840 in the Town of Ferrisburgh, there was one gristmill, three sawmills and one store; 495 horses; 5,183 cattle; 25,676 sheep; 871 swine; 2,700 bushels of wheat; 18 bushels of

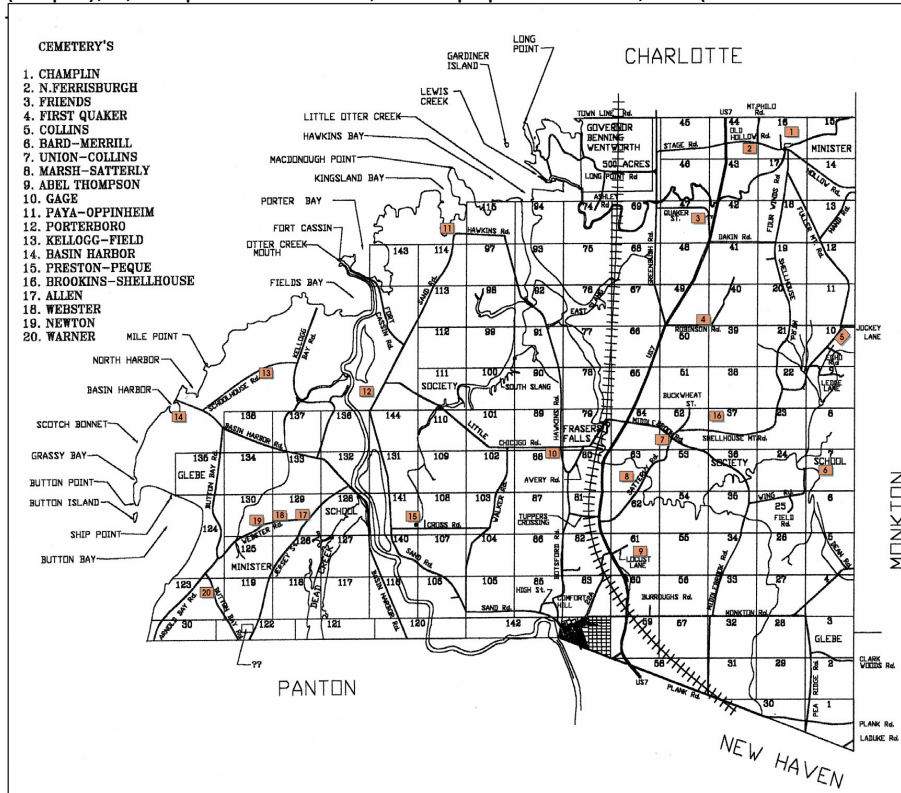
barley; 10,900 bushels of oats; 658 bushels of buckwheat; 8,910 bushels of Indian corn; 12,000 tons of hay; 1,400 pounds of sugar (maple); 6,690 pounds of wool; and a population of 1,755 (Zadock

about 1820's—1860's, with the associated woolen industry. Then dairy farming and production of cheese and milk became dominant. By 1850, the town's population reached its 19th century high level of 2,075, thereafter declining over the next century. The next major period of population increase began in the late-1960s reaching 2,657 in 2000. The population in 2020 was 2,646.

3. Historic Pattern of Settlement

Ferrisburgh is a large town, 61 square miles, about 39,000 acres, the ninth largest town in the state. The location of homes, farms and businesses we see today clearly reflects Ferrisburgh's history. Some Vermont towns have a single town center defined by a densely developed village, often around a village green, with scattered settlement in the rural land around. Many mountain towns are compact because they are constrained by topography, like Stowe or Montpelier. Some towns, like Pittsford, developed as a ribbon of settlement along a main road. Other towns, like Ferrisburgh, have more than one "center". Ferrisburgh's settlement pattern reflects the early importance of four major factors: 1) The Lake Champlain transport route and the fish it provided; 2) The water power provided by the waterfalls on the main rivers; 3) The extensive swampy wetlands which had to be avoided; and 4) The road network of the Route 7 north-south corridor, plus the east west crossroads which avoided the wetlands and took valley routes east through the hills.

Settlement therefore concentrated historically in four areas: 1) Around Basin Harbor on the Lake in West Ferrisburgh; 2) Around the Lewis Creek Upper Falls and Route 7 in North Ferrisburgh; 3) Around the town center crossroads on Route 7; and 4) Around Long Point and Lake Champlain in North Ferrisburgh



Surveyed Lots of 1763 and Cemeteries

Much of the town's land was cleared of trees and sold off for building material to make way for sheep and later for dairy farming. Ferrisburgh was famous for its merino sheep both for wool and breeding stock, and it is from Vermont that the famous merino sheep breeding stock were subsequently dispersed around the world. Sheep farming was the major agricultural product from

a. Basin Harbor and vicinity on Lake Champlain

During the early years of the Revolutionary War, through its location on Lake Champlain, Ferrisburgh was witness to many of the pivotal moments in American history. Lake Champlain is one of the most historic bodies of water in North America. On October 11, 1776, following the battle of Valcour Island, Benedict Arnold fled the British offshore from Ferrisburgh. A replica of his ship, the Philadelphia, is at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum at Basin Harbor, the original being in the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C.

After the Revolutionary War, in 1789, Captain Platt Rogers of Peekskill, New York, established a ferry and a shipyard at Basin Harbor with the labor of what were probably free Black people as well as some local workers. In 1790, he built a substantial stone house at Basin Harbor. Platt Rogers owned about 2,000 acres of land on both the Vermont and the New York sides of Lake Champlain, and one of his family members founded Plattsburgh. In Ferrisburgh, he owned essentially all of the shorelands from Button Bay to the mouth of Lewis Creek. Platt Rogers died in 1798, and following his death the Storms family, who were free Black people, were given lands at Kellogg Bay. The Storm family is buried in the graveyard at Basin Harbor.

Platt Roger's daughter married a Winan, and the Winans operated an inn and tavern at Basin Harbor beginning in about 1798. From 1804 to 1812, there was a naval shipyard at Basin Harbor. This shipyard moved to Vergennes after the War of 1812. The Winan brothers built the first steamboat on the lake in 1809, called *The Vermont*, which was only the second steamboat built in America. The Vermont was built in Burlington at what is today King Street.

The first steamboat was Robert Fulton's Claremont, and the Winan brothers built the hull for that ship in Poughkeepsie before they relocated to Vermont.

In 1800 Stephen Beach settled about a mile south of Basin Harbor. In 1809 one of the earliest schools in Vermont was built in this area and later. In 1818 the schoolhouse which is on Schoolhouse Road today, was re-built with stone quarried on Beach property. When the building ceased being a school, the property reverted to the Beach family. The Beach house was built in 1837 south of Basin Harbor. Today Basin Harbor is home to a nationally well-known Resort, and lakeshore summer homes.

Fort Cassin, north of Basin Harbor, was the site of a critical battle in the War of 1812, where almost 200 men were garrisoned. Thomas Macdonough was assigned the command of the naval forces on Lake Champlain. On May 14, 1814, the British sloop, Linnet, and eight galleys bombarded Fort Cassin. If they had won, the British would have blocked the mouth to Otter Creek, remained in control of the lake, and prevented the nearly complete American fleet, which was being built in Vergennes, from launching. Following that battle, the British fleet was forced to retreat. This American victory encouraged more Vermonters to sail over to Plattsburgh and help defeat the British land troops at the Battle of Plattsburgh.

The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum at Basin Harbor includes an extensive display of the maritime archeological research on the lake, exhibits of the boats used and the historic events in and around the lake.

b. North Ferrisburgh Village

North Ferrisburgh was the most densely settled area of the town historically. The first permanent European settlement there was about 1784. We know that when Robert Hazard built the first Grist Mill in Ferrisburgh at the Upper Falls on Lewis Creek in 1792, there was already a well-established village. The Upper Falls rapidly became a major industrial hub, typical of many New England towns, with a Sawmill next to the Grist Mill, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carriage makers, and several buildings associated with the Woolen Mill, for carding, dyeing, weaving and fulling as the sheep industry expanded after 1820. There were 3 dams to support this industry, one above the Falls and two downstream, below the bridge. There were several stores, a tavern, and by 1838-or 1839, a handsome Methodist church.

Post Office: Prior to 1836 there was no Post office in the Town of Ferrisburgh. Mail typically came through the Vergennes Post Office. But in 1836, the population in North Ferrisburgh warranted the first Post Office in Ferrisburgh. By 1836 Stoddard Martin received permission to set up a Post office at the Martin House Hotel and Tavern at the busy intersection of the north/south Stage Coach Road with Main Street and Stage Road. Prior to this time letters for Ferrisburgh were picked up from either Shelburne or Vergennes or Middlebury. The first Post Master was Stoddard Martin. The Martin House Hotel and Tavern was initially built as a large residence in the period 1817-1825, and expanded in 1830 to accommodate Stoddard and Abigail (Squier) Martin's 15 children. The Hotel became a major hostelry and meeting place, located on the north-south stage coach road of Route 7. The building burned down in 1925.



The Martin House Hotel and Tavern

The railroad was established by the mid-19th century with two railway stations, one in North Ferrisburgh and one west of Ferrisburgh Center.

The 1871 Beers Atlas shows the fairly compact village in North Ferrisburgh east off Route 7. This village consists of "Main Road" road with a minor road up Champlin Hill to the little cemetery, and School Street (Four Winds Road today). There were a large number of commercial and residential buildings including: a forge, blacksmith, sash and blind factory, woolen mill, wheelwright and one of the earliest schools in town. The large building in the center of the Hollow was known as the "Allen Block" after the owner, Norman J. Allen. It was built in 1884 and described as the largest mercantile store in Addison County.



North Ferrisburgh Railroad Station



David Hazard's House – built 1810

The Rokeby Museum: The original settlement of Ferrisburgh included members of the Society of Friends (Quakers). The Ferrisburgh Meeting was established in 1792, and the first church built in 1793. One Quaker family, the Robinsons of North Ferrisburgh, moved to Ferrisburgh from Rhode Island in 1790 when

they built a farmstead along what is today Route 7 in North Ferrisburgh. Today this building is listed on the Vermont Register of Historic Places, the Vermont African American Heritage Trail, and is a National Historic Landmark. The farmstead is now open to the public as part of the Rokeby Museum. The Robinsons sheltered many fugitive former enslaved persons at their home during the decades of the 1830s and 1840s.

The Robinsons were innovative farmers, and early industrialists. They worked with the Hazard family to bring merino sheep to the area and build a major woolen industry around the Falls of Lewis Creek in North Ferrisburgh Village. The waterfalls and dams they built there allowed them to use generate power for the mills.



Robinson Farmhouse - Rokeby

c. Ferrisburgh Center

The area which is today the crossroads of Little Chicago and Middlebrook road with Route 7 was settled early, although never as densely as North Ferrisburgh. The Center was a major crossroads,

and close to the water power provided at the Falls on Otter Creek. There was an early saw mill on Little Otter, and later a grist mill by Frazer's Falls. Here too was the first framed house in town. In 1806, a brickyard opened along Otter Creek, shipping to points all along Lake Champlain.

The Town Hall and The Great Convention: The Town Hall was a small brick building constructed in July 1843. Rowland T. Robinson organized an anti-slavery convention in Ferrisburgh. Frederick Douglass, one of the greatest orators and black leaders of the 19th century, delivered a fiery speech in opposition to slavery. The Convention was held where the Town Hall stood, just south of the Union Meeting Hall. This was one of the "100 Conventions" sponsored by the American Anti-Slavery Society. This location is on the Vermont African American Heritage Trail and a State Historic Site.

The Union Meeting Hall: Prior to 1840 the religious buildings in Ferrisburgh were the two Quaker Meeting Houses, one on Quaker Street (1801), and one on Robinson Road (1793), and the North Ferrisburgh Methodist Church (1838). In 1837 a group of families near the center of town organized a "Union Society" for the purpose of building a Meeting House to "promote Spiritualism, Temperance and the abolition of Slavery". The membership included Methodists, Spiritualists, Wesleyans and Congregationalists. The early Subscribers included Benjamin Ferris, Asa Hawkins, Henry Rogers, Ira Tupper and Cyrus Collins. The Building Committee included David Hazard (son of Robert and Sarah Fish of North Ferrisburgh), Heman Barnum and Zuriel Walker. They used bricks from the brickyard near the Gage cemetery to build the Hall. The Union Meeting Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

By the 1880's the church congregations which had made up the Union Society had built their own churches and thus, on December 31, 1898 the Union Society, "a religious corporation", dissolved itself and gave the property back to the Town for \$150 (per the original deeds).

In 1862, School House Number 17 was built at the intersection of Little Chicago Road with Route 7. Today that building houses the Ferrisburgh Historical Society. By 1871, there were 17 schoolhouses and school districts in town.



Union Meeting Hall and Town Hall - 1898

d. Long Point and Kingsland Bay

The ease of travel to Ferrisburgh via Lake Champlain provided a relatively easy access for recreational development in the late-19th century, with "camps" built along the shoreline. These were initially

simply fishing camps, used for the day, and maybe overnight. As families had more free time they expanded into recreational camps for entire families. Long Point, in the northwest corner of Ferrisburgh has 52 camps built mostly between 1890 and 1940. The camps are primarily leased properties owned by the Long Point Association.

Along the lake at Kingsland Bay, Gideon Hawley built a stone house in about 1790 to serve as an Inn. This building, located in Kingsland Bay State Park, is on the state's Register of Historic Places. At Kingsland Bay, Ecole Champlain, a girls camp where French was taught, operated from 1920 until 1973; the building is still standing.

Some were large summer homes, with servants' quarters. Architect Percy Griffin designed one such sprawling summer residence, Woodbridge Hall (1896), for Walter Scranton, which is located prominently between Porter and Kingsland Bays.

4. References

Atlas of Addison County, Vermont, by F. W. Beers et al. New York, 1871

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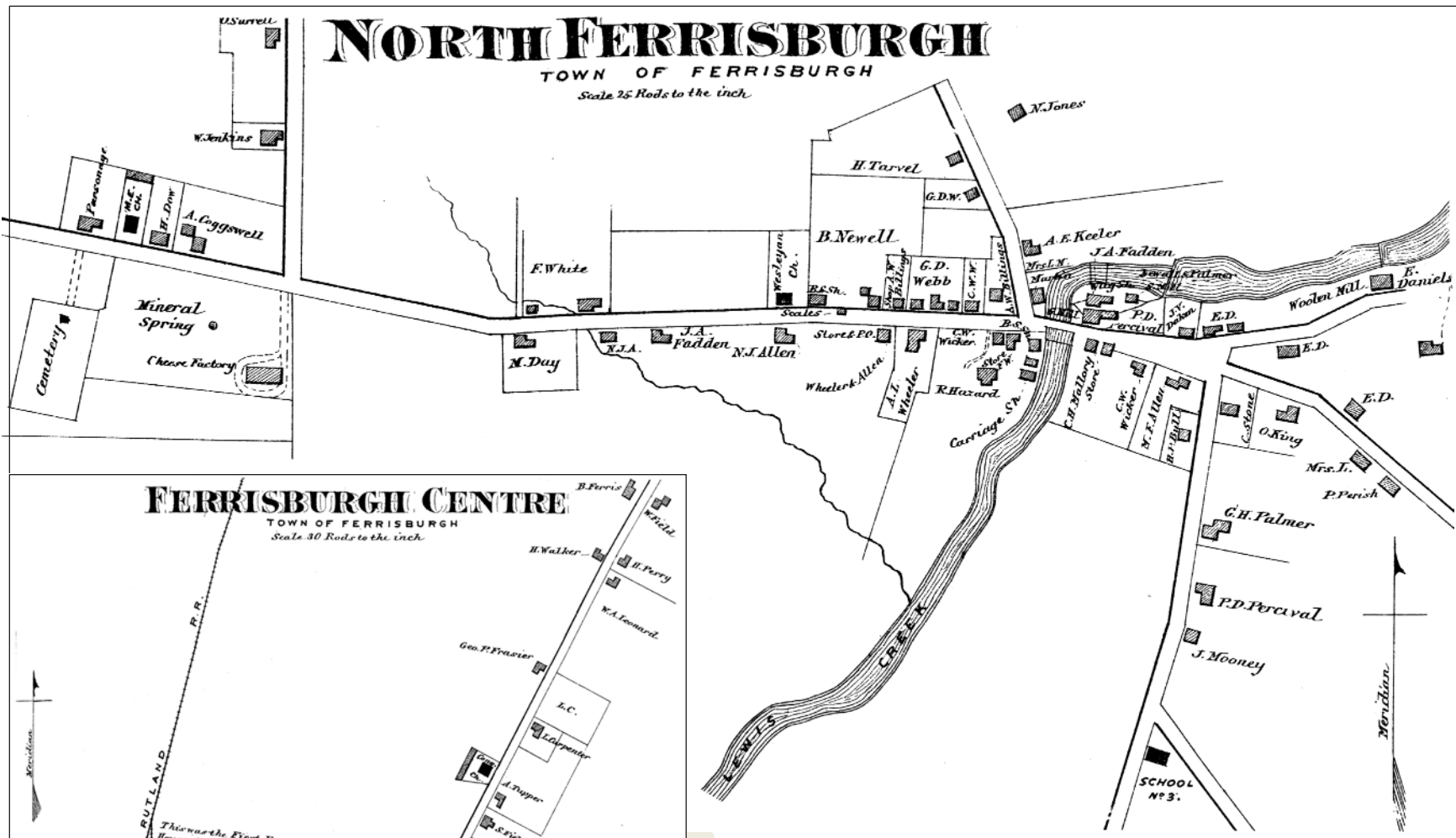
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NORTH FERRISBURGH

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH

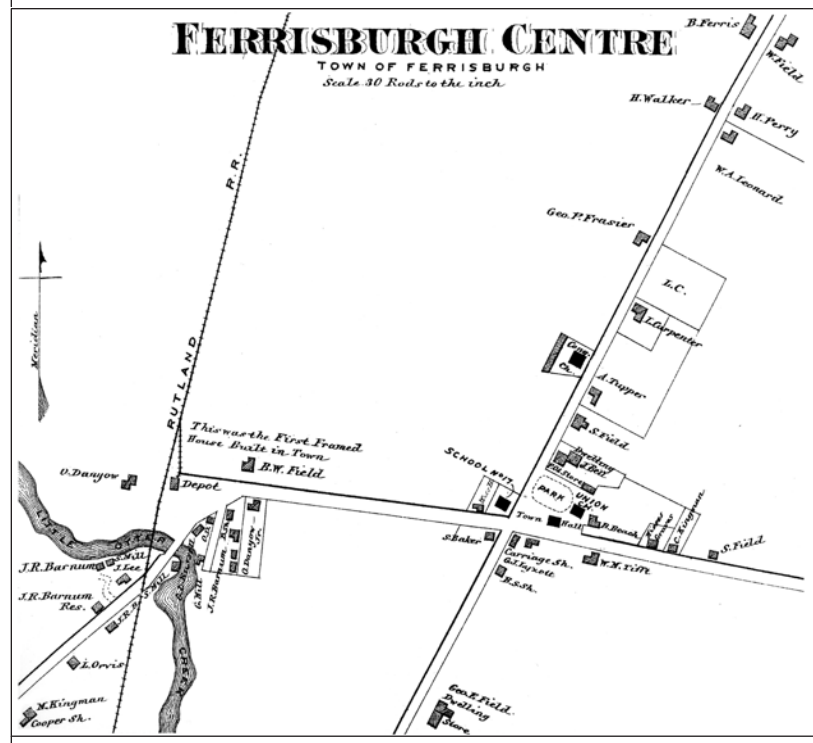
Scale 25 Rods to the inch



FERRISBURGH CENTRE

TOWN OF FERRISBURGH

Scale 30 Rods to the inch



NATURAL RESOURCES

Ferrisburgh Land Cover

Land Cover Type	Acres	Percent of Total Ferrisburgh Acreage
Woodland	5,455	17
Hay/Pasture	12,715	39
Cropland and other farmland	6,716	20
Wetland	5,301	16
Water	670	2
Developed land and Vacant land	2,049	6

USGS National Land Cover Database 2023

1. Geology and topography

a. Description

Ferrisburgh has a wealth of natural areas amid a predominately rural landscape. Most of the land is relatively flat and lies below 250 feet, with productive marshlands and three large rivers flowing into Lake Champlain. Lands west of route 7 include Shellhouse Mountain which is 700 feet high.

The bedrock geology of Ferrisburgh includes metamorphic sedimentary rocks in the western three-quarters of the town [“Champlain Valley”], and older metamorphic schists in the eastern part of town, the foothills of the Green Mountains, which are part of the Appalachian Mountain Chain. See the Bedrock Geology map.

The mountains of the Adirondacks to the west, across Lake Champlain, are some of the most ancient rocks in North America, about one billion years old. They are part of a Continental Shield area

of hard igneous and metamorphic rocks such as granites and amphibolites. Interestingly, they are the youngest mountains in the Northeast, because the previously-eroded roots of the Grenville Mountains began to rise only about 5 to 10 million years ago due to an underlying “hotspot” in the deep mantle rock [and they are still rising].

Then, several hundred million years ago, the sediments that were found on the floor of the ancient seas located east of this Shield area were pushed, folded, and subsequently faulted by mountain-building tectonic activity caused by continental drift. This mountain-building first produced sedimentary rocks like sandstone, limestone and shales. These sedimentary rocks were then transported several miles deep by the continuing forces of continental drift, where they were subjected to great heat and pressure [metamorphism] – producing the hard sandstones, quartzites, dolomites, marbles and slates of the Champlain Valley, and the schists of the Green Mountains. All these former mountain features have long since been eroded down to the town’s present-day moderate hills and low elevation topography. Because Ferrisburgh’s geological history included periods when the area was covered with warm, shallow salt water, some of the bedrock in town contains fossil beds, particularly in the Button Bay area.

Between the Adirondacks and the Green Mountains is a bedrock trough that was created by geologically old tectonic faults when the North American continental plate broke away from the European and African plates, beginning about 200 million years ago [the plates are still moving apart]. Today’s ancient, deep Lake Champlain now occupies this trough. Ferrisburgh’s bedrock is sliced by many of these old faults, some of which have created the steep west-facing cliffs on Shellhouse and Fuller Mountains in the eastern section of

town. While these old faults are no longer active, Ferrisburgh and much of the Northeast is rated by the U.S. Geological Survey as having moderate seismic hazard, as evidenced by historic earthquakes throughout the region.

Much more recently in the geological time scale, at the close of the Pleistocene Ice Age as the continental glaciation receded northward, meltwater from the ice created post-glacial Lake Vermont, which occupied the Champlain Valley about 13,000 years ago. The level of this ancient lake was about 500 hundred feet higher than the present-day Lake Champlain, and thus Ferrisburgh was mostly underwater for several hundred years during that period. On the floor of this lake were deposited the silt and clay sediments and soils that are now found extensively throughout town. When the receding ice retreated to north of the St. Lawrence valley about 13,000 years ago, a salt-water bay of the North Atlantic Ocean occupied the Champlain Valley for about 2,000 years (from about 13,000 to 11,000 years ago), which geologists call the Champlain Sea. The Champlain Sea left more silts and clays on its floor, and some wave-cut terraces and beaches along its shorelines at about elevation 325 ft., remnants of which can be found today on the west flank of Mount Philo, just north of town. Finally, when isostatic rebound from the earth's crust being relieved of the weight of glacial ice caused the bedrock at the north end of the Champlain Valley to rise above sea level, fresh water was captured, creating present-day Lake Champlain with water surface elevations of about 92 to 102 ft. [depending on drought-or-flood conditions]. The lake now drains to the northeast via the Richelieu River into the St. Lawrence River.

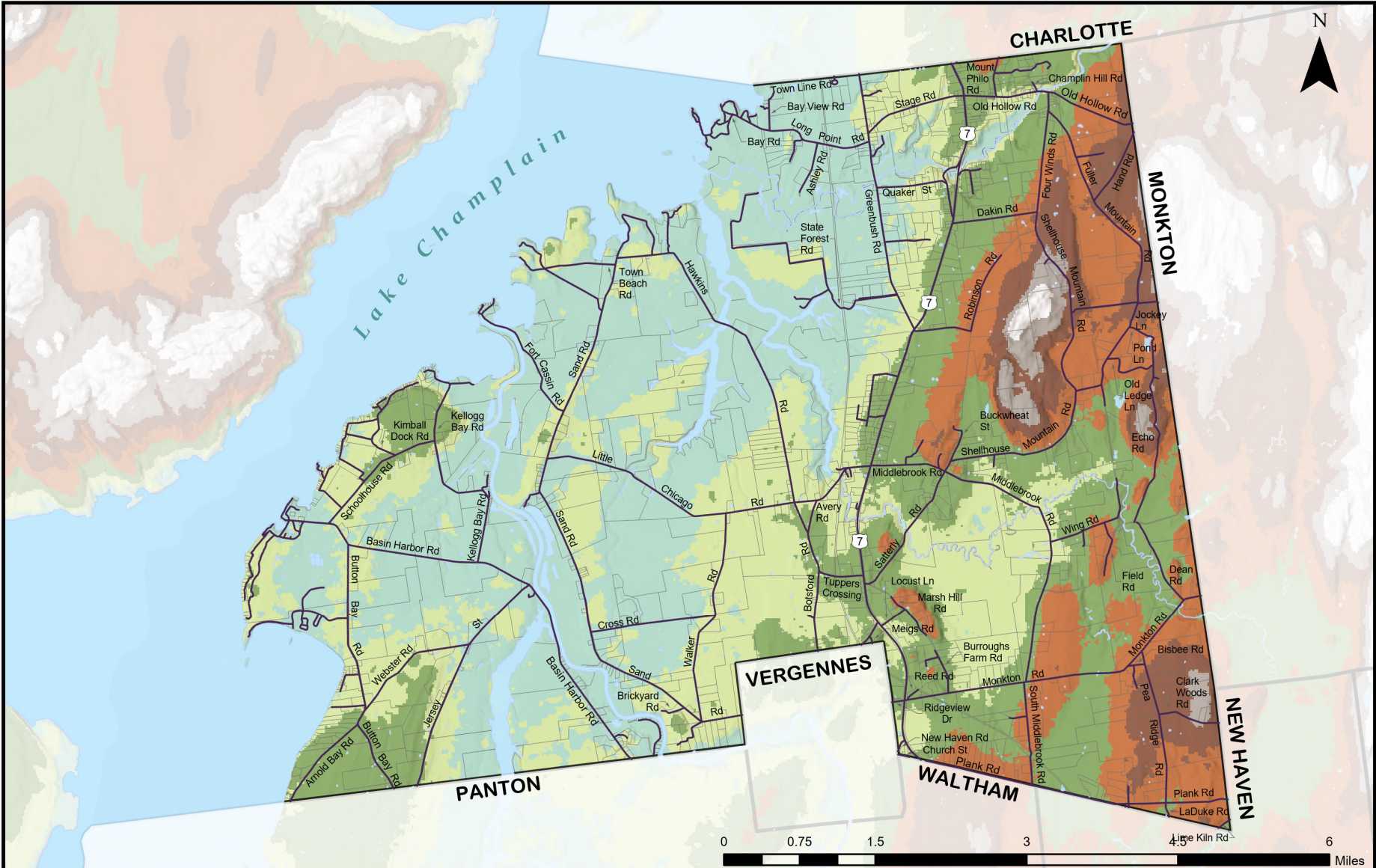
This geological history has provided us with mineral deposits, such as iron ore, which was mined throughout the 19th century in Ferrisburgh and surrounding towns, as well as the limestone that was used in many foundations, such as at the Union Meeting Hall. In addition, some of the clay deposits, which originated as bottom sediments in Lake Vermont and the Champlain Sea described above, were used in local brickyards both for local use, and for sale to other towns. Ferrisburgh today has limited sand, gravel or stone resources for extraction.

b. Policies:

1. Follow a public hearing process to discuss the development of local extraction sites, being sure to distinguish between gravel (crushing) and hard-rock (blasting) extraction.
2. Adhere to state and federal regulations concerning blasting, erosion prevention, sediment control.
3. Resource extraction is permitted only if the process does not unduly impact environmental quality or the character of the community.
4. No removal of sand or gravel directly from watercourses, as stated in Vermont State law (10 V.S.A. subsection 1021.
5. . Extraction of soil, sand or gravel must prevent erosion debris from entering watercourses and pose no safety hazard from pits or steep or unstable slopes. Upon termination, sites must be restored to natural contours with a vegetative cover.

c. Recommended Actions:

1. Conduct an inventory of extraction of sand, gravel and stone taking place in Ferrisburgh



Elevation
Ferrisburgh, VT



Source(s): Generated from USGS Digital Elevation Model



2. Forests and Wooded Areas.

a. Description

Although in the historic past there would have been extensive areas of forestlands, including swamp forest, today only about 16 or 17 percent of Ferrisburgh's land area is forested. Mesic, clay-plain lowland forest, once the most widespread ecosystem in the Champlain Valley, is now present only as isolated remnant tracts. Tree species included: white oak, red oak, swamp white oak, bur oak, ash, hemlock, shagbark hickory, bitternut hickory, red maple, silver maple, sugar maple and white pine. All of these still grow abundantly in the Champlain Valley, but no longer in the complex clay-plain ecosystems that once forested the valley.

Wetland forests include tree species such as silver maple, black ash, American elm, swamp white oak, shagbark hickory, muscle wood and willows. Drier forests include species typical of rich lowlands, such as sugar maples, white pine, beech, birch, red oak, white oak, remnant American elm and remnant butternut and basswood.

Since most of Ferrisburgh is flat and soils are largely composed of clays, the town has excellent potential for timber production. Forestlands in Ferrisburgh are not prone to leaching from acid rain because the carbonate content of the soils buffer the acid impact. Fertile, productive forest soils are abundant in Ferrisburgh.

For the first 200 years of European settlement, the agricultural areas of the Champlain Valley had a relatively stable land use pattern. The original native forest had been largely cleared and turned into farmland by the early 1800s. Hilltops, wet areas and other places not as useful for growing crops or pasturing herds were left as woodlots, which provided firewood, lumber and a potential source of income in time of need. Hedgerows defined the fields, running along the edges of roads, property lines and small streams.

The hedgerows were essential to the survival of some of the native forest species as they allowed for connections and movement between the relatively small woodlots.

This pattern began to change in the 20th century as some of the less productive farmland was abandoned. This was followed by the transition to larger farm machinery, which led to the merger of smaller fields, often resulting in the elimination of hedgerows. The woodlot ceased to be a necessary part of a farm and thus often became the most expendable land to be sold for development. Over the second half of the century, residential development began to occur in and around the edges of wooded areas throughout the Champlain Valley. Despite increases in the total amount of woodland over the past century in the valley, the ecological functions of the forest have in many places declined, resulting in poorer quality habitat for wildlife. In an attempt to slow down or reverse this trend, the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission has advised the Planning Commission to give emphasis to preserving forestlands in town.

Act 171, a law passed by the Vermont Legislature in 2016, requires Town Plans to identify areas that are important as 1) Forest Blocks, and 2) wildlife habitat connectors (wildlife corridors). These areas must be shown on a map.

A Forest block is a "contiguous area of forest in any stage of succession and not currently developed for non-forest use (24 VSA 4303). There are several significant forest blocks in Ferrisburgh, such as Lower Little Otter Creek Forest Block, and Otter Creek Forest Block.

Wildlife Corridors and Habitats are described in Act 171 as land or water that links larger patches of habitat within a landscape to allow or movement, migration and dispersal of animals, birds and plants.

Elizabeth Robinson Town Forest: In about 1962, Elizabeth Robinson willed the town a 135-acre woodlot on Shellhouse Mountain Road. Today there appear to be 121 acres shown on the tax parcel map. This forest was logged significantly in 1951-52. In the late 1960s, the forest was managed by a town forester for a mix of uses including timber, watershed protection, demonstration forestry, and recreation. In the 1970s, the forest was managed by the state's Public Lands Forester. In the 1980s, the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission (FCC) was established and today this organization has a Management Plan with management goals to preserve the forest as a surviving remnant of the Champlain Clay plain Forest for future generations. The FCC Management Plan also includes goals of protecting wildlife, especially bobcat habitats, and to minimize logging, erosion and recreational uses.

b. Policies:

1. Encourage future generations to continue forestry and farming and maintain traditional resource-based economic activity.
2. Maintain and refer to the Town Forest Management Plan.
3. Encourage landowners to inventory their forestlands and woodlands and manage them sustainably, through mechanisms such as third-party certification, use-value appraisal program/"current use" and value-added products.
4. Encourage forestry activity that meets Vermont best management standards.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Encourage the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission to update, maintain and implement the Town Forest Management plan.

2. Update zoning to a density-based code and require at least 50% of development of more than 40 acres to be open or forested.
3. Provide incentives to developers to maximize open space and retain hedgerows and wooded buffers.
4. Encourage tree planting for shade, wildlife habitat, maple syrup production, and wood.

3. Rivers, Streams and Lake Champlain

a. Description

Lake Champlain is the sixth largest freshwater lake in the United States and is 112 miles long with many bays and over 70 islands. The deepest point in the lake is 400 feet, North West of Long Point in Ferrisburgh, towards Split Rock in New York State. Because the surface of Lake Champlain is only about 95 feet above sea level this makes Lake Champlain in Ferrisburgh one of the deepest points in the U.S. at about 297 feet below sea level compared with Death Valley in California which is only 282 feet below sea level. The average depth of the lake is only about 64 feet.

The mean water level of Lake Champlain is 95.5 feet above sea level, with a "flood stage" elevation of 100 feet. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies the 1% annual risk, commonly known as the 100-year flood level, as an elevation of 102 feet above sea level. The spring floods in 2011 resulted in a Lake Champlain water level of 103 feet above sea level.

Lake Champlain is an extraordinarily important environmental, recreational and economic resource for the Town of Ferrisburgh and the State of Vermont. Lake Champlain's water serves as drinking water for many residents and visitors. The lake's aesthetic

beauty continues to draw business and tourists to the region. Thus, water quality is critical for the lake to continue as a major regional drinking water supply and to sustain a healthy fishery and recreational activities such as swimming and boating which residents have identified as extremely important. The State and Federal governments are continuing to develop a plan to restore the health of Lake Champlain, which has degraded due to a variety of pollutant sources. Blue-green algae has become an increasing health problem in parts of Lake Champlain.

The Vermont Department of Health tracks blue-green algae and has created a map, available to the public, showing the tracking sites and the collected data. There are a number of tracking sites in Ferrisburgh, and in 2013 all the sites were reported “generally safe.” The significance of Lake Champlain and its watershed have been underscored with the designation of this resource and its environs—including the Adirondack Mountains—as an International Biosphere Preserve.

Shorelands: Ferrisburgh has about 21 miles of shorelands, with ecologically significant habitats for state rare, endangered and threatened species scattered along most of the length of the shoreline. Shoreline protection against habitat loss, erosion and pollution of all types is critical for both wild plant and animal species and for the long-term recreational and camp use by humans.

About a quarter of the Ferrisburgh Lakefront is owned by the State.

Given the importance of Lake Champlain for fishing and other recreation, the recently arrived alewife and the constant problem of sea lampreys and zebra mussels suggest a critical need for aquatic ecosystem conservation policies and comprehensive planning.

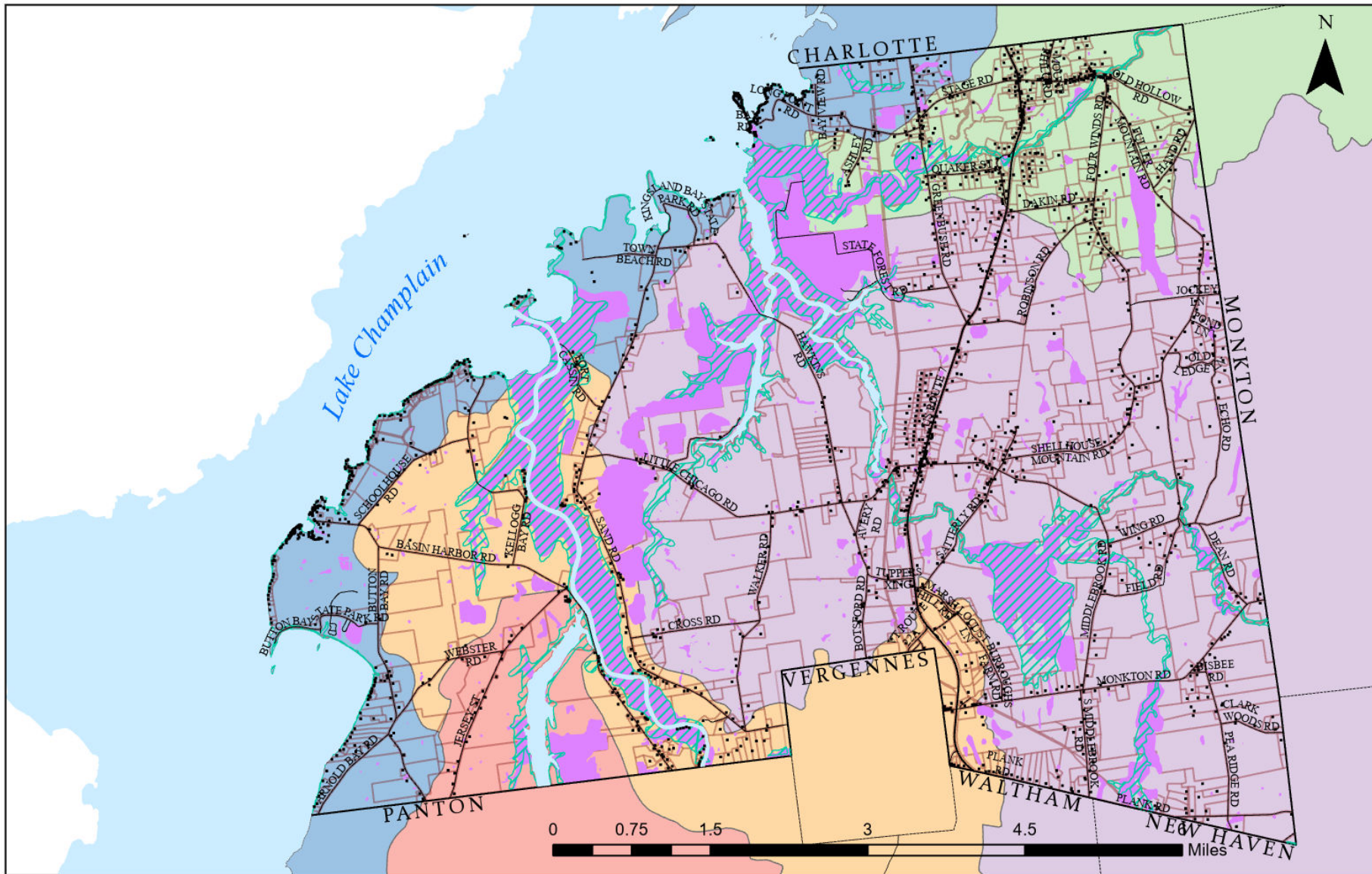
Fishing: Lake Champlain is nationally renowned for its fisheries in terms of numbers of fish, size and species diversity. This fishery is a multi-million dollar business, supporting both local and national fishing related business, and food for the home table. It should be noted, however, that the Vermont Department of Health has issued Health Advisories for fish caught in Vermont’s waters. The risk comes primarily from heavy metals such as mercury, and from PCBs. Some of these pollutants were deposited many decades ago; others, such as mercury, continue to be deposited by air blowing in from industrial regions far removed from Vermont.

Toxic Pollution: Long-term air and water pollution contribute a heavy burden on all the surface waters in town. The most recent reports, Health Advisories and updates, can be obtained from the Vermont Department of Health (see reference section below).

Sea Lamprey: Sea lamprey, which have been determined to be an ancient native species in Lake Champlain, spawn in several rivers flowing into Lake Champlain. These creatures attach themselves to fish and impact the multi-million dollar fishing business. Thus, there is a periodic lampricide program along Lewis Creek in Ferrisburgh, undertaken by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and the New York State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Zebra Mussels are an invasive species causing havoc in the lake. These are small, very sharp-shelled mussels that encrust all the historic shipwrecks and can interfere with freshwater intake systems for houses and hotels, including Basin Harbor, and the Vergennes-Panton Water District intake off Arnold’s Bay.

Other invasive species include Asian Clams, Ale Wife fish, Water Chestnut and Eurasian Milfoil.



Water Resources

Ferrisburgh, VT

Source(s):

Residential Structures: VT E911 Sites (2023).

Parcels: VCGI Standardized Statewide Parcels (2022)

FEMA Floodplain: FEMA 100yr Floodplain map digitized by ACRPC.

Watersheds: USGS HUC-12 Watersheds



- Residential Buildings
- ▨ FEMA 100yr Floodplain
- Vermont Significant Wetlands

Watersheds

- Dead Creek
- Lake Champlain Direct
- Lewis Creek
- Little Otter Creek
- Otter Creek

National Significance: Lake Champlain was designated a resource of national significance by the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act (Public Law 101-596), which was signed into law in 1990. The Act's goal was to bring together people with diverse interests in the lake, from Vermont, New York and the province of Quebec, to create a comprehensive pollution prevention, control and restoration plan for protecting the future of the Lake Champlain Basin. This goal has been realized by the plan, Opportunities for Action. The Lake Champlain Basin Program is currently working to implement the plan by addressing water quality issues, land and water use, and recreational and educational opportunities throughout the basin. Opportunities for Action identified four priorities for the Lake Champlain Basin, three of which are directly related to erosion and pollution in the lake:

Reduce phosphorus inputs to Lake Champlain to promote a healthy and diverse ecosystem and provide for sustainable human use and enjoyment of the lake.

Reduce toxic contamination to protect public health and the Lake Champlain ecosystem.

Minimize the risks to humans from water-related health hazards in the Lake Champlain Basin.

Streams and Rivers: Ferrisburgh has four substantial rivers or streams with important ecological and human functions, Otter, Little Otter, Lewis and Dead Creeks. These streams flow into Lake Champlain. The flow rate in Otter Creek is the third greatest in Vermont after the Winooski and Missisquoi Rivers. Otter Creek drains a land area of about 1,100 square miles; only the Winooski drains a larger area. Lewis Creek drains about 81 square miles.

All Ferrisburgh's surface waters are state designated as Class B waters of recreational use. Agricultural runoff is the primary cause of surface water pollution, leading to some eutrophication and algae blooms in lake bays. Nutrient enriched agricultural runoff is high along Otter Creek.

Otter Creek: The main stem of the Otter Creek, at 100 miles long, is the longest flat-water boating river in Vermont. Historically, the Otter Creek was used as a major highway for native Americans and was a primary access route for early European settlers coming north from Connecticut and Massachusetts. The City of Vergennes, located at the lower falls of the Otter Creek, was an early industrial center in the region and was carved out from the agricultural towns of Ferrisburgh, Panton and New Haven. The Otter Creek watershed (area of land that drains into Otter Creek) extends into Chittenden, Addison, Rutland and Bennington counties.

The most significant cause of water quality degradation in the Otter Creek watershed is sedimentation. The second major cause is pathogens, from wastewater treatment facility outfalls, animal waste runoff and failing septic systems adjacent to surface waters. The third major cause is nutrient enrichment, which is largely a result of agricultural runoff.

The smaller watersheds of Little Otter Creek and Lewis Creek, found north of the Otter Creek watershed, drain directly into Lake Champlain and are also included in the Agency of Natural Resources comprehensive plan.

Lewis Creek: Lewis Creek flows from its headwaters in Starksboro 33 miles through the towns of Monkton, Hinesburg and Charlotte, and Ferrisburgh, before emptying into Lake Champlain. Along the way, it drains 52,000 acres and flows past farms and villages,

through deep woods and open pastures, over ancient ledges and under more than 20 bridges.

From Starksboro to Ferrisburgh, the creek is a haven for diverse wildlife including mink and otter, bobcat and fisher, kingfisher and great blue heron, native brook trout and others. Their habitats vary from mile to mile: from overhanging forests where trout dart in shaded pools, to marshy areas where spring peepers announce the arrival of warm weather, to open pastures where Holsteins graze and blackbirds and bobolinks nest nearby.

Lewis Creek has also been a focal point for human settlement as in the 1800s settlers cleared the land and built mills and dams to harness the water's power. Many established family farms to cultivate the fertile valley floor. During this time, the Lewis Creek watershed began to experience deforestation, stream bank erosion, and sedimentation. Over the last century, Lewis Creek recovered much of its natural beauty. Today the mills are quiet, but the creek's floodplains remain an important agricultural resource, and a critically important habitat for birds and wildlife.

Since 1990, the Lewis Creek Association (LCA) has been working with these towns and their citizens to protect the Lewis Creek, its tributaries, and the watershed as a whole. LCA is involved in the following efforts:

- Outreach and education for local schools, community organizations and town governments
- Publishing a website and printed newsletter
- Tracking cards for wildlife identification and field outings
- Geomorphic assessments and annual water quality sampling
- Stream channel and wildlife habitat restoration

- Development of land management plans, open space agreements and stewardship plans
- Involvement in watershed, town and regional planning
- Invasive species eradication
- Detailed results from the LCA's annual water quality sampling program are available online at www.lewiscreek.org.



Today there is increasing pressure by town residents and visitors from around the state to access the Creek for fishing, and hiking. Public access is limited along most sections of Lewis Creek as it is in private ownership and access often means walking right through private back yards.

Vermont State Fish and Wildlife stocks Lewis Creek regularly, putting fish into the river by the bridge on Old Hollow Road in North Ferrisburgh, at a location which has no public access and no public parking. Fishing takes place year-round from the Falls in North Ferrisburgh to the Lake, and the Creek is very popular with

fishermen from all over the state. This results in a delicate balance of private landowner tolerance for public access onto the creek via private driveways.

Little Otter Creek: Little Otter Creek begins in the town of Bristol and flows through New Haven, Monkton and Ferrisburgh where it is joined by several smaller tributaries, including Mud Creek. The creek continues north west before flowing into Lake Champlain in Ferrisburgh. The watershed for Little Otter Creek covers 69 square miles, primarily in the towns of Monkton, Bristol, New Haven, Waltham and Ferrisburgh. Overall, land use in the watershed is 34% forested, 60% agricultural, 3% developed and 3% wetland. Little Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located at the mouth of the creek near Lake Champlain. The State of Vermont owns 1,416 acres, managed by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

The WMA is 60% wetland and the rest mostly upland forest, with a small amount of acreage in fields. Near the mouth, the river's water level is naturally regulated by Lake Champlain, creating a rich diversity of aquatic plants. The upland forest is a mix of red maple, white ash, gray birch, red and white oak, shagbark hickory, white pine and hemlock. This is another rich wildlife habitat area in Ferrisburgh supporting fish, raptors, migrating birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. It is open for hunting, fishing, trapping, boating and hiking.

Dead Creek: Dead Creek is about 16 miles long and is the premier birding spot in Addison County due to its varied habitats and excellent access. The associated wildlife management area offers a mixture of marshes, deciduous forests, open fields, and pine plantations. Agricultural fields along Route 17 offer opportunities to



see snow geese in the late fall and short-eared owls through the winter. Norton Town Road traverses the southern end of the creek. Marshes further north along the creek can be viewed from West Road (Stone Dam) on the east and off of Jersey Street/Goodrich Corners Road on the west. Dead Creek flows under Panton Road and then enters the Otter Creek along Basin Harbor Road.

b. Policies:

1. Use the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources fluvial erosion maps or, if not available, a 50-foot buffer, to guide development near stream banks.
2. Avoid any new construction within river corridor zones to mitigate damages caused when stream banks erode.
3. Set back all development along the Lake Champlain shore as specified in the Shoreland Protection Act.
4. Encourage further conservation of lands adjacent to surface waters and those which serve as flood attenuation

resources such as floodplain, and follow the Vermont Better Back Roads program.

5. Recognize that bank stabilization is critical to preserve lakeshore character and reduce sedimentation and runoff carrying nutrients like phosphorus and pollutants into the lake; require development setbacks to prevent increased bank erosion and pollution; and use site plan review for lakeshore district development proposals.
6. Encourage the participation by Ferrisburgh's landowners in programs sponsored by the Natural Resource Conservation Service to implement soil conservation and ecologically sound farm management practices.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Update zoning regulations to meet and/or exceed specifications of the Shoreland Protection Act in order to maintain local jurisdiction over Ferrisburgh's unique shoreline resources.
2. Consider use of overlay maps to create no disturbance zones along all streams.
3. Encourage Addison County River Watch Collaborative and other organizations to maintain an inventory of stream sampling data and needs for riparian buffers.

4. Wetlands and Vernal Pools

a. Description

Wetlands

Ferrisburgh has some of the highest quality wetlands in New England. These lie in the lower reaches of the Otter, Little Otter, Lewis and Dead Creeks. They are well known for their biological importance, providing necessary habitats for wildlife, fish, and birds,

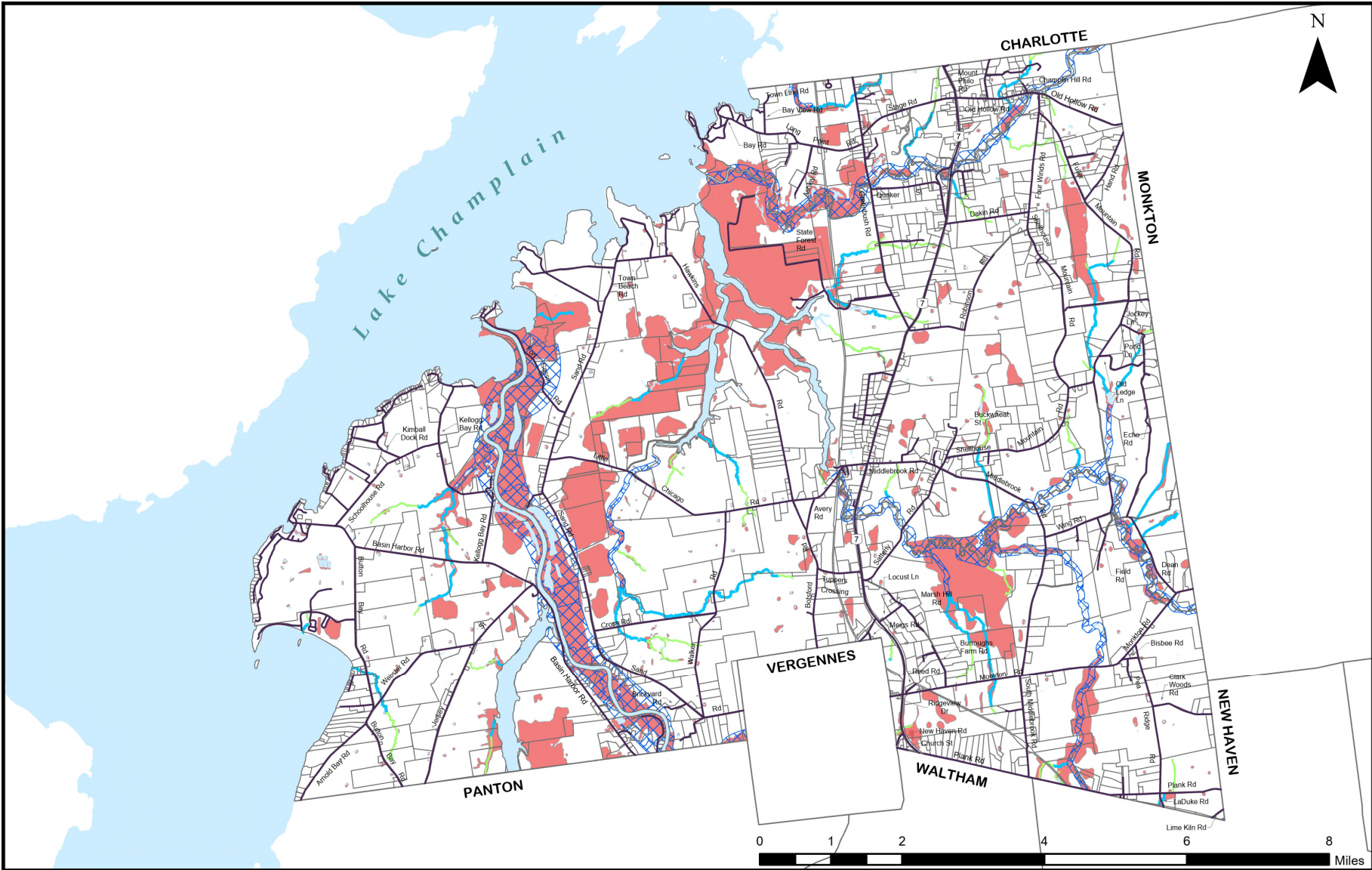
and are home to a number of state-listed threatened, endangered or rare plants. The wetlands along Lower Otter Creek are home to many rare state plants.

Significant wetlands in Ferrisburgh include:

- Little Otter/Lewis Creek Marsh: 1,600 acres.
- Upper Little Otter Creek/Marsh Hill Swamp/Marsh Hill Meadow: 600 acres.
- Little Chicago Road Woods: 200 acres.
- Dead Creek Marsh: 600 acres.
- Lower Otter Creek: 1,000 acres.






It has been found that leaving wetlands intact and designing projects around them, rather than filling them in, or interrupting the wetland area with roads or culverts, is likely to be far more cost-effective over the long-term than trying to replicate the functions they provide elsewhere. Each wetland must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Wetland Regulations: Many wetlands in the United States are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE). If a Wetland is determined to fall under federal jurisdiction, activities such as any draining, dredging, filling, excavation or other development may require a COE permit. Federal wetland rules operate independent of state regulations. The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) was conducted by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the 1970s. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources' (ANR) Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) manages wetlands in the state and maintains the Vermont Significant Wetland Inventory (VSWI) Map. Because not all wetlands have been delineated or shown on the VSWI maps, and because the status and boundaries of wetlands can change over time, the presence or absence of a wetland must be verified by a VTDEC Wetlands Ecologist or qualified Wetland



Wetlands & River Corridors

Ferrisburgh, VT

-  Roads
-  Parcels
-  River Corridors (Aug 27, 2019)
-  Small Streams (50ft. setback)
.25-.5 sqmi.
-  Small Streams (50ft. setback)
.5 - 2 sqmi.

Vermont Significant Wetland Inventory

-  Class II Wetland
-  Class I Wetland
-  Class I Buffer

Source(s): River Corridors & Small Stream Setbacks: VT ANR, 2019.; Wetlands: Vermont Significant Wetlands Inventory (VSWI), VT ANR, 2024.; Parcels: VCGI Standardized Statewide Parcels, 2024.



Consultant, who generally visit a site of interest and provide a written report that will include a map of the wetland boundaries. (Note: A preliminary screening can be conducted using the ANR on-line “Wetland Screening Tool”, but those screening results are not binding)

The Vermont Wetland Rules were first adopted in 1990, and the most recent amendments became effective in February 2023.

Vermont Wetland Rules establish three classes of wetlands:

Classes of Wetlands: Class I Wetlands are exceptional and irreplaceable in their contribution to Vermont’s natural heritage and merit the highest level of protection. As of this writing, none of Ferrisburgh’s wetlands have been placed in this classification; however, the Little Otter Creek Complex is under consideration and likely to be deemed Class One in the near future.

Class II Wetlands are shown on the VSWI Map. These are significant wetlands, which generally require a 50-foot minimum undisturbed natural buffer. Ferrisburgh, as the map shows, has many acres of Class II wetlands.

Class III Wetlands have not been determined to be of such significance that they require protection under state law. However, they may be under the jurisdiction of the COE, and therefore may require a COE permit or evaluation. Class III Wetlands may also be locally significant, and can therefore be protected at the local level by non-regulatory and regulatory bylaws. Ferrisburgh has many Class III wetlands.

State Wetland Protection: Vermont Wetland Rules protect all Class One and Class Two wetlands, as well as all wetlands contiguous to such mapped wetlands or with other characteristics which are listed in the VT Wetlands Rule. In other words, any wetland that is

hydrologically and vegetatively connected to a mapped wetland is also protected under the rules, regardless of whether it appears on the maps. If a non-mapped wetland is adjacent to a mapped wetland, it is considered contiguous and is protected by the rules. ANR staff makes this determination. Vermont Wetland Rules also apply to buffer zones, and any activity in a wetland or buffer requires a “wetland permit” from the ANR .

Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are seasonal bodies of water that typically form during the wetter months of the year, typically in the spring, and dry up during the drier seasons. Because Ferrisburgh has so much clay and glacial till soils, and numerous topographic low spots Vernal pools are likely to be present throughout the Town, and many have not yet been delineated and are not shown on ANR VSWI maps or Vermont Vernal Pool Atlas maps.

Vernal pools are considered to be a type of wetland, and are characterized by their lack of permanent inlet or outlet streams, relying instead on precipitation, groundwater, or snowmelt to fill them. Vernal pools provide essential habitats for a wide range of plant and animal species, many of which are specially adapted to their unique life cycles. They serve as breeding grounds for amphibians such as salamanders, frogs, and toads, which rely on the temporary nature of these pools to breed and lay their eggs without the threat of fish predation. Additionally, vernal pools support diverse communities of invertebrates, plants, and other wildlife, making them hotspots of biodiversity within their surrounding landscapes. They also provide critical ecosystem services such as water filtration, flood control, and groundwater recharge.

State Regulations regarding Vernal Pools: The Vermont Wetland Rules protect pool-breeding amphibian habitat. When activities are

proposed within 50 feet of a pooling wetland, wetland permitting requires the evaluation of the extent to which the vernal pool supports or provides habitat to support the reproduction of uncommon pool-breeding Vermont amphibian species and how the project may affect that habitat. This evaluation must be conducted in the spring breeding season, and must include an assessment of spring breeding and habitat conditions. VTDEC has guidelines on appropriate ways to conduct pool-breeding assessments and habitat surveys of vernal pools.

Federal Regulations Regarding Vernal Pools: The US Army Corps of Engineers has specific requirements and Best Management Practices (BMPs) for protecting vernal pools during development projects.

b. Policies:

1. Follow all federal and state laws regarding development in or near wetlands and wetland buffers.
2. Maintain a minimum 50-foot buffer of natural vegetation around all Class Two wetlands.
3. Require that a formal assessment be conducted of all wetlands on any parcel intended to be developed, including field delineation by a qualified wetland ecologist, with the costs borne by the applicant.
4. Recreational use in or near a wetland will not interfere with necessary wildlife habitat or significant wetland function.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Ensure most current wetlands classification and identification maps are being used in town documents.

5. Wildlife and Ecologically Sensitive Areas

a. Description

Ferrisburgh's forests, fields, wetlands and lakeshore provide prime habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Bird life is particularly abundant, with Ferrisburgh having the highest bird counts in all of interior New England. The town's extensive agricultural lands, natural wet meadows and abandoned farmland provide breeding habitats for several rare bird species such as the northern harrier hawk, redheaded woodpecker and upland sandpiper.

The 1,097-acre Little Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) lies adjacent to Lake Champlain. Because of the surrounding open areas in agriculture, deeryards are found in the forests and open spaces of the WMA. Deer wintering yards are not common in the Champlain Valley, but the WMA has a stand of hemlock that provides excellent winter protection. In addition to the WMA, the Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Fish & Wildlife has identified several other deer wintering areas within Ferrisburgh, which are located on the Natural Resources Map. The extensive wetlands are home to a whole range of wildfowl including: mallards, gadwall, green and blue-winged teal, goldeneye, Canada geese, loons, common and hooded mergansers, black duck, wood duck, great blue heron, bittern, coot, seagull, vulture, eagle and osprey. Many rare birds are also found, including least bittern, sedge wren, sora, loggerhead shrike and blue grey gnatcatcher.

Extensive, significant wildlife habitats and corridors are also found throughout Ferrisburgh, particularly on the steep bedrock cliffs and cobbles, and along wooded stream and drainage corridors. Species common to Ferrisburgh include deer, turkeys, bobcats, upland game birds, grassland bird species, coyotes and riverine species such as fisher, beaver, otter and mink. Several state-listed rare, threatened or endangered wildlife species are known to be found in

Ferrisburgh, and a list of these can be found at the Agency of Natural Resources, Nongame and Natural Heritage Program section of the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife. A forest block of 20 to 100 acres will sustain only small rodents, raccoon, hare, porcupine, cottontail, beaver, squirrel, skunk, weasel, woodchuck, muskrat and red fox. It takes a 100 to 500 acre block of forest to sustain mink, deer, sharp-shinned hawk, cooper's hawk, harrier, broad-winged hawk, kestrel, horned owl, barred owl, osprey, turkey vulture and turkey. To sustain moose, bald eagle, goshawk, red-tailed hawk and raven a forest block of 500 to 2,500 acres is needed. Undeveloped forest blocks are needed for coyote, black bear, fisher and bobcat.



As noted on the Significant Habitat Map, there are a number of state-identified deer wintering areas throughout town. Other deer wintering areas are evident near Kellogg Road, Arnold Bay Road and the Shellhouse Mountain area, which have not yet been identified by the state. The Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission wishes to

begin mapping local knowledge of wildlife sightings and travel patterns, such as these, to gain an increased level of understanding of the local wildlife population.

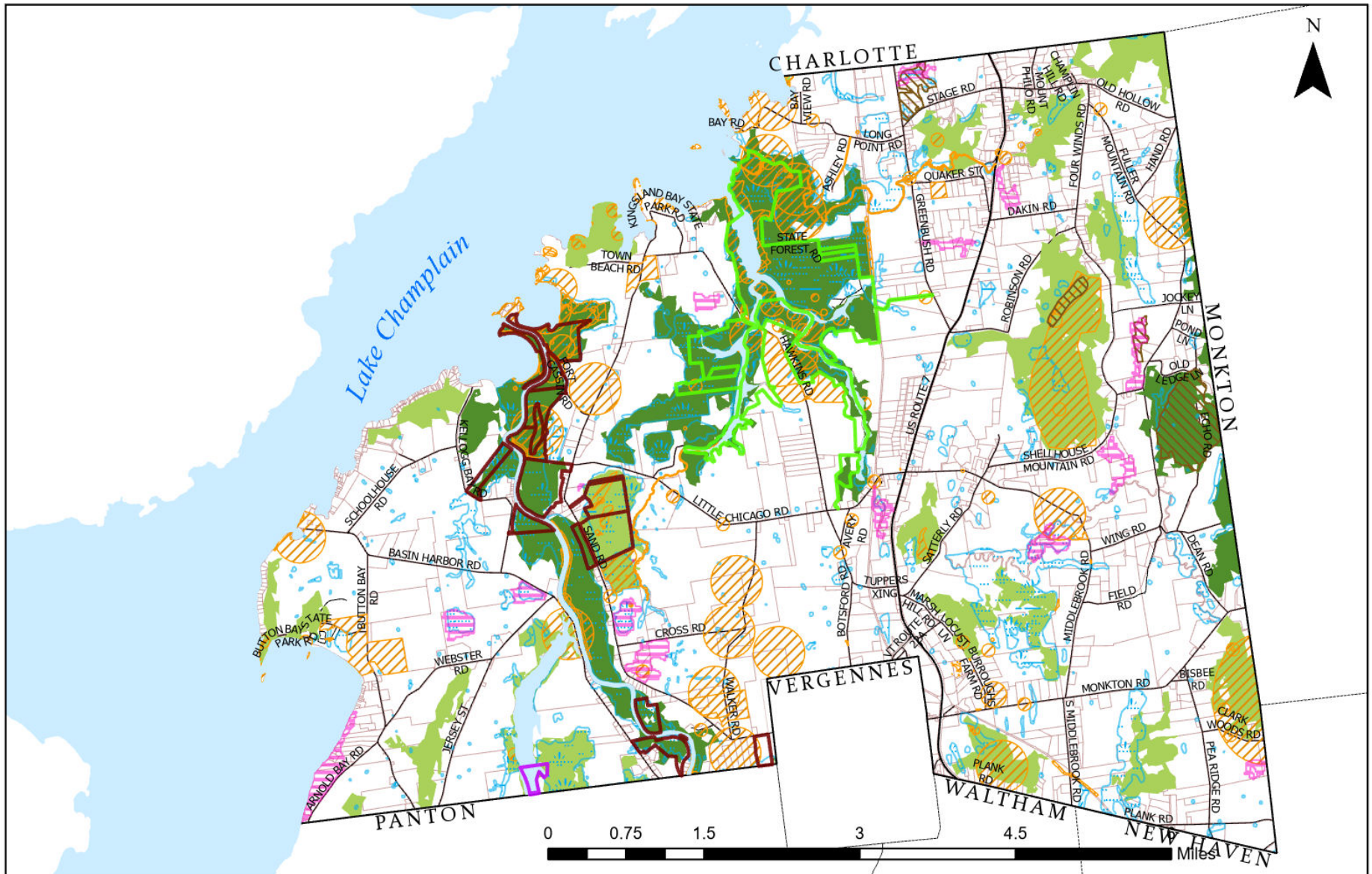
Ecologically Sensitive Areas

The Vermont State Department of Fish & Wildlife has identified rare, threatened and endangered species and significant habitat areas, as well as clayplain forest areas in Ferrisburgh. The clayplain forests have been fragmented due to land clearing and development. These rare ecological areas are identified on maps within the natural Resource chapter.

The section of Lewis Creek which flows through Ferrisburgh has been recently identified by ANR as habitat for two endangered, native fresh-water mussel species. Unfortunately, prime habitat for these mussels, such as Lewis Creek, has greatly declined in quality.

b. Policies

1. Work with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Non-game and Natural Heritage Program to ensure development does not endanger significant habitats of state rare, threatened or endangered species.
2. Maintain a natural buffer from any development adjacent to significant habitat, as shown on the Significant Habitat map, and from conservation areas, shown in green on the Planning Areas map.
3. Prohibit any unreasonable, out-of-the-ordinary, or unexpected noise, odors or artificial lighting.
4. Require lighting in adjacent developments to be down-directed and shielded to minimize light directed upward or outward, to the greatest extent possible.



Significant Habitat

Ferrisburgh, VT

Source(s):

Parcels: VCGI Standardized Statewide Parcels (2022).

Forest Blocks: VCD (2022). WMU's: VT Fish & Wildlife.

Habitat Features: VT ANR, VSWI.






Significant Habitat Features

-  Clayplain Forest Fragments
-  Deer Wintering Areas
-  Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species
-  Vermont Significant Wetlands

Forest Blocks

-  Highest Priority
-  Priority

Wildlife Management Areas

-  Dead Creek WMA
-  Little Otter Creek WMA
-  Lower Otter Creek WMA

5. Use the most current Significant Habitat map and other natural resource maps in any town planning decision process, including subdivision review.

6. Encourage landowners, hunters, wildlife viewers and the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission to map wildlife trails and corridors.

7. Support the Conservation Commission and their outreach to interested residents.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Encourage landowners, hunters, wildlife viewers and the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission to map wildlife trails and corridors.
2. Encourage landowners to improve wildlife habitat, such as by applying for funding to improve wildlife habitat through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS - www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov).
3. Identify and protect deer wintering yards, and bobcat and bear denning sites.

6. Soils, and Agricultural Lands

a. Description

Agricultural lands in Ferrisburgh cover approximately 59% of the total Ferrisburgh acres (USGS National Land Cover Database). This comprises 16% cropland, 39 % Hay and pasture, plus 4 % other farmland.

Soils in Ferrisburgh were deposited under a series of historic glacial lakes formed by melting ice. The soils also received some marine deposits during a period when the Champlain Valley was connected to the North Atlantic Ocean through its northern end. The resultant dominant soils in Ferrisburgh are high quality agricultural soils that are calcium rich and hold water, such as the Vergennes, Covington and Livingston series of soils. These soils include heavy clays, which drain somewhat poorly and greatly minimize potential for development

owing to their low permeability and their tendency to erode easily, but they are very good for agriculture. Soils classified as Amenia, Elmwood, Melrose and Nellis soils that are more loamy in nature are considered “prime” agricultural soils, with Vergennes and Covington listed as having ‘statewide’ importance. The terms “Prime,” “Statewide” and “Local” are particularly critical in Act 250 development review, under criteria 9B and 9C, which implement the state’s policy to preserve primary agricultural and forest soils and require mitigation plans.

Prime agricultural soils are found in only limited areas in Vermont and are often covered by development because early settlers established towns in such areas, and also because such soil has good ability to handle wastewater. Many acres of agricultural soils, mostly “Statewide” agricultural soils, have been conserved in Ferrisburgh, providing a large area for commercial agriculture. Ferrisburgh has very little “Prime” soil and, thus, conserving soils resources will be of paramount importance to future generations.

Because of its fertile soils, the warmer climate in the Champlain Valley and the town’s long tradition of farming, Ferrisburgh is still very much an agricultural town. There are 48 known farms in town of which 18 are dairy operations. There are at least four known maple-sugaring operations.

Enormous effort by Ferrisburgh resident farmers in partnership with the Vermont Land Trust has gone in to conserving the good soils and farmlands in Ferrisburgh. The result is approximately 8,725 acres of farmland conserved in perpetuity by about 32 families in town.

The Vermont Land Trust (VLT) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation board (VHCB) have been particularly active in assisting these farm families with conserving good farmland for the future. These Ferrisburgh families recognize that to have viable and sustainable farms you need to have enough farmers and farmland in a geographic area to support viable businesses associated with farming,

such as agricultural equipment dealerships, veterinarians, feed and farm supply stores and so forth.

The town's good soils, local tradition and large lot sizes also ensure that many residents grow large gardens each year and put away food for the long winter months. The amount of food grown in Ferrisburgh by farmers and residents increases the town's food security. Food security means having enough food locally so that when a natural or human disaster shuts down the usual transportation routes there is an adequate supply available for enough days.

Pressure from development spreading down from Chittenden County to the north will continue to remove primary soils from future agricultural uses. At the same time, demands for food and fiber will increase. Agriculture has been part of the history of Ferrisburgh and is strongly supported by town residents.

The trend over the last 20 years has been for dairy farms, the predominant agriculture in Ferrisburgh for the last 100 years, to get larger in size, with larger fields and larger farm equipment in use. This has resulted in taking out hedgerow and street trees. Although the use of pasture has increased over this same period of time, many farms are still confinement operations with larger number in fewer, but larger barns. Some farms have become organic certified to increase the profit per cow by the value-added marketing benefits of the organic seal.

There has also been an increase in vegetable and specialty farms in the last 20 years.

The price that the farmer/producer receives for their product has not increased as much over the last 20 years as over all salaries for people employed in the construction, haulage, distribution, service or retail sectors. Profit per cow has not kept pace with cost of living. Some farmers have therefore tried to maximize acreage of land use resulting in some loss of soil in run off.

b. Policies

1. Work with the State Department of Agriculture and farmers in town to support farmers and farming so that they can maximize their income without being forced to sell their lands for development.
2. Educate residents and seasonal visitors about the critical role of farming in Ferrisburgh
3. Require clustering, minimal soil loss to development, and/or mitigation on- or off-site to discourage development on soils classified as Prime, Statewide and Locally significant.
4. Require permanent easements to conserve agricultural soils and productive forest soils.
5. Prohibit removal of existing vegetative cover on all areas with slopes over 15 percent or where soils are shallow to bedrock, less than three feet.
6. Grading, cutting or filling must not result in a finished grade over 50 percent.
7. Fire Department Review is required to discourage development, including driveways, on slopes over 15 percent.
8. Encourage agriculture-related business in Ferrisburgh, including home based occupations
9. Refer to ANR's River Corridor maps to determine vulnerable areas for shoreline erosion.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Work with State Congressional delegation to promote Farm Bills in Congress that support small farms and aim for livable wages for farm families.
2. Work with the state to keep an Inventory of Prime and Statewide Soils in Town and regularly monitor the status of the inventory.

3. Update zoning regulations to allow for small building lots in 2 and 5 acres zones to allow for houses while conserving agricultural soils.

7. Air Quality

a. Description

Wind borne pollutants: Vermont lies down wind of many sources of air pollution. Winds from the west bring pollutants from industries and incinerators in the Midwest and from Wildfires in Canada and the West. Winds from the north bring a wide range of pollutants from northern Quebec. When warm air moves from the south, especially in summer we see a considerable increase in Air Quality Indicators. In decades past these air born pollutants resulted in high levels of acid rain, but federal regulations were eventually able to reduce the acidity of the rain through air pollution controls on individual industrial plants.

Vehicle Emissions: Vehicle emissions may be Ferrisburgh's largest source of air pollution. Idling contributes significantly to air pollution. This plan supports no-idling policies in public areas.

Trash burning: In May 2016, the Selectboard approved a town ordinance which states in part, "Unless a permit is obtained pursuant to this ordinance, the disposal of solid waste through open burning or incineration is prohibited in the Town of Ferrisburgh unless the practice has been approved by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation."

The Addison County Solid Waste Management District, of which the town is a member, prohibits by ordinance the burning of solid waste. Violators are subject to a fine.

Outdoor wood-fired boilers: Ferrisburgh residents interested in purchasing an outdoor wood-fired boiler should be aware that Vermont Air Pollution Control Regulations 10 VSA 5(204,205), as adopted 10 January 2009, control use of outdoor wood-fired boilers.

As of March 31, 2010, only outdoor wood boilers certified to emit less than 0.32 pounds of particulate matter per million BTUs (Phase II boilers) may be sold for use in Vermont. Units in use prior to that date must meet a standard of 0.44 pounds per million BTUs (Phase I boilers). Phase I boilers must be located more than 200 feet from the nearest neighbor's house and with a permanent smokestack that is higher than the roof peak of the house it serves.

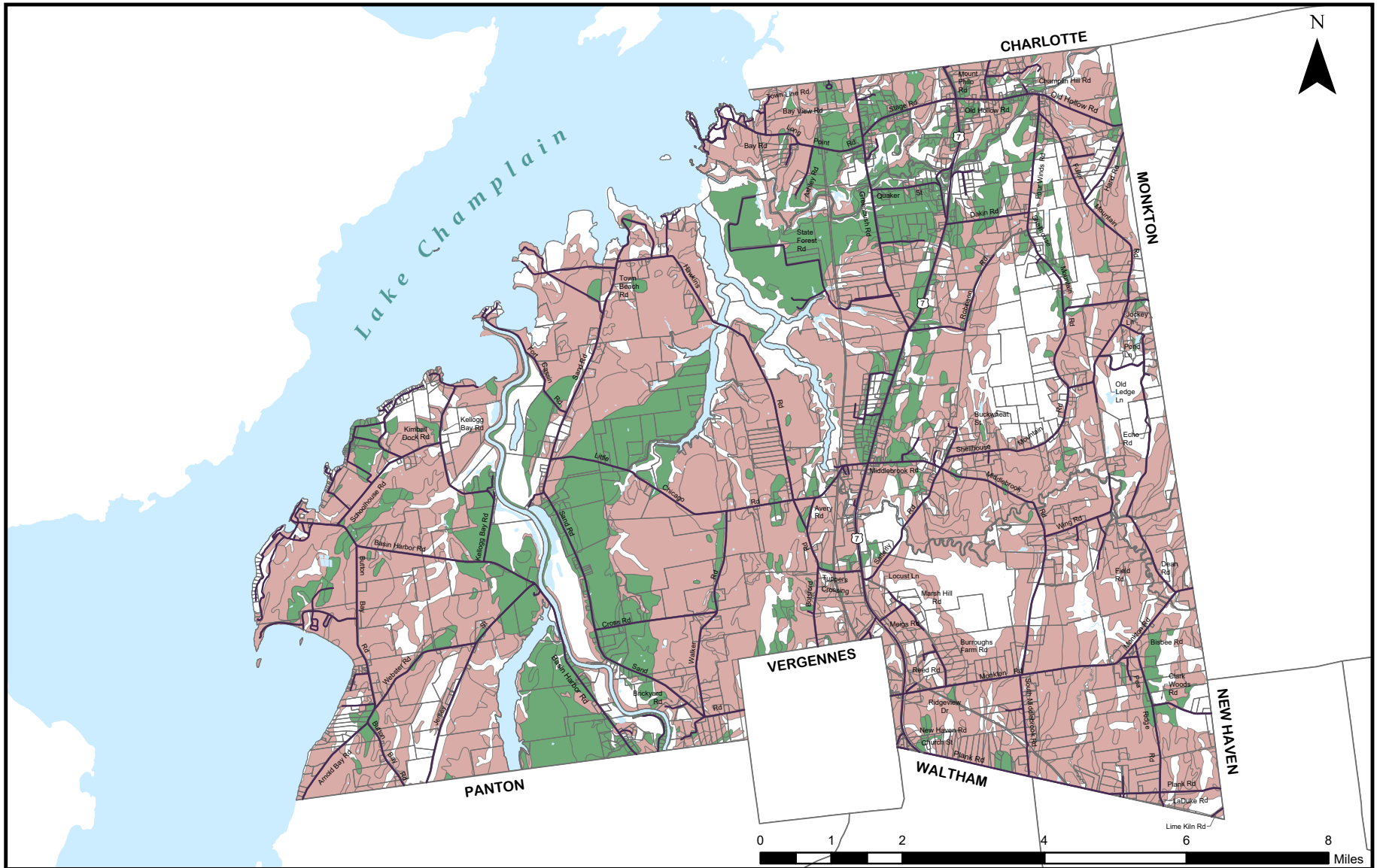
Wood stoves: Residents who have wood stoves uncertified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are encouraged to exchange them for new, more efficient and cleaner burning wood, pellet or gas stoves. Catalysts in EPA-certified catalytic wood stoves should be replaced every five years. Potential customers for these products should be aware that rebates are sometimes available from the state government. Contact the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation for further information about these and other opportunities.

b. Policies

1. Impacts to air quality should be considered in all development review processes. Impacts should be considered to adjacent residents, properties, natural areas and town-wide impacts.
2. Woodstoves and wood burning boilers must adhere to current state and EPA air-quality regulations.
3. Support efforts for car-pooling, public transportation and other cleaner modes of transportation.



c. Recommended Actions

1. Provide current local, state and EPA educational materials regarding environmental air pollutants and acceptable practices.
2. Encourage a no-idling policy at all town buildings and Ferrisburgh Central School.





Soils

Ferrisburgh, VT

-  Roads
-  Parcels

Agricultural Soils

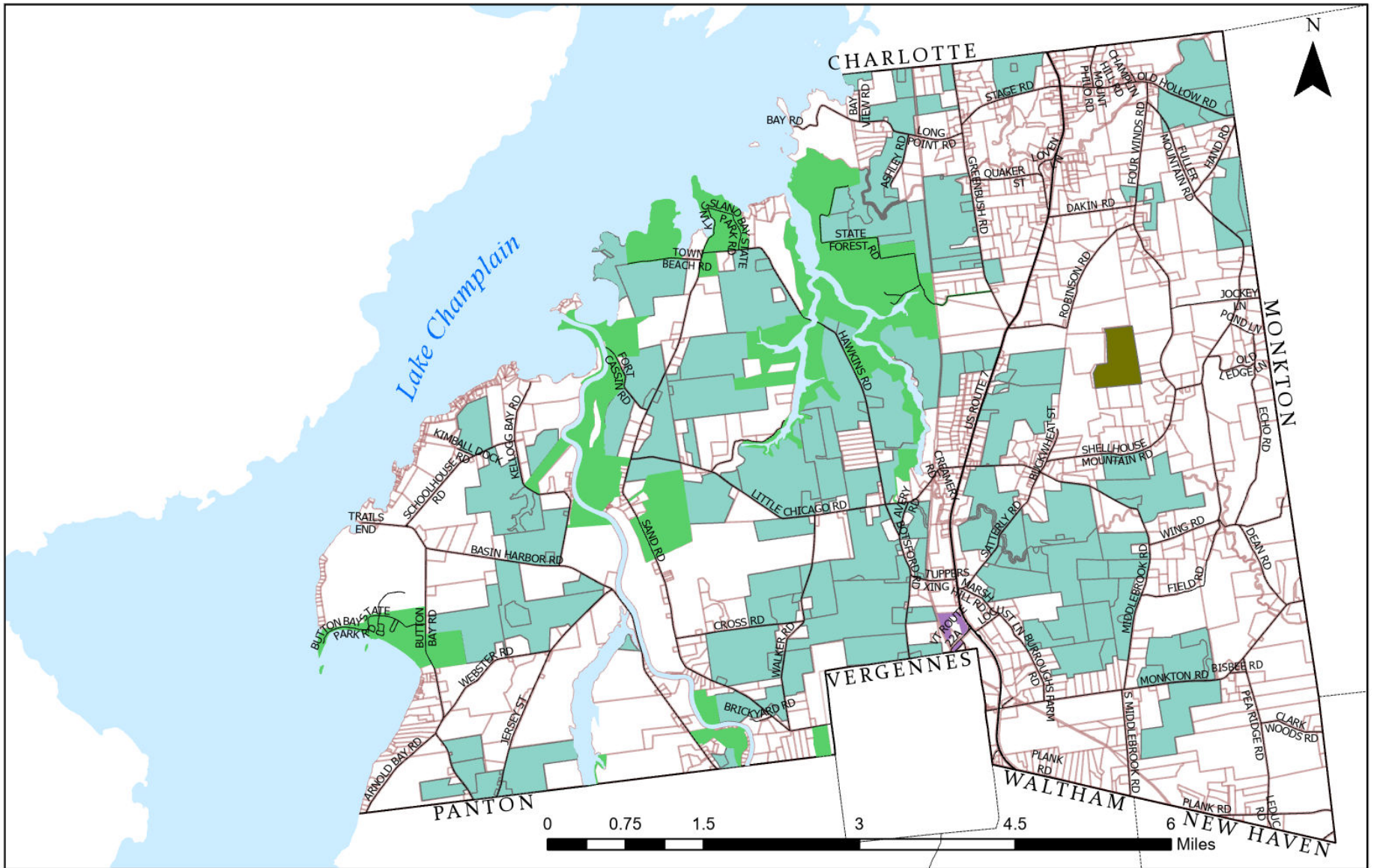
-  Statewide or Local Value
-  Prime Value

Source(s): Parcels: VCGI Standardized Statewide Parcels (2024); Agricultural Soils: USDA NRCS Soil Survey (2022).

Prime Soils have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oil seed crops, and are also available for these uses (the land could be cropland, pastureland, range-land, forestland, or other land, but not urban built-up land or water).

Soils of Statewide or Local Value fail to meet one or more of the requirements of prime soils, but are important for the production of food, feed, fiber, or forage crops.





Public, and Conserved Land

Ferrisburgh, VT

Source(s):

Parcels: VCGI Standardized Statewide Parcels (2022).

Protected Lands: VT Protected Lands Database (2021).



3/2024

Conserved Privately Owned

Typically with Easements

Publicly Owned

- State
- Ferrisburgh Town Forest
- Municipal

HUMAN RESOURCES

This section of the plan describes Ferrisburgh’s current population, patterns of growth, essential needs of the community such as housing and transportation, local economy and other resources and services available to residents.

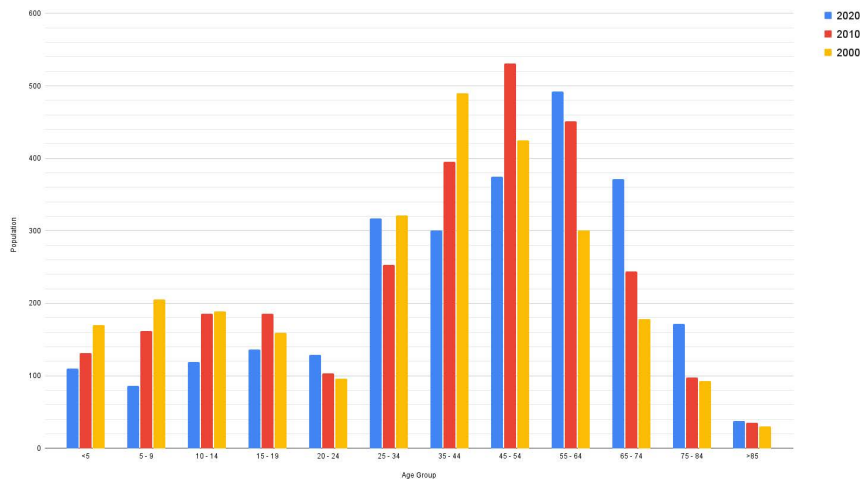
1. Population and Housing

a. Description

Out of 242 towns in Vermont, Ferrisburgh is the eighth largest town in Vermont at 61.24 square miles.

The total population of Ferrisburgh in 2000 was 2,657. In 2023 it was 2,653 (US Census), and in 2025 it is 2,677. The ratio is 55% male and 45% female. There were 33 children born in Ferrisburgh in 2024 (Town Report). The population is 16 % under the age of 18, and 19% over the age of 65. Ferrisburgh is 97% “white”. The median age is 46 years

Ferrisburgh Age Distribution, 2000 to 2020
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



By comparison the City of Vergennes total population is 2,566 and median age is 45 years.

Housing and Property Values: Ferrisburgh not only houses year-round residents, but has a high number of seasonal “camps,” most notably along the shores of Lake Champlain.

In 2025, the total number of dwelling units is 1,324 of which 297 are “camps”. Camps represent 13% of the total number of residences (Town records)

Sixty-four of the residential parcels were mobile homes, 48 are farms with houses and four are apartments or apartment buildings (Town records).

86% Owner occupied; 13 % rented.

Category	Property Count	Listed Value in dollars
Residential - House	915	287,220,800
Residential Mobile Homes	64	8,010,100
Seasonal/Camps, Non-Lake	14	1,427,500
Lake	283	166,978,700
Farms	48	23,545,600
Vacant Land – no dwelling	172	13,707,900
Commercial	64	36,802,000
Utilities	15	19,535,119
TOTALS	1,576	559,227,719

(Data provided by Listers, 2025)

The camps and residential properties combined total about \$464 million, or about 83% of total property values in Ferrisburgh.

The average household size has continued to decline over the last 55 years from about 3.67 in 1970 to 2.79 people per household in 2025.

Building permits indicate an average of 12 new houses per year over the last 5 years, plus an average of 8.6 per year of accessory dwellings.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
New Houses	11	9	18	13	8
Accessory Dwelling Unit	8	7	13	10	5
Permits Denied	0	1	1	0	0

Although town records show about 8 accessory apartments are constructed every year, there is not a huge diversity in Ferrisburgh’s housing stock, most being single family homes. It is therefore a challenge for seniors, first-time home buyers, single-earning families, and those looking to rent, to find an affordable living situation in Ferrisburgh.

Although the total number of new residences each year is only about 20 per year, the value of improvements, renovations and out-of state sales has increased the value of both residences and seasonal homes.

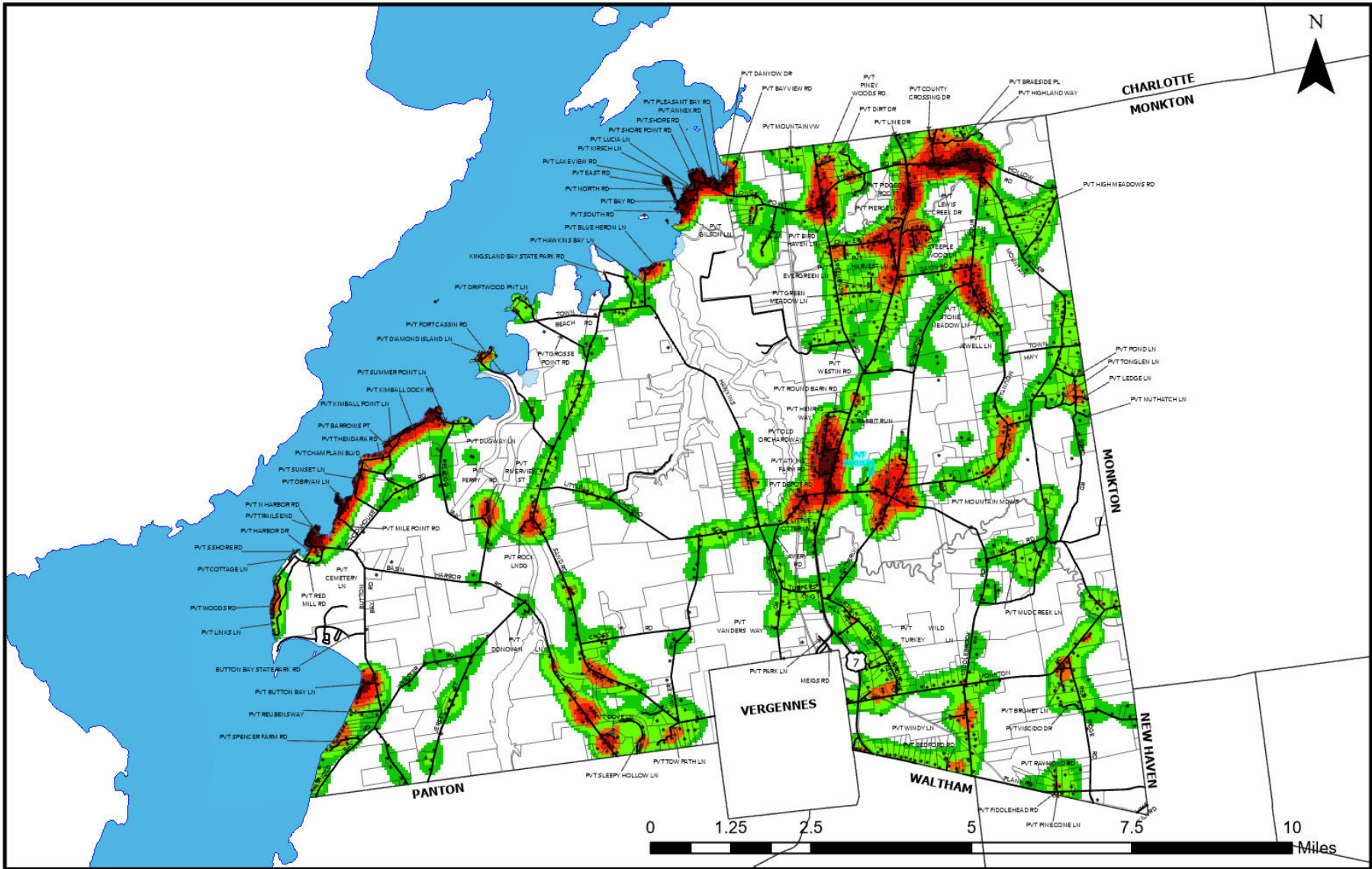
b. Policies

1. Encourage all Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) to include affordable housing units.
2. Encourage multi-family and manufactured housing that can provide affordable places for people to live.
3. Encourage Accessory dwelling units.
4. Prioritize affordable housing building to first renovate, second to infill with new construction on vacant lots in densely settled areas, and third to build new homes.
5. Allow for density bonuses for affordable housing units in PUDs.
6. Support the provision of housing that will allow older residents to continue to live in the community.

7. Support the provision of housing that will allow young people to buy homes and raise their families in the community.
8. Work to ensure that Ferrisburgh is an attractive community with affordable housing options for younger residents.
9. Work with land trusts and developers to encourage development of small- scale affordable housing PUDs.
10. Promote affordable housing and an increase in availability of rental housing by allowing for apartments associated with existing houses or conversion of large single-family homes into multi-family homes, consistent with rural Ferrisburgh.
11. Encourage accessory dwellings by adding rental units to existing homes or accessory structures.
12. Maintain a mix of housing types and values by discouraging ‘cookie cutter’ housing developments that contain homes of a single style, size or sale price.
13. Encourage any new residential development to be energy efficient and promote use of the Vermont Sate Energy Code.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Ensure that proposals for multi-unit housing projects include a mix of housing sizes and prices.
2. Require that any large scale housing development proposal includes a diversity of dwelling units, and multi unit buildings
2. Support new or renovated housing within walkable distances of retail, municipal services, recreational and educational facilities and public transportation.
3. Update land use regulations to allow for greater flexibility, increased density in the Town Center and adjacent Vergennes.
4. Encourage Selectboard to continue to review opportunities to address limited availability of wastewater or public water in Ferrisburgh.



Population Density
Ferrisburgh, VT



Source(s): VT E911 Sites, 2023.; 2020 U.S. Census, 2020.

Each single family residence is multiplied by the Ferrisburgh median household size, 2.34 persons in 2020. (Includes homes, mobile homes, other residential, and seasonal dwellings).

Each multi-family residence is multiplied by 3 times the median household size, or 7.02 persons.

Density interpolated over a 1/4 mile radius.



2. Economy & Economic Development

a. Description

The median household income in 2023 was \$111,406. The per capita income in 2023 was \$51,547 compared with the year 2000 when per capita income in Ferrisburgh was \$23,066 (the equivalent of \$43,000 in 2023).

In 2024 3.5% of households were classified as in poverty and 2.1 % do not have health insurance.

In terms of employment: 12% self-employed; 20% work in construction; 20% in Health and Education; about 11% in agriculture.

Of the working population, 54% work within Addison County; 13% are self-employed; 55% of workers commute up to 30 minutes to work each day. Only 0.4% use public transport to commute to work.

Farms, Home Occupations and Home-based Businesses: Agriculture and agriculture related businesses remain a critical component of our economic base and a dominant feature of the landscape. In 2025 there are 48 farms in Ferrisburgh (Listers Report). These farms include dairy, orchard, livestock, hay, hops, cheese, pasture, chickens, maple syrup production and vegetable farming. There are also a wide variety of other agriculture related businesses in Ferrisburgh, including: processing farm and sugaring products, landscaping services, gardening center, commercial equine operation, computer consultants, website sales, art galleries, antique sales, farm machine sales and services, auto repair shops, skilled woodworking, carpenters, builders, music teachers, and boat builders. While some of these are quite large in scope, most are home occupations or small accessory businesses. Others, like Dakin Farms on Route 7 are nationally and internationally well known and export Vermont agricultural products world wide. For this reason, among others, it is a state-wide priority that Vermont towns have equal access to telecommunications (see

utilities and facilities section) to support these local- level opportunities.

Tourism and Recreation: Ferrisburgh grew from the shores of Lake Champlain inward and some of its earliest settlement happened at Basin Harbor with an inn and ferry established in 1790. The Basin Harbor Resort was established in 1886, and continues to operate today as a family run business (Fourth Generation Beach Family). Basin Harbor Resort is now in its 139th year of operating. There are about 75 cottages and 3 guesthouses, several of which are historic buildings. The Resort is a major employer in town with a permanent staff of 35 and 135 seasonal workers. Its amenities include an airport, marina, and multiple seasonal restaurants. Adjacent to the Basin Harbor Club is the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum. These facilities in West Ferrisburgh, plus the several Marinas and Campgrounds are vital parts of the Towns and state's tourism economy attracting tourists from around the nation and world.

Scenic Resources: Ferrisburgh Residents and visiting tourists have always expressed a deep appreciation for the scenic landscapes of the Town, from the views over the Lake to the Adirondacks to the West, and especially the agricultural landscape. At every community meeting held to seek public input on updates to this town plan everyone attending expressed a very strong desire to retain the rural landscape and protect viewsheds. The landscape and viewsheds are a critical economic resource, attracting permanent residents to live here and, long term tourists to own summer homes here, and tourists to visit. Surveys of residents indicate that they especially enjoy the "broad fields of West Ferrisburgh"; the "calm beauty along Lewis Creek as it flows to the lake" the "View to the south from Buckwheat Road to South Middlebrook Road", the view from Shellhouse Mountain. Residents also listed the following views that they love:

- Anywhere in West Ferrisburgh, in any direction; Lake, Mountains and agricultural landscape.

- Looking West from the top of Old Hollow Road near the intersection with Hand Road.
- The views of the Hollow when entering the village
- Kingsland Bay, Basin Harbor, Town Beach.
- View south from Fuller Mountain a half mile east of intersection with Shellhouse Mountain Road.
- Views to the NW from Woodman Hill looking over agricultural fields towards Vergennes.
- Views to the East and West on high parts of Monkton Road, near Allandra Farm.
- Views East and West from Jersey Street and Webster road- any time of year.
- View to the West from height of land on Botsford Road near Neatocht Farm barn.
- View to the east from Sand Road towards the Green Mountains.
- Views to Little Otter Creek from Hawkins Road.
- Favorite drive along Hawkins road, to Sand Road, to Fort Cassin.
- Old Hollow Road from Monkton to Route 7.
- Monkton Road.

Residents expressed concern at the fact that there are many roads in town where the old power poles and cables remain long after the new ones have been put in place, making rural roads unsightly and detracting from the rural landscape.

Route 7: Currently Ferrisburgh’s section of Route 7 is a designated part of the Champlain Valley Byway. This designation celebrates Vermont’s scenic and cultural assets and maps specific businesses for tourism and recreational purposes. While catering to tourism can provide a significant economic benefit to Ferrisburgh, Route 7 development must also consider the impacts and services to Ferrisburgh residents. Planning and policy will determine how well Route 7 can offer safe services and amenities to both visitors and

residents, while maintaining its unique sense of place, with views to the mountains and farm fields, historic structures, and safe access to successful local businesses.

Businesses currently located along Route 7 include: gas stations, car dealerships and maintenance, a general store, and bakeries. There are a number of closed and abandoned commercial areas as well, which were a noted concern of residents within the 2013 planning survey and again during the 2024 surveys.

Sections of Route 7, both south and north, include dilapidated buildings and junked cars, some of these within the State ROW. These are detrimental to the Town’s economic development.

Infrastructure/Utilities: Services such as high-speed Internet, cable, and viable waste water treatment are essential services for supporting both home- based businesses and any other types of clustered business development. Route 7 commercial areas currently do not have access to a community waste water treatment facility. In the past, soil type has determined that community- sized treatment systems could not be built. Because technology is continually advancing, Ferrisburgh should continue to reassess waste water options that would support clustered commercial and residential development.

b. Policies

1. Ensure that all Zoning and Subdivision Regulations include mechanisms to protect and conserve scenic views.
2. Consider establishing some scenic pull-off spots along roads.
3. Work with private property owners to reach mutually agreeable solutions during land development projects.
4. Encourage and support home occupations and home-based businesses throughout Ferrisburgh, so long as they are in keeping with the policies of the land use plan, human resource policies and natural resource policies within this document, and adhere to Ferrisburgh’s zoning regulations.

5. Encourage and support business development in the Mixed Use zoning district, prioritizing agricultural related endeavors.
 6. Encourage businesses associated with tourism, recreation, local-food production and processing, which are in keeping with the goals of the land use plan and natural resource policies within this document, and adhere to the Ferrisburgh’s zoning regulations.
 7. Support and encourage businesses that produce value-added products and use sustainable business practices, especially as they enhance and support the traditional agriculture and forestry and rural character of the town.
 8. Support and encourage the use of locally grown food products, farm stands and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in all parts of town.
 9. Encourage development of local food-based businesses and local forestry businesses.
 10. Ensure availability of high-speed, broadband Internet connections.
6. Contact VTrans to expedite removal of junked vehicles, collapsing buildings and other unsightly and dangerous equipment and materials along Route 7.
 7. Work with Selectboard to identify ways to remove or find new uses for abandoned buildings.
 8. Engage with Addison County Economic Development Corporation and other rural economic professionals to provide a roadmap for appropriate local business development.
 9. Increase access to indoor and outdoor gathering opportunities (farmers markets, craft fairs, talent shows, seasonal celebrations), including access to the Town Offices/Community Center.
 10. Review business development proposals for their ability to provide safe and enjoyable access to goods and services.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Continue to request Selectboard to develop a Capital Budget Plan.
2. Clearly define home-based business and home occupation within Ferrisburgh’s zoning regulations.
3. Contact the Power companies to request that they remove old power poles and cables throughout town.
4. Develop simple design standards within the Ferrisburgh zoning regulations for business developments within the Route 7 corridor that ensure development is in general character with the existing buildings.
5. Work with town committees to consider scenic pull off locations on some town roads.

3 Education & Childcare

a. Description

Schools Ferrisburgh is part of the Addison Northwest Supervisory District (ANWSD). The other towns in the ANWSD are Addison, Panton, Vergennes and Waltham. The Ferrisburgh Central School is the local elementary school, serving Pre-Kindergarten (PK) through Grade 5. In 2025 there are 35 children in in Pre-K (ages 3-5) plus 135 children in the Ferrisburgh School, grades K-5. In addition, there are presently 13 Ferrisburgh children being Homeschooled, and 9 children attend the Champlain Valley Christian School. (Total Ferrisburgh pre-K- grade 5 is thus 202 children)

The Vergennes Union Middle and High School serves grades 6 through 12, and in 2025 there are 131 Ferrisburgh students attending out of the total Vergennes school enrollment of about 450 students in grades 6-12.

High school age students may choose to attend the Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury. In 2025 there are 23 Ferrisburgh students attending the Hannaford Career Center at different levels of FTE.

The ANWSD also offers a wide array of after school and summer programs for all ages.

Although there is some effort to help the Ferrisburgh children learn about their town through local activities such as tapping the maple trees on the Town Green, the school does not play the same role in daily town life as it used to because it is a District School, and the buildings are not owned by the Town any more. The trend is towards amalgamation into larger units with state control.

Childcare According to the State of Vermont's Bright Futures Childcare Information System, there are three (3) registered home care providers and three (3) licensed providers in Ferrisburgh. This means that the homes have passed health and safety inspections, the furnace has been inspected, the provider has taken CPR and First Aid, and takes six hours of workshops yearly. Family home child care providers may care for two children under two years of age and four children from two years and up.

b. Policies

1. Encourage high quality childcare services that meet the needs of the town's working parents.
2. Ensure that the town has planning in place to provide adequate municipal facilities to meet current and future growth.
3. Encourage school students to take an active role in their town through working with the Planning Commission, Conservation Commission and related activities.
4. Work in partnership with appropriate state agencies and the school to improve and maintain the school recreation area.
5. Promote and encourage volunteering in school programs and activities.
6. Encourage safe access to the elementary school and plan for future connections that would allow pedestrian or bike access,

as outlined the 2012 Safe Routes to School Travel Plan and the 2025 Trails and Travel Plan.

7. Support the development of programs that incorporate an appreciation of local history, community participation and the democratic process into the learning environment.
8. Encourage citizen participation in the school policy-setting process.
9. Support the development of programs in Ferrisburgh's elementary school to promote an increased understanding of natural systems and to use the town's natural areas as a resource for engaging children in their local environment.
10. Support the provision of early education and after-school programs.
11. Ensure excellent and diverse educational opportunities to facilitate a tradition of lifelong learning by town residents, and work to engage residents of all ages the town's education system.

c. Recommended Actions

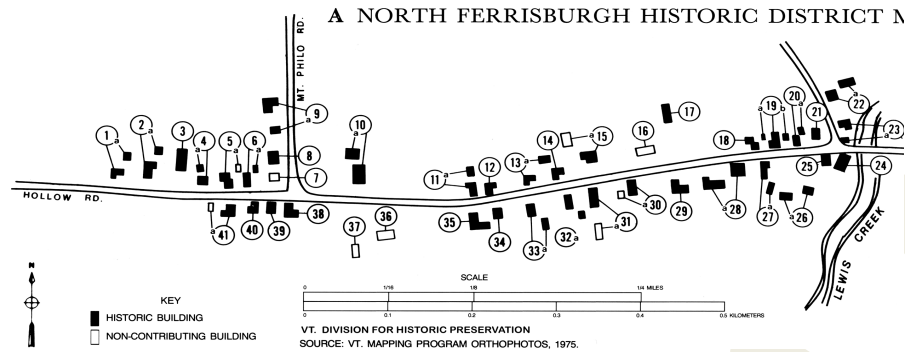
1. Work with the Ferrisburgh Central School on a regular basis to support the school in its mandated requirements and enhancements that support rural education.
2. Encourage town residents to help with the school garden and composting program.
3. Continue working closely with the ANWSD.
4. Work with applicants who wish to provide new Childcare services.

4. Historic & Cultural Resources

a. Description

There are 156 historic buildings listed on the State Register of Historic Places in Ferrisburgh. The village of North Ferrisburgh has more than 40 historic buildings along Old Hollow Road. This village is listed as an historic district in the State Register of Historic Buildings. In addition

three buildings—the Rokeby house built in 1790; the Union Meeting Hall (1840) in the center of town; and Hawley’s Ferry House (1800) at Kingsland Bay—are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Long Point is well known as a summer camp area. There has been considerable renovation of summer homes along Lake Champlain where wealthier, often out-of-state, families can afford to upgrade older camps. Another area of historic camps extends from Basin Harbor to Kellogg Bay. These are not presently protected by design control.

With its impressive stone, wood and brick farmhouses, stores and churches, 19th century barns, lakeside cottages and camps, Ferrisburgh retains a diverse and rich architectural heritage.

b. Policies

1. Encourage the adaptive re-use of historic buildings, which retain authentic features.
2. Use landscaping as an integral aspect of all development in town such that protective ground cover is established and shade trees, screening trees and shrubs are planted in a manner that reflects a rural landscape.
3. Encourage use of native species for landscaping plants.

4. Protect all archeological sites or potential sites, notably along all riverbanks and conservation areas, working with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Determine how best to identify the 156 historic buildings in town and gather current addresses for all the structures.
2. Identify and maintain the town’s historical records.
3. Continue to support the work of the Ferrisburgh Historical Society.

5. Community Facilities & Services

a. Description

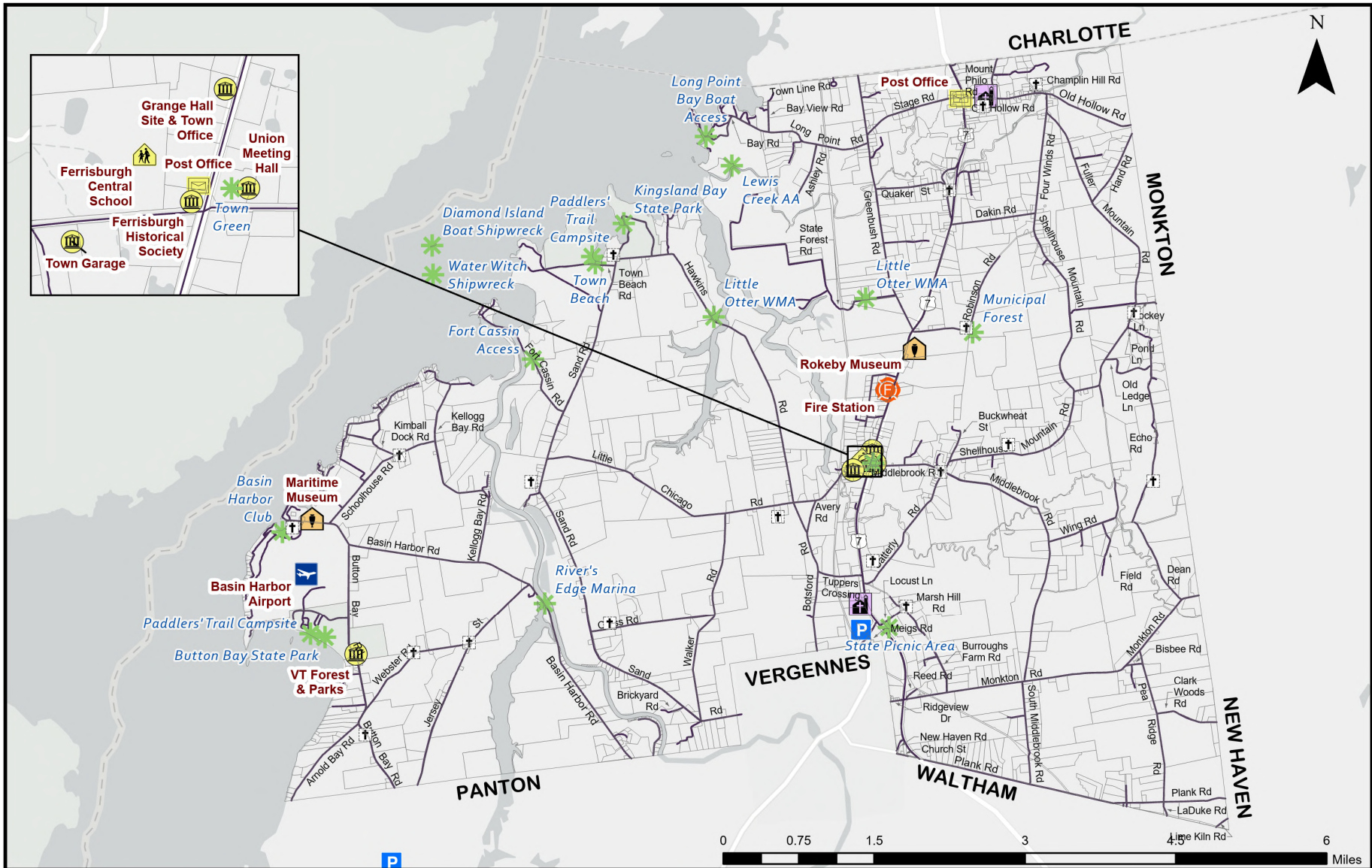
Police: The Addison County Sheriff’s Department provides civil process for the entire county. The Vermont State Police provide service for motor vehicle regulation and criminal law enforcement. Ferrisburgh also funds a sheriff patrol contract.

Fire: There is a dedicated group of volunteers in the Ferrisburgh Fire Department, with equipment housed in the 1993 firehouse on Route 7 north of the Center. Ferrisburgh also contracts with the Vergennes Fire Department for services.

Rescue: The Vergennes Area Rescue Squad (VARs), a local non-profit organization, responds to calls in Ferrisburgh as well as Panton, Bristol, Charlotte, Addison, New Haven, Vergennes, Waltham and Weybridge. VARs bills for its services, receives additional funding from towns serviced, and accepts donations.

Ferrisburgh also participates in Mutual Aid.

Medical: There are no medical facilities in Ferrisburgh. Porter Hospital in Middlebury and the University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington are the closest larger hospitals. There are medical clinics in Vergennes as well. Addison County Home Health and Hospice can



Community Facilities

Ferrisburgh, VT

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|-------------|
| | Cemetery | | Post Office |
| | Park and Rides | | Cultural |
| | Recreation | | Religious |
| | Governmental | | Airport |
| | Emergency Services | | Roads |
| | Educational | | Parcels |

Source(s): VT E911 Sites, 2025



Make home visits, and the Community Health Services of Addison County has an Open Door Clinic in Middlebury.

Social Service Organizations: Voters typically approve funding to support the following agencies and organizations that provide services to the town and its residents: Addison County Parent Child Center; Addison County Community Action Group (HOPE); Addison County Counseling Service; Addison County Economic Development Corporation; Addison County Home Health and Hospice; Addison County Humane Society; Addison County Readers; Addison County River Watch Collaborative; Addison County Transit Resources; American Legion; Boys and Girls Club of Greater Vergennes; Champlain Valley Agency on Aging; Community Health Services Open Door Clinic; Elderly Services; Gage Cemetery Association; Green Up VT; Hospice Volunteer Services; John Graham Emergency Shelter; Lewis Creek Association; North Ferrisburgh Cemetery Association; Otter Creek Natural Resource Conservation District; Retired and Senior Volunteer Program; Rokeby Museum; Union Cemetery; Vergennes Summer Rec Program; Vermont Center for Independent Living; Vermont Adult Learning; and WomanSafe

Health Officer: Ferrisburgh has a Health Officer who is nominated by the Selectboard and appointed by the Commissioner of Health. This person responds to animal bites, West Nile virus issues, rabies, failed septic systems.

Department of Health: The Emergency Preparedness Unit is operated by the Department of Health, Middlebury District. The Department of Health also undertakes food and lodgings inspections and information on this can be found at www.healthyvermonter.info.

Emergency Preparedness: Fire Chief Wager is presently coordinating an emergency preparedness plan with several local and state organizations.

Library: Historically there was a library in the Hollow in North Ferrisburgh, but today the Bixby Memorial Library in Vergennes is the

local library, and it is well used by Ferrisburgh residents. In addition to lending books, the library also offers other services to the community including programs for adults and children and education outreach as well as public computers and Wi-Fi.

Solid Waste: Ferrisburgh is part of the 19-town Addison County Solid Waste Management District, which has a comprehensive management plan. Recycling in Ferrisburgh is mandatory as part of membership to the ACSWD. There is a transfer station on Route 7 in Middlebury and recycling and garbage collection also takes place twice a week in Vergennes.

Town Offices/Community Center: The Town was able to take advantage of historic preservation funding to rebuild the former Grange building which had been destroyed by fire. The Town Hall has town offices downstairs, including a large meeting room, and a large open Community room upstairs which can be used as a flexible community event space and for Town Meetings.

Ferrisburgh Historical Society: Ferrisburgh Historical Society took up residence in the former Town Clerk's building (School House Number 17, built in 1862) in 2008. This group works with the State Historic Preservation Department to identify and maintain the town's historical records which are housed in the Town Vault in the reconstructed Town Offices/Community Center and at the Ferrisburgh Historical Society.

Rokeby Museum: While not owned by Ferrisburgh, this history museum, dedicated to two centuries of Vermont agricultural life, and an understanding of the history of enslaved people, is a great resource for residents of Ferrisburgh and the Nation.

Telecommunications: Fairpoint Communications and Champlain Valley Telecom provide local wired phone service in Ferrisburgh. They provide DSL (digital subscriber line) service to some subscribers in town for high-speed internet access, and there is cable service to areas along the Route 7 corridor and adjacent to Vergennes. In

addition, since October 2020 Ferrisburgh joined Maple Broadband. There is presently inadequate high-speed internet service available in Ferrisburgh.

There are currently one telecommunications towers located on the VanDeWeert farm in Ferrisburgh, and there are several farms in town with antennas installed on their silos. These antennas are providing cell phone coverage primarily along the Route 7 corridor. These existing antennas are excellent examples of how infrastructure can be incorporated into the town's existing built environment in a manner that has virtually no visual impact. Most people driving by these silos would not be aware that they are also serving as cell phone towers.

b. Policies

1. Support the local Fire and Rescue Services and ensure that there is adequate road access for emergency responders and emergency vehicles to be able to reach each building.
2. Maintain and promote the Town Community Center for public and private events.
3. Support efforts to improve telecommunications.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Work with Addison County regional Planning and other state and federal agencies on a hazard mitigation plan
2. Work with Regional Planning to assess community needs for services.

6. Transportation

a. Description

Ferrisburgh has always been part of a major transportation corridor primarily centered along Route 7, also known as the "Vermont Western Corridor." The corridor includes; the 176-mile stretch of Route 7 between the Quebec and Massachusetts borders, the parallel

portion of I-89 running from Burlington to Highgate. This was the stage coach road in the nineteenth century.

Roads: Ferrisburgh has 84.2 miles of road, of which Ferrisburgh Maintains 76.42 miles . We have 51 miles of asphalt and 25.42 miles of gravel roads.

Class 1 roads (maintained by VTrans) 7.785 miles;

Class II roads 18.39 miles. Class II Town Highways generally provide access to neighboring municipalities or connect residential and/or commercial activity centers and would have at least 500 AADT. The municipality maintains the road, but has the option to notify VTrans to replace the yellow centerline pavement marking if it is paved. In Ferrisburgh Class II roads include: Basin Harbor Road, Button Bay Road, Greenbush Road, Long Point Road, Monkton Road, Old Hollow Road and a 0.9 mile section of Little Chicago Road (from Route 7 to Hawkins Road).

Class III roads 58.03 miles; Class III Town Highways include all of the other town highways that are negotiable in all seasons. They are fully maintained by the municipality.

Class 4 roads 2.73 miles. Class IV Town Highways are fully maintained by the municipality and have no state aid apportioned for their maintenance. Ferrisburgh's Class IV roads include a few that are minimally travelled (e.g., Burroughs Farm Road, Town Beach Road at Kingsland Bay State Park) and impassible or untraveled highways (not including town trails) that are not maintained year-round.

There are also 6.77 miles of legal trails.

High Crash Locations (HCLs): For every five-year period, the Vermont Agency of Transportation analyzes sections of highways and intersections for their vehicle crash rates on the Federal-aid Highway System (FAS).

Highway Department: The Town of Ferrisburgh has its own Highway Department with a full-time Road Foreman, A Superintendent and

three additional crew. The department is responsible for summer maintenance, winter snow removal and maintenance, and reconstruction of town highway infrastructure. The Town has a maintenance facility and a variety of road maintenance and construction equipment.

U.S. Route 7: Route 7 is the primary north-south arterial highway serving the western side of the State of Vermont. This route stretches from one end of the state to the other. Route 7 is a two-lane highway covering 7.3 miles within the town. Within Ferrisburgh, the surface width of the traveled highway is 40 feet, shoulder to shoulder, with 12 foot lanes and 8 foot shoulders. The road right-of-way, which varies in width, is under the control of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). There are limited passing places and heavy traffic. Speed limits are 50 miles per hour for most of the distance through town, with 40 mile per hour speed zone through the center of town associated with the turn off for the school at Little Chicago Road and through North Ferrisburgh. Traffic data collected indicate that the majority of drivers usually exceed the posted speed limits.

In response to two decades of public concern traffic Lights have been added in the town center at Little Chicago and Middlebrook roads, and in North Ferrisburgh at Old Hollow and Stage Road. The North Ferrisburgh crossroads also has a crosswalk. There is presently a grant funded project to add a crosswalk at the Town Center.

Vermont Route 22A: In addition to Route 7, there is a short section of Route 22A near the Vergennes turnoff in Ferrisburgh. Route 22A is a major truck route connecting to Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. Route 22A is a regional connector that passes through the City of Vergennes and connects to Route 4 in Fair Haven. This is the primary route from this area to connect with Interstate 87 in New York. Route 22A and Route 7 are maintained by the State.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Traffic: There are no sidewalks throughout Ferrisburgh and lack of shoulders is also a concern for pedestrians, bicycles and strollers as the traffic levels increase over time. Currently the Champlain Bikeway has marked routes through Ferrisburgh using Route 7 and a number of the secondary roads (e.g. Greenbush, Mt. Philo, Little Chicago, Hawkins, Sand, Basin Harbor and Button Bay Roads).

Any improvements to roads in Ferrisburgh are required to safer movement of pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian traffic, as directed in VTrans' Complete Streets Law. This law recognizes the significant impacts street design has on the experience of any given place. Complete streets also incorporate vegetation, including street trees, as a way to bring shading, stormwater management and aesthetic value to a street. Ferrisburgh can take advantage of a number of state and regional grant programs that provide street trees.

Vermont's Complete Streets Law went into effect July 1, 2011. The purpose of the Complete Streets Law is to ensure that the needs of all transportation system users are considered in all state and municipally managed transportation projects and project phases, including planning, development, construction, and maintenance, except in the case of projects or project components involving unpaved highways.

The policy applies when new roads are being constructed, and when paved roads are being reconstructed, rehabilitated, or otherwise maintained.

Rail: In the past, the transportation system primarily utilized the lake and inland waterways. During the 1840s rail came to dominate freight movement, and eventually served transit needs beginning with the use of the Vergennes train station in 1849. Today, the emphasis of the transportation system is on the Vermont Rail System (VRS) for freight, as well as the local road network and Route 7, the town's primary highway for truck and automobile traffic.

The rail line which traverses through the town remains in use, not only for freight traffic but also with Amtrak Service to south New York City and north to St Albans. The Ferrisburgh/Vergennes Amtrak Station off Route 22A is also a Bus stop and Transit hub. The Train station is a beautifully renovated historic station which was moved a short distance to its present location. It includes office space upstairs and a waiting room and large commuter parking lot.



Air: Ferrisburgh has a private airport at Basin Harbor.

Water: There are private marinas on Otter Creek and at Basin Harbor in Ferrisburgh.

Public Transport: The Middlebury LINK Express currently offers four trips daily (two in the morning and two in the evening, Monday through Saturday), between Middlebury and Burlington. This bus stops on Route 7 at the Old Hollow Road/Stage Road intersection, and at the park-and-ride off 22A. Addison County Transit Resources offers several trips per day between Vergennes, Bristol and Middlebury, which Ferrisburgh residents may find convenient.

Commuting: Route 7 is the primary commuting route in the area. With few public transportation options, the majority of Ferrisburgh residents depend on their cars to get to work.

The mean travel time to work was reported to be 24.8 minutes. In July 2007, the Vermont Agency of Transportation completed construction of a new 83-vehicle capacity park-and-ride facility at the intersection of Routes 7 and 22A in Ferrisburgh. The Middlebury LINK Express makes a number of programmed stops at this facility. This park and ride facility is heavily used and an excellent addition to the town transportation hub.

b. Policies

1. Maintain a safe network of roads which accommodates vehicular traffic and considers the safety of all users, on foot, cycle or horse.
2. Ensure that the Town follows Vermont's Complete Street Law when upgrading roads, constructing new roads or improving intersections.
3. All public and private streets and walking/cycling trails, including those of any PUD, should connect to the greater network of streets and trails to support better emergency vehicle and public service access, improved bicycle and pedestrian routes, and to reduce redundant travel time for drivers.
4. Maintain an up-to-date inventory of roads, highway structures, bridges, buildings and maintenance equipment to

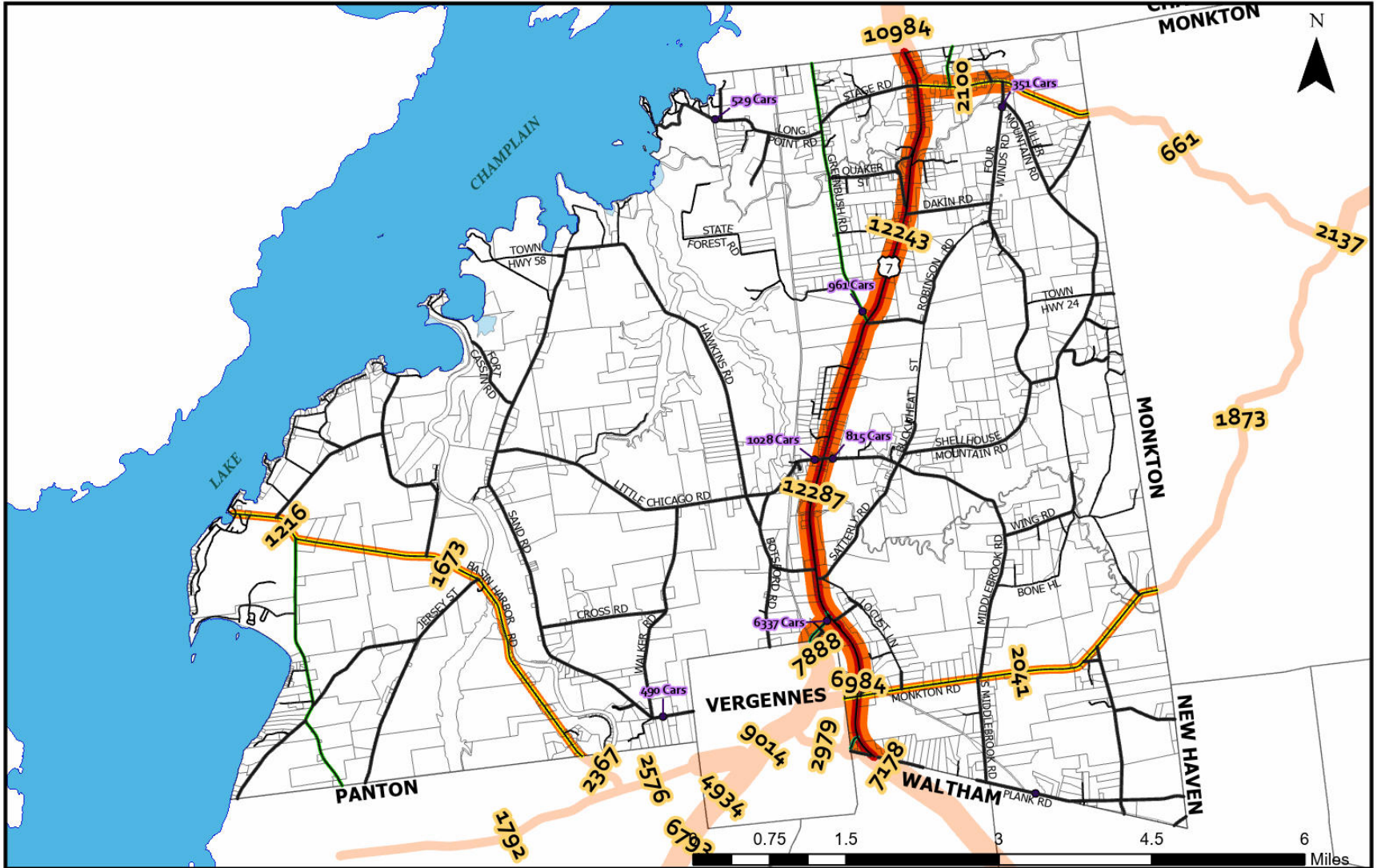
ensure that residents have a properly maintained highway system.

5. Roadside maintenance should follow recommendations of Vermont's Better Back roads Program, seeking to minimize stormwater run-off, erosion and sedimentation to local surface waters.
6. Work with the Agency of Transportation (AOT) to implement changes to Route 7
7. Limit the number of curb cuts when developing new roads or drives.
8. Involve the Ferrisburgh Central School and Recreation and Trails Committees in discussions regarding street upgrades within the Central Village planning district and other areas of town adjacent to school property.
9. Encourage car pools, ride sharing and public transportation opportunities to and from Burlington, Vergennes, Bristol and Middlebury.
10. Use the minimum amount of salt necessary to keep roads clear of snow and ice to reduce ecological damage, and consider use of non-salt de-icing agents where appropriate
11. Ensure that private roads and drives are constructed in a manner that causes minimal erosion, are not overly engineered, and are in keeping with the rural character of the town.
12. When considering the construction of new paved sections of town road, be sure that safety, traffic demand and maintenance considerations dictate that a paved road section is appropriate.
13. Maintain the town's roads and bridges and make needed improvements in a manner that protects Ferrisburgh's special features.
14. Encourage the maintenance of street trees in order to preserve and cultivate this scenic feature of our roadways.

15. Maintain safe sight distances for access to Route 7 and other major intersections.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Ask the Town Road Foreman, working with the VTrans, to clearly identify intersections in town that are becoming potentially hazardous and develop a long-term plan to maintain safety.
2. Develop a Complete Street Planning Document for the entire town.
3. Require that all re-paving projects anywhere in town include Complete Streets analysis and increase safe pedestrian and bike use.
4. Work with farmers, commuters, local residents, pedestrians, bicyclists and other interested parties to develop a plan to share the town's roads that would include specific recommendations to address safety and maintenance issues.
5. Encourage a town-wide plan for bicycle and pedestrian routes (See 2025 Trails and Travel Plan)
6. Keep an inventory of all Class 4 roads and maintain them so that they are available for public access for trails or other public uses.
7. Encourage Selectboard to maintain an ongoing review of speed limits on all town roads.
8. Discuss opportunities with ACTR for public transportation services to extend to Ferrisburgh residents.
9. Consider the weight and size of delivery vehicles, milk trucks and agricultural equipment as new connecting roads are built and older ones are reconstructed.
10. Encourage the Conservation Commission to continue identifying and promoting awareness of key animal crossings in town.



Transportation Volume

Ferrisburgh, VT

Source(s): Functional Class, VTrans (2023); AADT, VTrans Traffic Data Management System (2023). Traffic Count Data, VTrans Traffic Data Management System (2023).



2/2024

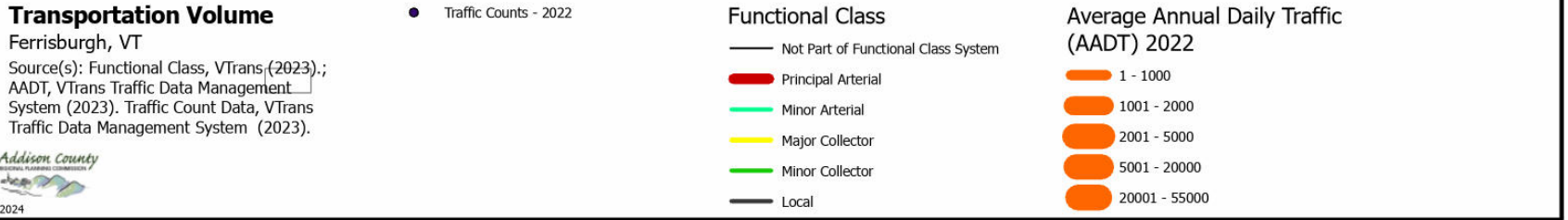
● Traffic Counts - 2022

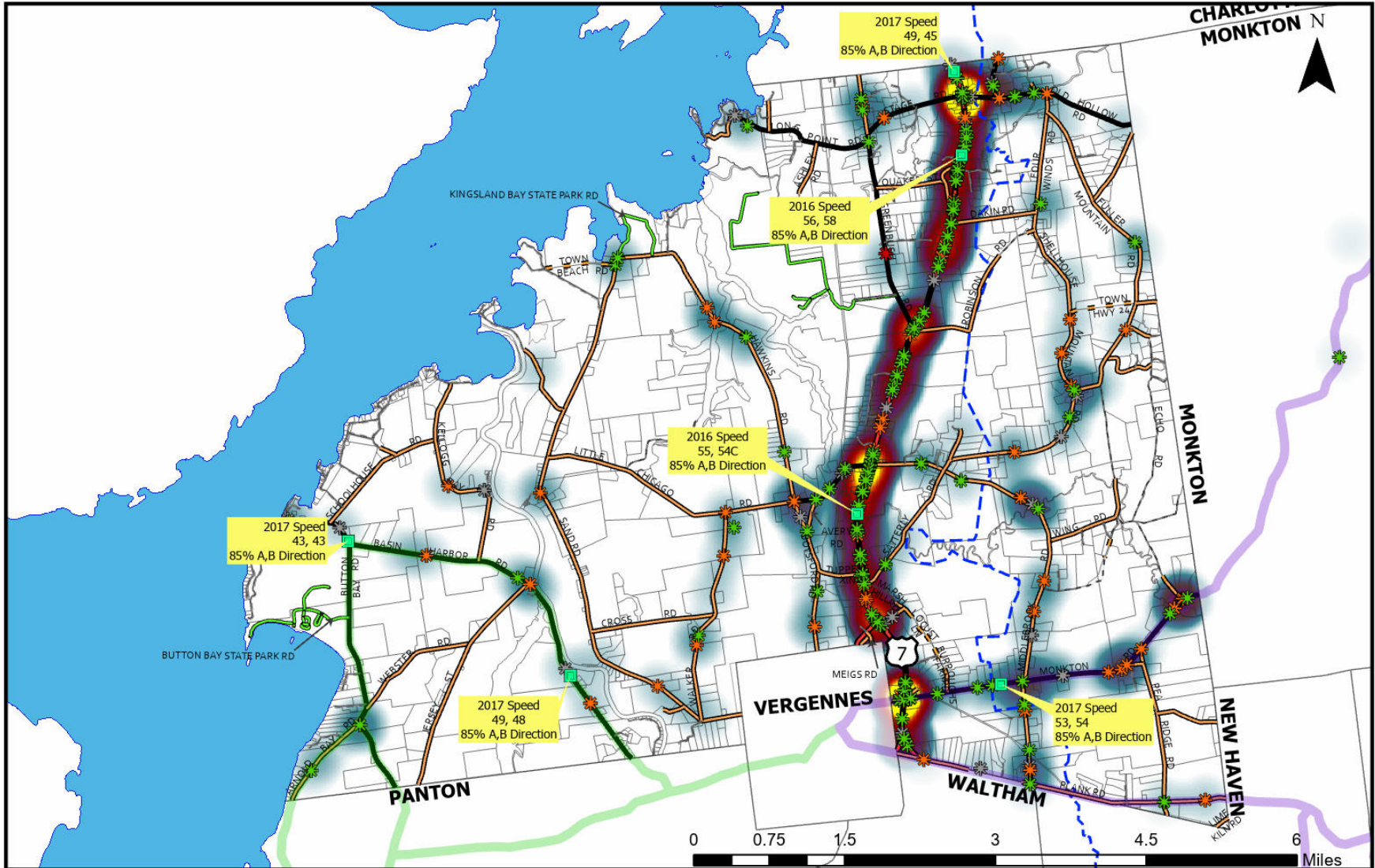
Functional Class

- Not Part of Functional Class System
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) 2022

- 1 - 1000
- 1001 - 2000
- 2001 - 5000
- 5001 - 20000
- 20001 - 55000





Transportation Safety Concerns

Ferrisburgh, VT

Source(s): VTTrans Traffic Data Management System (2023) ; VTTrans Crash Data Public Query Tool (2024). VAST Trail brochure digitized by ACRPC. Lake Champlain Bikeways brochure digitized by ACRPC.



2/2024

Lake Champlain Bikeways

- Rebel's Retreat
- Town & Country

- Speed Data
- - - VAST Trail

Crash locations 2015-2024

Crash Type

- Unknown Crash Type
- Fatal
- Injury
- Property Damage Only

Crash Density 2000-2024



Yellow boxes indicate speed data collection locations, the year collected, and the 85 percentile speeds recorded for each direction of travel.

11. Work with town staff to determine enforcement needs and any needs for speed limit changes, particularly in higher density areas and business areas of town.

7. Recreation and Trails

a. Description

Recreation: Ferrisburgh has many town and state-owned open spaces and recreational facilities. The Shoreland area in particular has been a tourist and fishing attraction for visitors since the late nineteenth century. In recent years town surveys have clearly shown that Ferrisburgh residents strongly support and desire a diversity of recreational opportunities which are easily available to everyone throughout town. Recreation includes outdoor pursuits such as hiking, snow-sports, fishing, boating, birding, and also opportunities to walk and cycle throughout town. Bicycle riding is a healthy activity for Vermonters of all ages, and an important aspect of modern tourism in Vermont. In a 2013 town-wide survey, a high percentage of respondents listed access to safe walking and biking as important to them. In a 2004 survey, a very high percentage of school-age children asked for more recreation trails and bike paths in town. In Surveys taken during 2024 residents still request safer roads and trails for walking and biking.



Recreation Facilities and Natural Areas:

Kingsland Bay State Park

Button Bay State Park

Wildlife Management Areas: Little Otter Creek, Lower Otter Creek, Fort Cassin and Dead Creek.

Lake and River Access Areas: Fort Cassin, Lewis Creek, the Town Beach, South Slang, Button Bay and Kingsland Bay.

Town Forest: Shellhouse Mountain Municipal Forest (121 acres).

Village Green: One acre at the town center.



Town Beach: A picnic and swimming area (one acre) on Lake Champlain. Car-top boaters also frequently use this area.

Ferrisburgh Central School has a playground, playing fields and a gym on approximately 24 acres – but this is not open to the public.

The Basin Harbor Club has a public golf course and a private airstrip.

Vergennes Pool: Residents of Ferrisburgh may also use the Sam Fishman Pool in Vergennes.

VAST snowmobile trails weave across many acres in Ferrisburgh.

Champlain Bikeway routes are marked along many roads in town, especially in West Ferrisburgh.

Paddlers Trail: Ferrisburgh's Lake Champlain shoreline is part of a lake-wide canoe and kayak Paddlers Trail with access to public and private campsites along the shoreline. Two Paddlers Trail campsites are located in Ferrisburgh, one at Kingsland Bay and the other at Button Bay State Park.

The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, located adjacent to the Basin Harbor Resort on Lake Champlain, has become a nationally renowned center for research on Lake Champlain especially as it applies to the early history of North America. Here there is a replica of the Philadelphia, and many artifacts from the Revolutionary War period of American History.



Underwater Historic Preserve: Like all such underwater preserves in navigable waters, it belongs in the public trust, and is under the protection of the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation.

Fishing and Marinas: There is a large boating and fishing recreation business on Lake Champlain with some of the best bass fishing in the nation attracting thousands of visitors each year. One of the many

marinas on Lake Champlain can be found on Basin Harbor Road, and another is located at Basin Harbor Club.

Accommodation: Despite the abundance of recreation opportunities in town, Ferrisburgh offers a very limited selection of overnight accommodations and places to eat, with the exception of the Basin Harbor Resort. In other parts of Vermont, the rise in bed-and-breakfast accommodations, especially in historic houses or farmhouses to supplement farm income, is becoming much more common and in high demand.

Roads: Ferrisburgh has some roads designated as official routes by the Lake Champlain Bikeways, however, many roads are not maintained in a manner that would allow safe bicycle riding. Many scenic roads have no shoulders, including: Basin Harbor, Kellogg Bay, Schoolhouse, Botsford, Vergennes-Monkton, Hawkins, Sand, Old Hollow, Mt. Philo, Shellhouse Mountain, Four Winds, Middlebrook and Little Chicago.

Public Access: All the waters of Lake Champlain are navigable and in the public trust, and the lower sections of Otter, Little Otter and Lewis Creek up to the waterfalls just upstream of Old Hollow Road in North Ferrisburgh are also classified as part of Lake Champlain and open to fishing all year round. Maintaining public access is important to the majority of Ferrisburgh residents according to surveys. There are a number of fishing access points in Ferrisburgh, including Long Point, Greenbush Road, Button Bay, Little Chicago Road, Fort Cassin.

Ferrisburgh Recreation Area: The Recreation Committee has helped establish and maintain a recreation area adjacent to the Ferrisburgh Central School and across from the Town Garage on Little Chicago Road. This parcel of land is the site of a winter skating rink/summer multi-use court.

Trails: The Ferrisburgh Trails Committee, has initiated Kingsland Bay trail improvements, working with the Vermont Forest, Parks and Recreation Department and the Youth Conservation Corps to create a sustainable loop, and close unauthorized trails, thus protecting the

shoreland area. The committee, assisted by ACRPC and a Municipal Planning Grant, has developed a Trails and Travel Master Plan with the following objectives:

- Locate the existing and potential trail corridors and connections in Ferrisburgh, and create a comprehensive trail network plan that meets the needs and preferences of different users.
- Develop and distribute appropriate maps for public trails and for trails on private land with landowner permission.
- Secure funding and support from various sources, such as federal, state and local programs, grants, donations, partnerships and sponsorships, for the development and maintenance of the trail network.
 - Engage and educate the public and stakeholders about the benefits and opportunities of trails, and solicit their input and feedback throughout the planning and implementation process.
 - Design and construct trails that are safe, accessible, attractive, sustainable and compatible with the natural and cultural resources of the area.
- Encourage the maintenance of trails and roads for recreational use and establish methods of maintaining our system of trails through volunteer “trail stewards.” trail work groups.
- Promote and encourage the use of trails for recreation, transportation, fitness and tourism, and provide amenities and services that enhance the user experience, such as signage, maps, restrooms, parking, and bike racks.
- Monitor and evaluate the performance and impact of the trail network, and identify areas for improvement and expansion

The Master Travel MasterPlan prepared by the Ferrisburgh Trails Committee (2025) (available at the Town Office) includes the following **proposed** trails:

1. A Multi-Use Travel Path which will be an accessible path connecting key locations in Ferrisburgh, connecting Little Otter Creek Management

Area and the Rokeby Museum to the Town Center, the Amtrak Station and Vergennes.

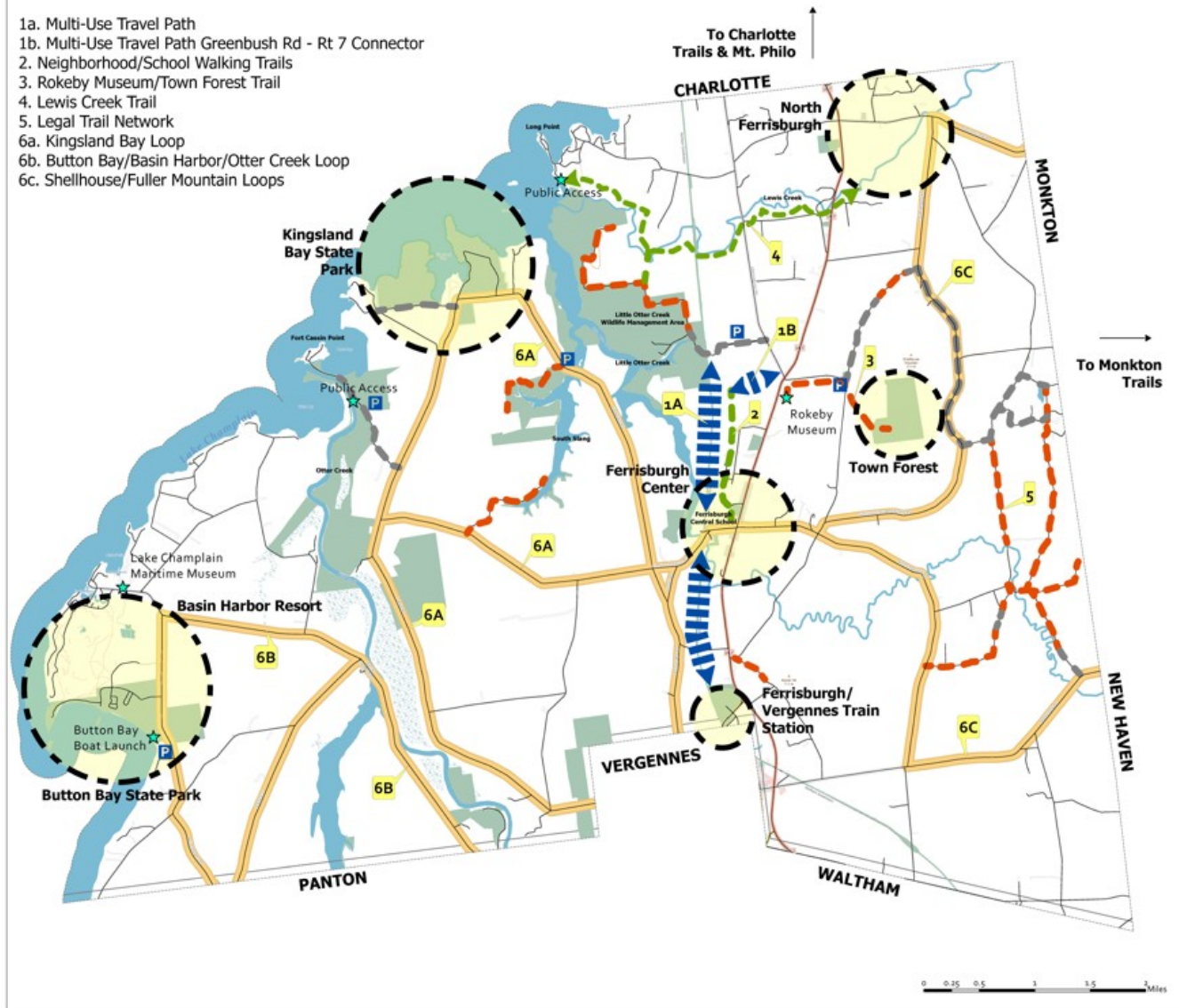
2. Neighborhood/School Walking Trails to provide safe accessible sidewalks and paths throughout the Town Center area for all ages and abilities.
3. A Rokeby Museum/Town Forest Trail to enhance the connection between existing trails at the Rokeby, the Town Forest Trails and adjacent legal trails.
4. A Lewis Creek Trail along the Creek, connecting Long Point/Little Otter Creek Wilderness Area with North Ferrisburgh and connect to Charlotte Trails.
5. Legal Trails along class 3 and 4 roads could provide a walking/biking trail system connecting Monkton, Town Forest, North Ferrisburgh and the Town Center.
6. On-road and gravel Bike Routes: a. Kingsland Bay Loop; b. Button Bay/Basin Harbor/Otter Creek Loop; c. Shellhouse / Fuller Mountain Loops.

b. Policies

1. Maintain the Town Beach and associated facilities.
2. Snowmobile club is required to maintain and clearly mark places where VAST trails cross roads.
3. Encourage lakeshore landowners to support the Lake Champlain Paddlers Trail.
4. Maintain public access to traditional recreation areas and encourage the common rural practice of allowing for hunting, fishing and other low-impact recreational activities on private lands.
5. Encourage all recreationists to respect private property by removing litter, avoiding trails in mud season, using care crossing fences and not discharging firearms near homes.

Potential Routes & Trails

- 1a. Multi-Use Travel Path
- 1b. Multi-Use Travel Path Greenbush Rd - Rt 7 Connector
- 2. Neighborhood/School Walking Trails
- 3. Rokeby Museum/Town Forest Trail
- 4. Lewis Creek Trail
- 5. Legal Trail Network
- 6a. Kingsland Bay Loop
- 6b. Button Bay/Basin Harbor/Otter Creek Loop
- 6c. Shellhouse/Fuller Mountain Loops



Ferrisburgh Trails & Travel Master Plan



- ★ Points of Interest
- P Parking
- ➡ Multi-Use Travel Path
- Existing Class 3 & 4 Roads
- Potential Routes
- Legal Trails and Existing Walking Trails
- Prioritized On-Road Bike Loops
- ☐ Destinations
- State & Town Owned Lands



6. Encourage the development of new pedestrian friendly and appropriately scaled commercial establishments in the Town Center.
7. Capitalize on town’s scenic and recreation and historical resources to draw new customers to local businesses.
8. Encourage the ZBA and Planning Commission to require attractive landscaping when issuing permits, especially on or near Route 7.
9. Encourage the Planning Commission and Zoning Board to consider trails, footpaths and sidewalks where appropriate.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Continue supporting activities of Ferrisburgh’s recreation committee in the pursuit of a year-round recreation facility in the central village planning district.
2. Coordinate with the FCS Recreation Committee and the Safe Routes to School team to address the need for safe walking and cycling pathways to and from schools.
3. Develop a 4 - season trail system that connects to village center through the creation of a master plan and supported through grants.
4. Identify locations for bike paths throughout town and off ‘unfriendly’ roads. To evaluate, think “where could I walk or bike with my children, grandchildren, or elderly parents.”
5. Public transportation: develop a Masterplan for the Town Center which includes a public transportation hub.
6. Promote and Utilize community volunteers to create paths, plant trees and flowers.
7. Make the Town Center attractive, welcoming and useful.
8. Collaborate with Vergennes to create connecting trails.
9. Identify and encourage services of value to the senior population and locate in an accessible, walkable center.
10. Investigate the skate park area and trails between FCS and RR tracks.
11. Encourage a family restaurant in town.

12. Use the Master Travel Plan as a planning resource when reviewing proposed land use development.

8. Utilities and Energy

a. Description

A detailed description of Utilities and Energy, prepared by the Ferrisburgh Climate and Energy Committee, can be found in the Enhanced Energy Plan in Appendix A. This plan supports energy conservation and the development, installation, and utilization of natural and low polluting resources such as small-scale wind turbine systems, solar, bio-mass, and ground and air source heat for residential homes, small businesses, and municipal buildings. Associated policies and recommended actions should be promoted in all development decisions, including Act 250 and Section 248 hearings.

In the face of diminishing resources, Ferrisburgh should curb dependency on fossil fuels. How and where we build our homes, services and civic buildings, and how we interact with the surrounding region has a dramatic impact on this dependency. As a car-dependent town, Ferrisburgh must look for ways to decrease our fossil fuel consumption and promote alternatives to single occupancy commuting.

b. Policies

1. Require commercial buildings to use energy efficient lighting appliances and practices, replacing incandescent lights with compact fluorescent lights (CFL) or light- emitting diode (LED) lighting.
2. Support alternative energy projects which do not impact our identified scenic and natural resources.
3. Require municipal energy efficiency and conservation.
4. Encourage the development of alternative energy sources.
5. Require energy conservation in new development projects.

6. Encourage the use of solar, wind, biomass, hydro and geothermal, carefully weighing the benefits of such installations against their impacts on water, wildlife, scenic, forest, and historic resources.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Update Land Use Regulations to encourage growth toward compact development within village areas with appropriate sidewalks and paths linking amenities and services.
2. Promote car and van pooling from the Ferrisburgh park-and-ride.
3. Encourage building practices that use energy-efficient materials and heating systems, solar orientation, and other alternative or renewable energy systems.
4. Encourage programs such as Efficiency Vermont to analyze residential, commercial and municipal buildings that identify conservation and energy efficiency measures that owners can take to reduce energy use and live more comfortably.
5. Review zoning bylaws to ensure that they encourage and support the installations of renewable energy technologies/Vermont Energy Code in existing and new homes.
6. Encourage the Energy Committee to research funding sources and supportive programs that would enable the town to retrofit/install renewable energy systems for town buildings and the school.

Wastewater Disposal, Groundwater and Drinking Water Supply

1. Wastewater Disposal:

A. Community Wastewater Systems: There are no municipally-owned wastewater collection, treatment and disposal systems in town. The adjacent municipal sewer collection system in Vergennes is not currently available to new connections from properties in Ferrisburgh. There are a small number of privately-owned community wastewater systems in town, which serve specific developments. Their expansions or abilities to add new connections are controlled by the landowners in the developments they serve, and are likely to be limited by the goals of those landowners and/or by the lack of additional treatment or disposal capacities. The potential likelihood of new medium or large-scale wastewater systems in Ferrisburgh appears to be small, due to the high initial and ongoing costs of such systems. Currently, essentially all of Ferrisburgh's residents and businesses rely on soil-based on-site wastewater treatment and disposal systems.

B. On-Site Soil-Based Wastewater Disposal Systems: In 2007, the Vermont legislature conferred universal jurisdiction on the Dept. of Environmental Conservation [VTDEC], Agency of Natural Resources [ANR] over all wastewater disposal systems. VTDEC updated their wastewater disposal regulations, which provide detailed requirements and guidelines for the appropriate siting, design, installation and operation of soil-based wastewater disposal systems that can serve their users while also preventing health hazards, contamination of drinking water wells, and negative impacts on surface waters and groundwater. The current VTDEC Wastewater Systems and Potable Water Supply Rules require a state permit for all subdivisions, new construction, changes in use of property and additions to existing structures that increase the number of bedrooms. Those requirements

include the establishment of isolation zones around wells and wastewater disposal fields. Some of these isolation zones may extend off-property, in which case, notifications are generally required regarding proposed new state permits to the adjacent landowners on whose property the isolation zones extend. In addition to these state regulations, Ferrisburgh's current Land Use Regulations also require that new, expanded, or change-of-use wastewater disposal systems conform with state regulations, and that their owners obtain the necessary state permits before a town zoning permit can be issued. Ferrisburgh residents understand the limitations of the town's soils with respect to conventional on-site sewage disposal systems. Some areas of town have low-permeability soils, shallow depths to water table or bedrock, steep slopes or other characteristics that may be poorly suited for soil-based wastewater disposal systems. In addition to these limitations, some parcels have difficult characteristics such as small size, or proximity to existing drinking water wells or surface water. More than half the town has soils unsuitable for conventional in-ground on-site septic systems, and much of the rest of the town has soils only marginally suitable, and which may require mound-type systems. The areas with the best characteristics for soil-based wastewater disposal often overlap with good agricultural and forestry soils.

Advanced wastewater treatment devices are available and can sometimes ameliorate these difficult characteristics, but they cannot address all limiting characteristics. Therefore, not all parcels have the certain availability of viable wastewater disposal options. The current state and town regulations do not prevent the siting of wastewater disposal systems or water supply sources off-property. In some locations along the lake shoreline, some rivers, and in locations where a septic system has failed the state has approved Alternate wastewater disposal systems.

3. Groundwater and Drinking Water Wells

Groundwater is the water that flows underground in the unconsolidated surficial materials above bedrock such as sand and gravel, or in the fractures in bedrock. "Aquifer" is the term used to for any geologic formation [surficial or bedrock] that can provide useful amounts of water. Ferrisburgh does not appear to have extensive or high-yielding bedrock or sand-and-gravel aquifers. But there is enough groundwater in Ferrisburgh's geologic formations that many town residents have drilled or shallow wells or springs that tap the groundwater. To a widely varying degree, wells in town can be susceptible to contamination or nuisance conditions caused by naturally-occurring constituents, and to human-caused pollutants such as from leaking petroleum or industrial tanks, road salt, stormwater conveyances, on-site septic systems and agricultural chemicals. In addition, and to widely varying degrees depending on their depths and locations, water wells in town have also been susceptible to variations in yield. Future changes in precipitation patterns due to climate change are likely to increase the number of drinking water wells, particularly shallow wells and springs, that experience problems with yield or water quality.

4. Private water Lines

Approximately 40 percent of Ferrisburgh residents (459 households as of February 2025), primarily in the southern and western areas of town, are on public water supplied through 12 private pipelines linked into the Vergennes-Panton Water District (VPWD). The VPWD and some residences and one resort draw water from Lake Champlain and treat the water.

A Map of these lines is located in the Town Offices, and detailed maps of some lines are on file in the Town Offices. These 12 water lines are all private lines owned by the users on that line. The users pay for maintenance of the line, and users on each line have to approve any and all new hook-ons to their line. Each user purchases their water

from the Vergennes Panton Water District (VPWD) which is the public Water Supplier. If someone wants to build a house, expand their home, build a business, or farm, the applicant must provide an engineer design and seek all approvals from both the Private line and receive a specific Allocation of water from the VPWD. Some of the private lines have their own Associations and collect annual dues in order to do line maintenance.

VPWD does not own any distribution lines in Ferrisburgh. VPWD supplies water to 31 miles of distribution lines in the towns of Ferrisburgh, Waltham and Addison. This water is pumped from a deep-water intake located about a quarter of a mile offshore from Arnolds Bay in Lake Champlain. This water is flocculated to remove turbidity, chlorinated and fluoridated before distribution.

The VPWD is a Municipal Corporation formed by vote of Vergennes and Panton in 1996. VPWD is classified by the State as a Consolidated Water District (VSA 24 3342).

VPWD is regulated by the State as a Public Community Water System through the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division, Public Drinking Water Program.

VPWD is responsible for regular monitoring of water quality throughout all its service distribution lines and reporting to the State, and annual reporting to all of its customers (CCR, Consumer Confidence Report). VPWD public records can be found at “Vergennes Panton Water District WSID: 5010”, under “Drinking Water Public Library” <https://anrapp.vermont.gov/dwlibrary/> .

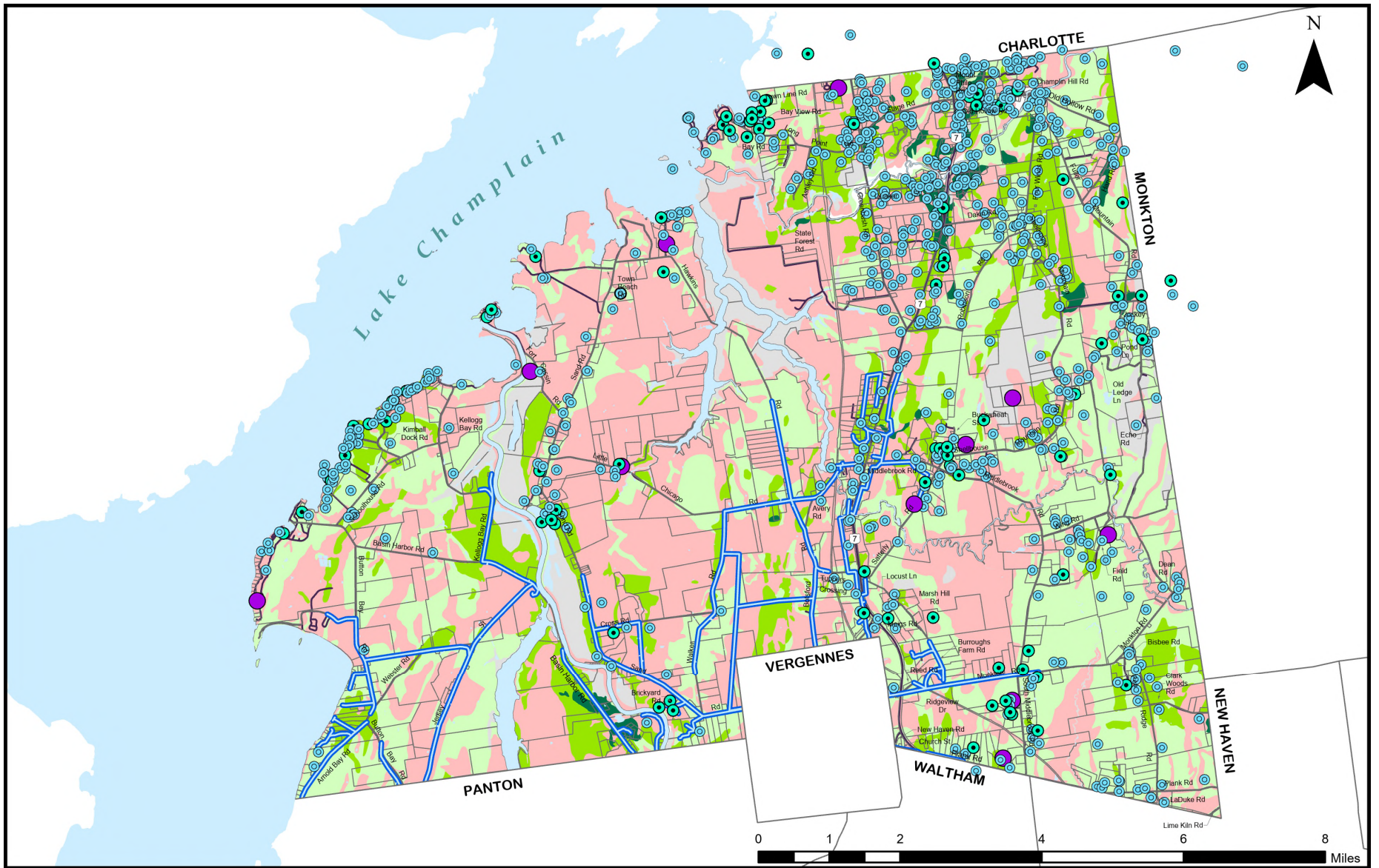
There are a number of factors which limit availability of water supplied through these private lines, including maintenance of old lines, lack of adequate pressure, lack of capacity of pumping, treatment and storage.

5. Policies

1. Subdivision permits should be issued conditioned on receiving required state and federal permits.
2. Ensure that the Letters of Allocation of water, provided by the VPWD, are kept on file in land records for properties on private water lines.
3. Maintain accurate town records of approved septic systems.
4. Encourage upgrading of old or inadequate septic systems, especially near shorelines, rivers and wetlands, and replace failing systems.
5. Development on recharge areas or protection areas for municipal or private water supplies must not diminish the potential quantity or quality of ground and surface water by disrupting the flow, or polluting the water supply as a result of failed septic systems, storage of hazardous waste materials, runoff or other cause.
6. Private well isolation zones must be delineated on final plats.
7. Isolation Zones of water sources and wastewater disposal systems must adhere to State Regulations regarding notification requirements if those zones extend off-property.

6. Recommended Actions

1. Consider applying for a grant to Inventory the condition of septic systems adjacent to rivers and Lake Champlain.
2. Apply for grant from the Vermont State Department of Environmental Conservation to conduct a waste water feasibility study to understand more efficient, community treatment systems for population-dense and future mixed-use areas.
3. Evaluate what role, if any, the town could play in supporting the private waterlines in Ferrisburgh.



Soil Septic Suitability, Drilled Water Well Yield, & Private Water Lines

Ferrisburgh, VT

- Parcels
- Roads
- Private Water Lines Connected to VPWD
- Well Yield (GPM)**
- 0-30
- 31-100
- 100+

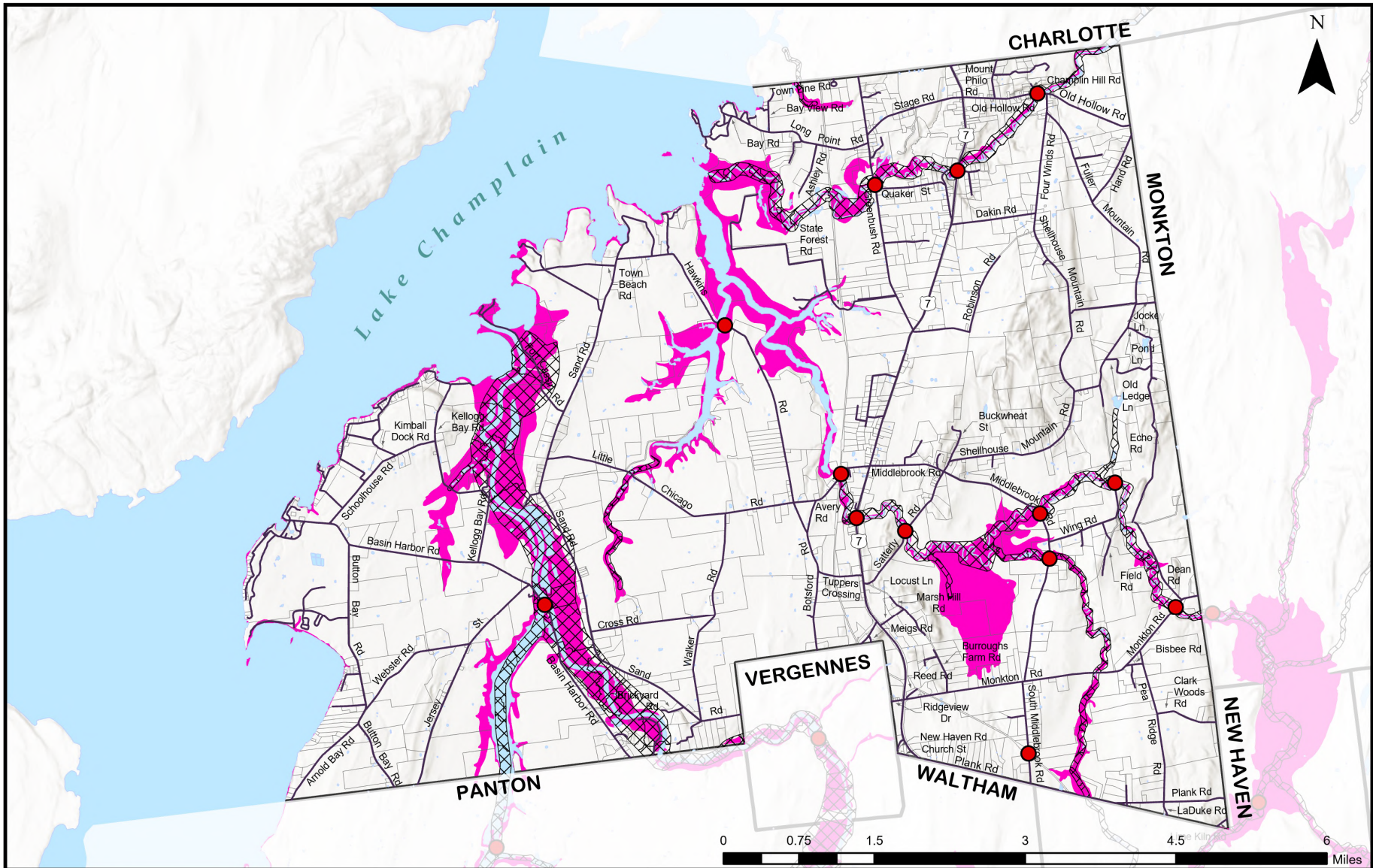
Soil Septic Suitability

- Well Suited
- Moderately Suited
- Marginally Suited
- Potentially Not Suited
- Not Rated

Source(s): Parcels: VCGI Standardized Statewide Parcels, 2024.; Soil Suitability: USDA NRCS (2022)*.; Well Yield: VT ANR (2024)*.; Private water lines connected to Vergennes-Panton Water District: Digitized by ACRPC (2025).

* indicates that these data layers have not been field-verified.





Flood Hazards
Ferrisburgh, VT

- Bridges
- Roads
- River Corridors
- FEMA Floodplain (digitized)
- Parcels

Source(s): River Corridors: VT DEC, 2019.
FEMA floodplains digitized by ACRPC.
Bridges: VTrans, 2025.



FLOOD RESILIENCY

1. Overview

Flood damage has become more common and costly throughout Vermont. Achieving flood readiness through safer placement of new development and public infrastructure, protecting the functions of the watersheds that protect us, adapting our critical infrastructure and preparing for emergencies can avoid and reduce flood damage and costs associated with it.

Following the devastation caused in 2011, July and August 2023, and July 2024, the damaging power of flooding—and the threat it poses to hundreds of Vermont communities—remains fresh in the minds of nearly all Vermonters.

Vermont State statutes 24 VSA Chapter 117 §4302 and §4382 require municipalities to include a Flood Resilience Element in municipal development plans adopted after July 1, 2014. The statute requires towns to identify flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas and strongly encourages towns to avoid development in those areas. If new development is to be considered in such areas, it should not increase the possibility of flooding and fluvial erosion. The statutes also promote the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.

Flooding is the most common natural disaster causing property damage in Vermont. Flooding is a serious threat to public safety, structures and infrastructure, and the natural environment. Flood hazard areas have been mapped along many of Ferrisburgh's streams and the Lake Champlain shoreline. Flood hazard areas in town are currently defined as the area that would be inundated during a 100-year flood (The 100-year flood is the flood elevation that has a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded each year). In Ferrisburgh, many of the extensive floodplains and wetlands identified

on FEMA maps are the result of lake floodwaters backing up into the town's major rivers. FEMA's flood maps are available for reference in the Town Clerk's Office.

2. Floodplains, Flood Hazard Areas, & Fluvial Erosion

Floodplains are the areas adjacent to water bodies that are subject to periodic flooding. As a result, floodplains perform several important functions, primarily relating to erosion and flood control and wildlife habitat. In unmodified floodplains, fluvial erosion is moderated by woody vegetation and landforms that help detain water, debris, ice, and sediment. These natural floodplains reduce water pollution and recharge aquifers and provide downstream water resources, including larger streams, ponds, and lakes. The gradual release of floodwater minimizes erosion, streambank scouring, and downstream flooding. Often floodplains provide excellent farmland because of the rich soil deposits left after the waters depart.

Floodplain areas can be identified for different intervals of risk based on the likelihood of projected volumes of water. These are identified as the Flood Hazard Area on maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

While FEMA maps show the areas impacted when water rises to a specified flood elevation, they do not take into account homes along river banks that are far above the flood depth. Due to the erosive actions of fast moving flood waters, these homes can be at risk when the riverbank washes out from under them. This area of risk is called a river corridor zone.

ANR has maps for every river in Vermont which shows river corridors, so that towns may plan for the safety of their residents. For smaller streams not mapped by ANR, a 50-foot buffer would be an effective river corridor. Adopting zoning which limits development in these areas, similar to floodplain zoning, is encouraged and certain financial

benefits are provided for towns with river corridor zoning in the event of a declared disaster.

3. Flood Resilience Management

The development and implementation of flood emergency preparedness and response planning are critical for mitigating potential flood related risks to public safety, critical infrastructure, historic structures, and municipal investments. The objective of flood resilience management is to enhance a community’s ability to anticipate, avoid, withstand, respond to, and recover from the adverse effects of routine and seasonal as well as exceptional flooding events.

Emergency Relief & Assistance Fund. In the event of a Federally declared disaster, Ferrisburgh can make a claim for funds to assist in post-disaster relief. The Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) provides state funding to match federal public assistance after such disasters.

National Flood Insurance Program Ferrisburgh is enrolled in the National Flood Insurance Program. Any development in flood hazard areas is not only a risk to itself, but has the potential to increase the severity of flooding downstream from its location

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is administered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and provides a source of flood insurance for buildings in communities that choose to participate. Nearly ninety percent of communities in Vermont participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood insurance is available for buildings and their contents anywhere in participating communities. Without access to the National Flood Insurance Program, flood insurance from private sources may be unavailable or prohibitively expensive.

To participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, a community must regulate all new development in high-risk Special Flood Hazard

Steps for Municipalities to Receive Additional Emergency Relief Funds through ERAF

Municipalities normally receive 82.5% with 75% Federal and 7.5% State contributions



Areas to ensure that new development is safe from flood damage. In 1985 the Federal Emergency Management Agency created Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) that are the areas of greatest concern for inundation flooding. These are commonly referred to as the base flood or “100-year flood” area (more accurately meaning, a 1% chance of flooding each year). The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) floodplain management regulations must be enforced in these areas, and the mandatory purchase of flood insurance applies. FEMA, in conjunction with the US Geological Survey, is in the process of updating these FIRMs. The updated version is expected by 2027.

Town Road & Bridge Standards Ferrisburgh has adopted and meets the Vermont Agency of Transportation Town Road and Bridge Standards. This includes the “hydrologically connected” local roads covered by Municipal Roads General (stormwater) Permit standards, as well as town highways.

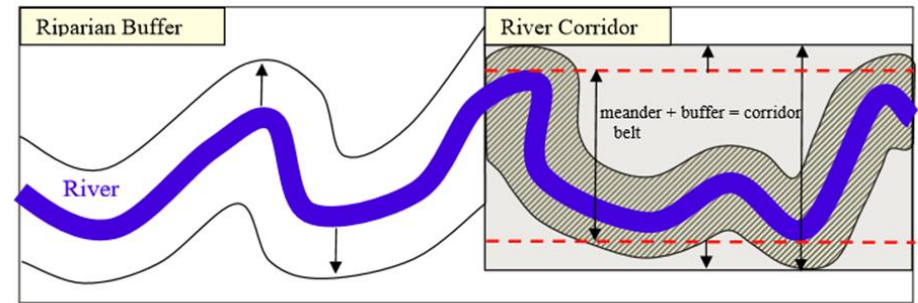
Local Emergency Management Plan The Local Emergency Management Plan (formerly called the Local Emergency Operations Plan) establishes lines of responsibility during a disaster as well as vulnerable populations, shelters, and resources. The LEMP should be updated every year after Town Meeting.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan A Local Hazard Mitigation Plan helps communities identify important local hazard issues, prioritize next steps, and provide access to funding through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program. The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is also one of the mitigation actions needed to qualify for numerous sources of additional post-disaster funding through FEMA and the state of Vermont.

Ferrisburgh has an approved Single Jurisdiction, All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, adopted 9/1/2017 and is presently working on updating this Plan.

4. River Corridor Protection Regulations & Special Flood Hazard Areas

River Corridors are the area that a stream or river needs to maintain fluvial geomorphic equilibrium, that is, the space in which streams and rivers will move. River Corridors include the width of the meander belt of a river and an additional 50' buffer to allow for a stable bank. The Vermont Rivers Program has developed the Statewide River Corridor, using map-based data on watershed catchments, stream gradient, reference channel width, meander belt widths, valley walls, and major transportation features, to identify corridors of all rivers and streams with watersheds over two square miles across the state. For small streams, with watersheds less than two square miles, the state has set a default width measured on the ground as fifty (50) feet from the top of the stream bank as the corridor. Communities may conduct their own geomorphic assessment, a field-based study of the physical condition of local rivers and major tributary streams, to determine River Corridors more accurately.



Comparing a buffer setback to a river corridor. Adapted from Ohio DNR, Rainwater and Land Development Manual, 2006 Ed., Ch 2. Post Construction Stormwater Management Practices, p. 21.

River Corridor Maps do not indicate any required action on the part of municipalities. They are developed to facilitate ANR's responsibilities in Act 250 to protect public safety from fluvial erosion hazards and to regulate activities exempt from municipal regulation under the Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rules.

5. Stormwater

While flooding and erosion are not daily challenges, managing stormwater is. Planning for the effective absorption of stormwater at a regional, town and residential level is crucial to the overall health of natural resources and infrastructure, and can greatly influence how well a town is prepared for significant rain/snow fall. Conventional piping of stormwater to an off-site stream, river or lake increases speed and volume of the stormwater, speeds bank erosion and dumps sediment and toxins into surface waters. This plan supports both non-regulatory and regulatory tools to encourage better on-site stormwater management. Reducing impervious surfaces, minimizing vegetation removal, and collecting rain water for gardens are ways residents can manage stormwater. At a town and regional level, Ferrisburgh must continue to recognize the importance of our forests and wetlands for stormwater filtration and flood mitigation. Ferrisburgh intends to guide development away from these areas, encourage best management agricultural practices, plant trees and

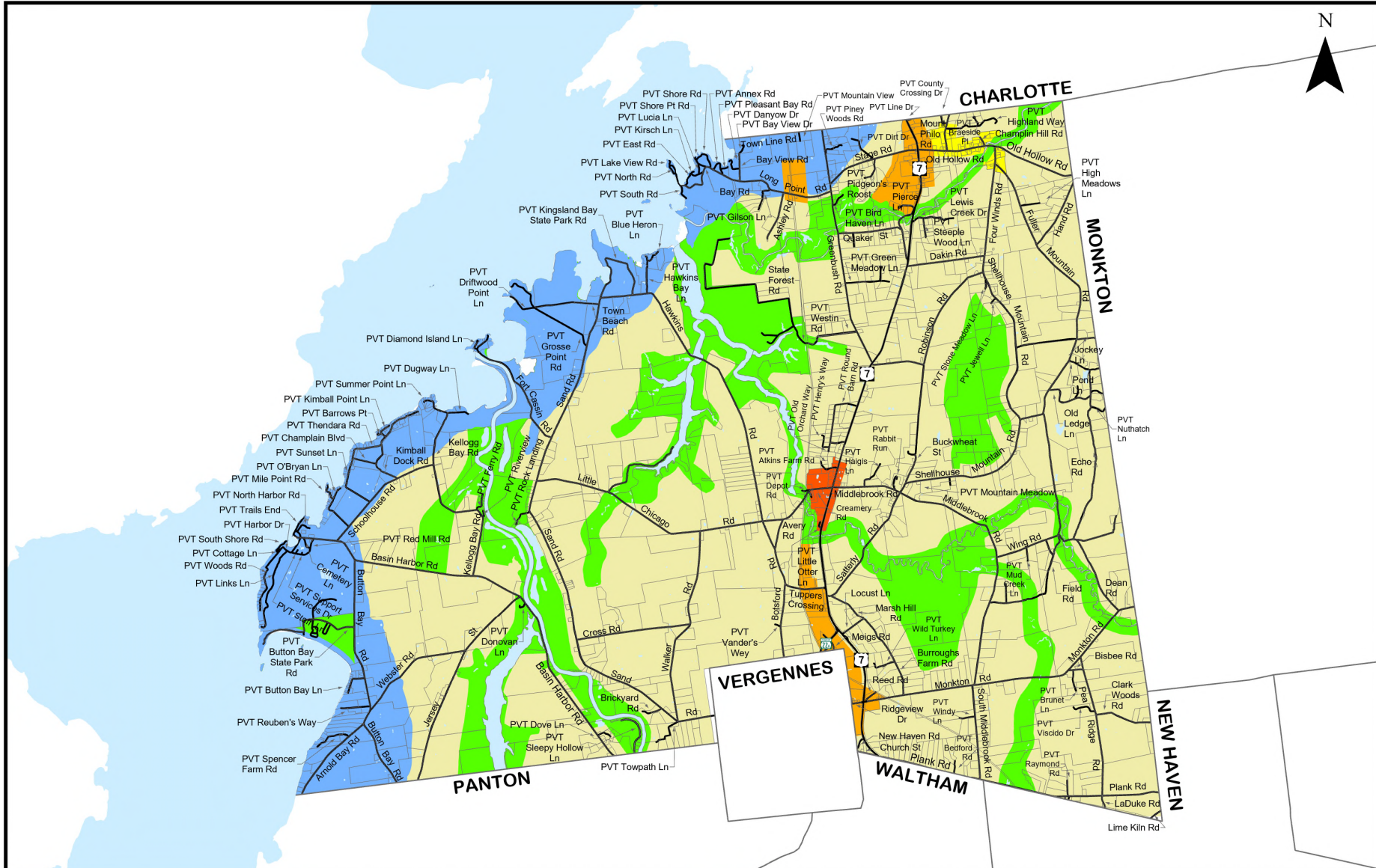
minimize impervious surfaces. Vermont's Better Back Roads Manual provides guidance for the best management of runoff from roads.

6. Policies

1. Continue Ferrisburgh's participation in and compliance with, the National Flood Insurance Program.
2. Stormwater runoff from developed lands, parking areas, roads and driveways must not negatively impact ground and surface waters.
3. Subdivisions subject to state stormwater regulations should provide an adequate stormwater drainage plan for the entire subdivision parcel.
7. Use the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources fluvial erosion maps or a 50-foot buffer, to guide development near stream banks.
8. Avoid any new construction within river corridor zones to mitigate damages caused when stream banks erode.
9. Set back all development along the Lake Champlain shore as specified in the Shoreland Protection Act.
10. Encourage further conservation of lands adjacent to surface waters and those which serve as flood attenuation resources such as floodplain, and follow the Vermont Better Back Roads program.
11. Recognize that bank stabilization is critical to preserve lakeshore character and reduce sedimentation and runoff carrying nutrients like phosphorus and pollutants into the lake; require development setbacks to prevent increased bank erosion and pollution; and use site plan review for lakeshore district development proposals.
12. Encourage the participation by Ferrisburgh's landowners in programs sponsored by the Natural Resource Conservation Service to implement soil conservation and ecologically sound farm management practices.

7. Recommended Actions

1. Adopt a "no build" policy in identified river corridors, and in flood hazard areas, currently defined as areas that would be inundated during a 100-year flood.
2. Explore inclusion in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS).
3. Encourage residents to obtain information regarding low-impact- development (LID) strategies for managing stormwater at the residential level.
4. Update zoning regulations to meet and/or exceed specifications of the Shoreland Protection Act in order to maintain local jurisdiction over Ferrisburgh's unique shoreline resources.
5. Encourage Addison County River Watch Collaborative and other organizations to maintain an inventory of stream sampling data and needs for riparian buffers.



Planning Areas
Ferrisburgh, VT

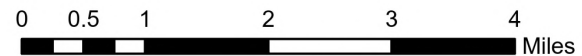
Planning Area

- Conservation
- Lake Champlain
- Mixed Use

North Ferrisburgh Historic Village

Rural

Town Center



LAND USE PLANNING AREAS

1. Overview

A land use plan identifies areas within a town or region that share similar characteristics such as farmland, forest, wildlife habitats, scenic values, and development patterns. The Land Use Plan helps provide a framework of facts, goals, and policies that support and justify the Land Use Regulations and the Zoning Districts, as well as playing an important role in Act 250 projects and Section 248 utility projects.

The over-arching goals of this land use plan are to maintain Ferrisburgh's unique, rural character much loved by residents and visitors; agricultural lands and economy, and special natural features; to preserve its views; to support local businesses and encourage home-based businesses; to encourage new housing of both single family homes and multi-family units with walkable streets wherever feasible; encourage tourism; and to guide growth that provides residents with a safe and enjoyable place to live, work and play.

To achieve these sometimes competing goals the plan describes and maps out prime and statewide agricultural lands, much of which have already been conserved, and also identified sensitive and important resource areas such as: wetlands, flood hazard areas, steep slopes, deer wintering yards, areas with shallow soil, rare, threatened or endangered species and outdoor recreation areas.

To further sustain our natural, scenic and agricultural resources, development policies must encourage flexible siting of buildings, support growth concentration in a walkable Town Center, support the re-use and restoration of historic buildings, and require design standards for those areas most vulnerable to growth pressure, such as the Route 7 corridor.

The planning areas identified in this plan are reflective of Ferrisburgh's past land use and current zoning districts, with recommendations for

some zoning revisions, based in part on the recent Act 181, plus public comment and a lack of either a municipal sewer system or, a town public water system. Recommendations include revisions to the Route 7 mixed use areas and the industrial areas with a reduction in the number of planning areas from 8 to 6.

2. How to Use the Land Use Plan

This land use plan describes Ferrisburgh's six planning areas, their associated zoning (found in the Ferrisburgh Zoning Bylaws) and corresponding Land Use Policy. Each numbered policy set forth for each planning area, below, is intended to be strictly adhered to in all regulatory actions and decisions involving development, including but not limited to decisions rendered under Ferrisburgh's Land Use Regulations, and Section 248 and Act 250 review.

Each planning area has "recommended actions." These actions are listed to guide the Ferrisburgh planning commission, legislative body and any associated committees in planning strategies and decisions now and into the future. Priority tasks can be found in the Implementation section of this plan.

3 RURAL LAND USE AREA

a. Description

Associated zoning districts: Rural Residential (RR-2) and Rural Agricultural (RA-5)

This planning area is found throughout Ferrisburgh

The Rural Area covers the majority of land in Ferrisburgh. It is characterized by farms and farmland, woodlands, wetlands, low density residential development and several small-scale businesses and home occupations. This area has soils best suited for agricultural and forestry uses, including areas with prime agricultural soils, soils of statewide significance and soils of local significance. A significant

percentage of these lands have been conserved, ensuring that they can remain in productive use in perpetuity.

Historically, residential properties in this planning area have been sited along rural roads. In the past 30 years or more, homes have been sited further from the road, with access via long driveways cutting through wooded land or open fields.

b. Land Use Policies

1. Support agricultural use of this are, including value added businesses and those businesses and home occupations which service or support agriculture.
2. Low-density residential uses and other compatible uses such as open space, conservation, low-intensity outdoor recreation, forestry and farming are encouraged. Other uses, such as small-scale commercial activities which support agriculture, should be permitted as conditional uses only.
3. Utilize PUDs so as to cluster residential development whenever possible, and maximize usable blocks of undeveloped land when residential development is sought in this planning area.
4. Home-based businesses, home occupations and telecommuting should be supported in this planning area so long as they fit with the goals and policies of this plan.
5. Recognize the economic strains on area farmers, and support the current- use program and other programs to keep property in its undeveloped state.
6. All land identified by the state as prime agricultural, soils of statewide or local significance will not receive densities above one unit per five acres (or currently five-acre minimum lot size).
7. Siting of new residential properties should place ample consideration on maximizing open space, minimizing new infrastructure and utilities, maintaining our working landscapes and keeping contiguous natural areas in-tact.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Consider revising regulations to allow development based on density instead of minimum lot size to allow flexibility of building placement within the context of the immediate, surrounding landscape.
2. Encourage shared driveways and utilities to minimize impacts to surrounding landscape.

4. LAKE CHAMPLAIN PLANNING AREA

a. Description

Associated zoning districts: Shoreland District (SD-2)

This planning area includes the lands adjacent to the shores of Lake Champlain, running the entire length of Ferrisburgh's most westerly boundary.

This area includes forested and open land, recreational and tourism related businesses, year-round homes and many seasonal cottages. It includes areas of Button Bay State Park, Kingsland Bay State Park, the Basin Harbor Club, commercial marinas, and Ferrisburgh's public beach, all of which are directly adjacent to the shores of Lake Champlain. Many of the properties in this planning area include sweeping views of the Lake, the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains and the Adirondacks themselves. Much of the past development within the shoreland area has been seasonal, summer homes built relatively close together. Many of the roads and driveways are narrow and winding and do not meet typical modern road standards. More recent development has been primarily intensive renovation of older, seasonal housing stock with some very high value new construction.

The Basin Harbor area is a particularly unique, historic area of Ferrisburgh and the Champlain Valley. An inn and ferry were first established here in 1790 and the hotel continues to operate today as part of the Basin Harbor. Basin Harbor is one of Ferrisburgh's biggest

businesses, having a year-round staff of 30 and a seasonal staff of 300. It has operated since 1886.

Natural resources associated with this planning area have been relatively well protected through the currently designated Shoreland zoning district and associated bylaws, and the State Shoreland Protection Act of 2017. This Act establishes a state regulation for guiding development within 150 feet of the mean water level.



b. Policies

1. This planning area is for both seasonal and year-round homes and provides both private and public recreational opportunities associated with Lake Champlain.
2. All development in this area will be reviewed based on detailed standards and clear conditions that address issues such as riparian setbacks, soil erosion, possibility of wastewater pollution to surface water or surrounding wetlands, vegetation and wildlife corridors, scenic vistas and view corridors.
3. Development densities should be used for Planned Unit Developments.
4. Ensure the upkeep of all public access points, beaches and trails.

5. Home occupations, telecommuting and appropriate home-based- businesses meeting the goals and policies of this planning area are supported.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Create specific design and siting standards for this area within Ferrisburgh's zoning regulations, that at a minimum, meet any requirements set by the state associated with shoreland protection.
2. Include specific vegetated buffer requirements for all shoreline properties within Ferrisburgh's shoreline zoning regulations.
3. Work with ANR and ACRPC to determine river corridor areas and flood mitigation measures.
4. Work with the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission and other local organizations on outreach efforts to residents regarding water quality and habitat protection and make the information available on Ferrisburgh's website and at the town office.
5. Review the concept of private driveway standards that could retain the close-knit neighborhood feeling of seasonal, lake-side areas while increasing the accessibility of emergency services.
6. Work with shoreland private land owners and the state to improve and expand public access to Lake Champlain.

5. CONSERVATION AREA

a. Description

Associated zoning districts: Conservation (CON-25)

The conservation planning area comprises Ferrisburgh's river corridors, wetlands, contiguous forested areas and steep slopes, including Shellhouse Mountain. These critical and sensitive ecological features are found throughout Ferrisburgh.

Ferrisburgh is renowned for its vast acres of wetlands, essential wildlife habitat, and natural areas with rare plant and animal species. Surface waters include tributaries directly associated with Lake Champlain, Dead Creek, Lewis Creek, Otter Creek, and Little Otter Creek. These forested river corridors provide important wildlife travel corridors, essential flood mitigation and water quality protection. There are only a few clusters of pre-existing development located directly on the major streams, most of which is in agricultural use or is part of a state-owned Wildlife Management Area. These natural areas are also used extensively for outdoor recreational purposes such as fishing, hunting boating, hiking, cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing, and bird watching, to name a few.

b. Policies

1. Due to the importance of these areas for wildlife habitat, natural flood and erosion mitigation and/or scenic qualities and recreation, hunting and fishing best uses for land in these areas are limited to agriculture, forestry, non-motorized, outdoor recreation such as walking or hiking trails, or wildlife refuge.
2. Commercial use in the conservation district is limited, through conditional use permit, to marinas and outdoor recreation facilities.
3. Camps and single-family homes are conditional-use only, and must be reviewed to determine potential impact on critical ecological habitats, soils, sewage, water, access, frontage and scenic considerations.
4. A 50-foot vegetated buffer with a diversity of canopy heights must be maintained directly adjacent to banks of rivers and streams unless an alternative buffer that is approved by federal or state agricultural agency or certified consultant is designed and implemented.

5. All agricultural and forestry uses must adhere to Best Management Practices in order to restrict undue impact on wildlife habitat and water quality.
6. Use the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources fluvial erosion maps and FEMA identified floodplain areas, to guide development near stream banks. Avoid any new construction within river corridor zones to mitigate damages caused when stream banks erode.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Work with ACRPC to determine river corridor areas and needed flood mitigation measures needed for Ferrisburgh.
2. The Conservation Commission should identify all contiguous woodlands and other prominent natural features, such as ridges and steep slopes, currently within the rural planning area and adjacent to bordering towns to determine what additional lands should be considered for the conservation planning area and conservation zoning district.
3. Continue to work with the state and local organizations, including, ACRPC, the Addison County River Watch Collaborative, Lewis Creek Association, and the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission, to determine best management of these resources.
4. Ensure that there are no new structures within the designated FEMA floodplain or FEH areas, and that improvements and/or repair of existing structures get a conditional use permit and comply with applicable federal and state regulations.

6. NORTH FERRISBURGH VILLAGE AREA

a. Description

Associated zoning districts: North Ferrisburgh Village District (RR-2)

The North Ferrisburgh Village Area includes the area from property lines east of Route 7, along both sides of Old Hollow Road, north up Mount Philo Road to the boundary with Charlotte, east along Old

Hollow Road, including Champlin Hill, over the Lewis Creek Bridge, a short way up the hill on Old Hollow Road to include the historic houses located there, and south a short distance to include the historic houses and old schoolhouse along Four Winds Road, including the stretch of Old Hollow Road and the north end of Four Winds Road. This area is a compact historic village within Ferrisburgh.

This area is listed by the state as an official Historic District. Primarily residential, this planning area houses several businesses, all of which reside in historic, re-purposed buildings. Local roads in this area are relatively narrow with little to no shoulder. A compact residential settlement pattern is evident today with both historic and newer homes, many of which sit close to the road edge. This area is home to the North Ferrisburgh Methodist Church, the North Ferrisburgh Cemetery, and several home-based businesses. Due to its historic nature, there is a diversity of lot sizes, a number of which are less than 1 acre. Lewis Creek runs through this planning area. Currently, most residential sections of this planning area are zoned at a 2-acre minimum, with many non-conforming lots that are smaller than this.

This area has seen a recent increase in the number of new homes, and home renovations, and an increase in the number of young families and many more children. It is seen as a desirable, family-friendly neighborhood, with an active Village Association. This wonderful revitalization of the village has highlighted the urgent need for footpaths or sidewalks so that all pedestrians can safely walk through the Village. Traffic speeds have been addressed by the Town in recent years, but lowering speed limit to 30 mph is far from adequate for safety in the densely populated Village. The recent addition of radar signs should help somewhat. Many homes have inadequate parking space on their own land. A Master Plan for a walkable Village is clearly needed.

Another recent trend has been several flash flood events, especially in July 2023 and July 2024. This has been especially problematic in the central part of this Village area, along Old Hollow Road, between the

Piano Gallery (old Shortsleeves store) and just east of the Bridge over Lewis Creek. There was considerable property damage and danger to life. There are clearly several factors contributing to the flash flooding: Heavy rainfall in a very short period of time; high levels of run off flowing from the east/west hill which runs parallel to Old Hollow on the Charlotte side; increased impermeable surfaces in Ferrisburgh and Charlotte on the North side of the ridge; An old culvert which was not designed to carry such enormous volumes of water and debris; densely packed buildings and nowhere for the water to go until it gets further towards the Creek where the land suddenly flattens out into a fast expanding wetland. In addition, because Lewis Creek makes a sharp almost 90 degree turn right at the bridge, the wall along the west side of the river was reinforced with concrete back in the 1930's and this clearly poses a flood hazard to the whole street in a future flash flood. One house has been bought out by FEMA owing to partial collapse into the Creek. A Master Plan for Flood Prevention and Flood Resilience is clearly needed.

External factors such as fishermen and women, and people who wish to walk along Lewis Creek create challenges for the neighborhood in terms of parking, lack of any public parking and lack of public access to the Creek. The state Fish and Wildlife stocks the Creek at the Bridge in the Hollow which attracts fishermen from all over the state. The Masterplan for the Village should include how best to handle fishermen/women and people who wish to walk along the river on private property.

b. Policies

1. All new road construction and upgrades to town streets, roads and highways should adhere to the State's Complete Street Law and safely accommodate all transportation system users, regardless of age, ability, or what mode of transportation they prefer, not limited to vehicular only (walking, cycling, public transportation, equestrian, etc.).

2. All renovations or new building must be reviewed for flood resilience.
3. All commercial uses should be conditional, make use of pre-existing buildings or building footprints, be reviewed to ensure that the septic system on site meets state standards, and that the buildings conform to a set of design standards and fit with the goals of this plan of supporting walkable, mixed-use, village.

c. Recommended Actions

1. A high priority task should be to develop a Masterplan for the Village which includes both Flood Resilience planning and management, creates a walkable village and provides public parking and access to the Creek.
2. Incorporate FEH and Floodplain regulations along the Lewis Creek hazard areas.
3. Ensure that all changes in use of buildings include verification that the septic system meets state requirements.

7. FERRISBURGH TOWN CENTER

a. Description

Associated zoning districts: Ferrisburgh Town Center (FTC-1)

Ferrisburgh’s Central District Planning Area is located in the roughly geographical center of town surrounding the intersection of Little Chicago Road and Middlebrook Road with Route 7. It extends to the north property line just north of Atkins Farm Road, and includes a designated Village Area.



This Planning Area along Route 7 is unique in that it houses several public and community facilities in close proximity, a number of which are historically recognized: The Town Green on Route 7; Town Offices and Community Center; The Union Meeting Hall; the Old Methodist Church which has recently been converted into a grocery store; one of the two Ferrisburgh post offices; and one of the original School Houses. This area of town also includes town properties for road equipment and storage; and the Ferrisburgh Central School. In addition, there is a subdivision, and residential lots mixed in with a range of highway oriented commercial uses. While there are a number of people-oriented services and amenities in this area, including the elementary school, there is currently no opportunity to safely walk or cycle in this area. While lots vary in size and setbacks, buildings along Route 7 sit relatively close to the road.

This area is surrounded by open space and farmland, some of which is conserved. Under current zoning, there is a limited amount of land available for development in this area, and the soils are suitable for on site septic. There is no public sewer system.

The Town Center has a private water line running through the area, this is called the Ferrisburgh Fire District Number 1 which is linked to the Vergennes Panton Water District (VPWD). The capacity of this line is not known.

The ever increasing speed and volume of traffic on Route 7 is also a challenge for development in this area. A Master Plan for the Town Center would be of great benefit to future planning. Public input at community meetings indicates that town residents would prefer the development in this area to be all west of Route 7 in order to minimize the dangers posed by Route 7 traffic. A traffic light at the intersection of Little Chicago and Middlebrook Road has helped, but sidewalks and crosswalks are urgently needed.

b. Policies

1. All commercial and municipal uses shall conform to a set of design standards and fit with the goals of this plan of supporting mixed-use business areas within walkable distances of each other.
2. Priority should be given to the re-use of existing historic buildings or building footprints. Setback waivers apply for the re-use/re-purposing of existing historic buildings.
3. All new road construction and upgrades to town streets, roads and highways should adhere to the state's Complete Street Law and safely accommodate all transportation system users, regardless of age, ability, or what mode of transportation they prefer, not limited to vehicular only (walking, cycling, public transportation, equestrian, etc.).
4. Development must adhere to the criteria within the natural resource section of this plan, zoning regulations and state regulations to protect and conserve Ferrisburgh's natural and scenic resources.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Incorporate design standards into zoning regulations for Route 7 businesses, which restricts scale and massing, and encourages safe access for vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
2. Make safety improvements at the intersection of Little Chicago Road and Route 7, especially for the traffic related to the school.
3. Work with VTRANS and the Ferrisburgh Selectboard to reduce traffic speeds on Route 7, within this defined area.
4. Review the Report and conceptual Masterplan of the Town Center (2025) and determine which zoning and land use regulations should be updated to allow accommodation of higher development densities.

8. MIXED USE AREA

a. Description

Associated zoning districts: Highway Mixed Use (HMU-2) and Industrial (IND2).

This land use planning area comprises 4 areas: one in North Ferrisburgh, and one in south Ferrisburgh, both presently zoned Highway Mixed Use and on or close to Route 7; plus one area presently zoned Industrial which is connected to the southern Highway Mixed Use area on Route 7; and the fourth area is a small outlier industrial area on Long Point Road adjacent the Rail line.

Currently, these areas include gas stations, several businesses including used car dealerships, two landscaping companies, the North Ferrisburgh post office, auto repair, warehousing, an Electric Substation, Aubuchon Hardware, auto-repair business, the Amtrak Station, and a new grain business, Conservation land open space, a Dollar General, a solar array, and a tavern, all interspersed with residential properties.

Businesses are not densely placed and currently cater to vehicular traffic only. There are numerous driveway cuts, including large driveway cuts for businesses, creating unpredictable entering and exiting movements from traffic on and off Route 7. There is a variety of building styles and ages from Victorian residential to prefabricated commercial buildings, ranging in age from mid nineteenth century to new construction.

Generally speaking this planning area is not attractive in terms of landscaping or design and town residents at recent community meetings expressed concern over the high speed of traffic, and unsightly nature of the area close to Route 7.

The southern part of the Mixed Use area constitutes a natural extension of the existing development within the city of Vergennes.

The southern area adjacent to Vergennes could be developed as part of a joint Master Plan with part of Vergennes with a focus on a multi-nodal transportation hub around the Amtrak station. This could allow for increased density of housing to meet present and future demand, within walking distance of downtown Vergennes.

b. Policies

1. In order to deter sprawl development along Route 7, future growth will be encouraged that connects directly to existing development in a way that facilitates shared resources and utilities, provides opportunities for a diversity of multi-modal connections to street networks other than Route 7, maintains unique natural and cultural features, and which fits with the economic development goals of the Town.
2. All commercial uses shall conform to a set of design standards and fit with the goals of this plan of supporting walkable, mixed-use, business areas that preserve large, contiguous blocks of surrounding open space and woodlands, and maintain scenic views from Route 7.

3. All new road construction and upgrades to town streets, roads and highways should adhere to the State's Complete Street Law and safely accommodate all transportation system users, regardless of age, ability, or what mode of transportation they prefer, not limited to vehicular only (walking, cycling, public transportation, equestrian, etc.).
4. Priority should be given to the re-use existing historic building or building footprint.
5. Setback waivers will be supported for the re-use/re-purposing of existing historic buildings.
6. Encourage any new services, amenities and/or street designs to safely connect vehicular and pedestrian traffic with those existing along Monkton Road in Vergennes, with no new roads and/or new driveways connecting directly onto Route 7.

c. Recommended Actions

1. Incorporate design standards into zoning regulations for Route 7 business areas and encourage safe access for vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
2. Allow development based on density instead of minimum lot size such as allowing more than one use per acre.
3. Consider creating a limited access policy to encourage limited driveway cuts and shared driveways to increase safety in this area.
4. Continue discussions with the City of Vergennes to better understand common land use goals and policies of this business area and abutting properties.
5. Require landscaping plans for any new businesses and any changes of use or new construction.
6. Review the Report and conceptual Masterplan of the area around the Amtrak Station (2025) and determine what zoning and other land use regulations should be updated to allow for higher housing densities.

COMPATIBILITY WITH SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

A. Addison County Regional Plan

The Town of Ferrisburgh is located in Addison County. By state statute, town plans must be compatible with the Regional Plan and both must conform with the state's planning goals. The Ferrisburgh Town Plan contains goals and objectives similar to the Addison County Regional Plan. The Regional Plan adopts the land use plans of its member municipalities as its own, so there can be no conflict between local and regional land use plans. Therefore, the Ferrisburgh Plan is compatible with the Addison County Regional Planning Commission's Regional Plan, which was last adopted in July 2018.

B. Panton

Panton's current Town Plan was adopted in 2019. Panton's planned land uses and zoning districts along the town line are compatible with those of Ferrisburgh. Both towns have recognized the areas around the Otter and Dead Creeks as environmentally sensitive areas requiring special protection. Most of the [remaining lands along the border are part of low-density agricultural and rural residential areas](#).

C. Vergennes

Vergennes' current plan was adopted in 2020. The city's planned land uses and zoning districts along the border are compatible with those in Ferrisburgh. The Ferrisburgh plan includes a mixed use area that wraps around the eastern and northern borders of the city along Route 7. The rest of Ferrisburgh's land is part of agricultural and rural residential planning areas, which are compatible with Vergennes' agriculture and conservation district on its north and western borders.

5 Waltham

Waltham's current plan was adopted in 2024. Most of the land along the town line in Ferrisburgh is classified as rural residential. Waltham's

land use plan puts the area adjacent to Ferrisburgh in its north-central planning area. The Waltham plan describes the land along the border as residential where the clusters of housing are kept distinct by large pockets of farm and forest land. This is compatible with the rural residential planning area along the town line in Ferrisburgh.

6 New Haven

New Haven's current Town Plan was adopted in 2017 with planned land uses and zoning districts along the town line that are compatible with those of Ferrisburgh. Along the border, most of the land in New Haven is classified as residential agricultural. New Haven's zoning system allows for higher density development in a narrow strip along town roads, with larger lot sizes for interior land. Most of the border land in Ferrisburgh is rural residential with a small area of conservation land along Mud Brook, which is similarly identified as conservation in New Haven.

7 Monkton

Monkton's Municipal Development Plan was adopted in 2020. It calls for land uses and development patterns along the town line which are compatible with those of Ferrisburgh. Along the border, most of the land in Monkton is classified for low-density agricultural use with some conservation areas along the hills. This is consistent with Ferrisburgh's upland conservation and rural residential planning areas.

8 Charlotte

Charlotte's plan was adopted in 2019. The two towns share a long border and the land use plans for most of this area are compatible. Ferrisburgh and Charlotte have both identified the shoreline and the Lewis Creek corridor as areas requiring special protection. Most of the land along the border is part of rural residential and agricultural areas. Charlotte's plan expresses concern over the highway commercial character of the Route 7 corridor in Ferrisburgh at the town line, which contrasts with their rural designation and Route 7 protection strategies. It is, however, the intent of this Ferrisburgh plan to prevent

strip commercial development along Route 7 and support well-defined centers with commercial and residential uses in North Ferrisburgh.

IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the plan suggests specific actions, responsible parties, and time lines for many of the goals and recommendations from earlier chapters. These lists are not intended to cover all possible actions. However, it does offer some of the more important steps that may be taken to implement this plan.

TASK 1. Update Land Use Regulations

- Update Land Use Regulations to conform with the Town Plan.
- Establish design standards for the Town Center District and the Mixed Use district.
- Ensure Land Use Regulations comply with federal and state laws and regulations.

Who: Planning Commission with appropriate support.

Why: Land use Regulations (Subdivision and Zoning) must conform to the Town Plan.

When: Fall 2025/Spring 2026

TASK 2. Write a Capital Budget Plan

- Review the Capital Budget Plans developed by other similar rural towns
- Develop a scope of project

Who: Selectboard working with the Planning Commission and a hired Consultant.

Why: Long Term Planning requires a solid understanding of present capital assets.

When: Within one/two years, and then on-going.

TASK 3. Protect and conserve Agricultural Soils and other Agricultural Resources

- Update Land Use Regulations
- Allow small Lots in Rural Zoning Districts to allow development while keeping soil in agricultural production.
- Create scenic pull-off locations on Town Roads

Who: Planning Commission and Town Highway Department

Why: Protect and conserve agricultural soils; provide safe locations for residents and tourists to enjoy the rural landscapes of Ferrisburgh

When: within two years

TASK 4. Develop a Master Plan for the Town Center.

- Review the conceptual Master Plan documents for the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Report (2025)

Who: Planning Commission, Selectboard and outside consultants.

Why: Results of the town survey and community meetings clearly indicate desire for a cohesive, attractive multifunctional Town Center.

When: Within 3 years

TASK 5. Provide more options for recreation

- Develop recreational areas and opportunities in which town residents can participate and which encourage fitness and community-building.
- Build a trail network throughout town

Who: Trails Committee and Planning Commission.

Why: Results of the town survey and the open house indicated widespread support for more recreational and walking opportunities in town

When: Ongoing

TASK 6. Develop a Master Plan for the area around the Amtrak Station

When: Ongoing

- Review the conceptual Master Plan documents for the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Report (2025)

Who: Planning Commission and hired Consultant, and in collaboration with City of Vergennes Planning Commission.

Why: Town residents would like to see increased housing available close to Vergennes and improved public transport.

When: Within 3 years

TASK 7. Develop a Flood Resilience and pedestrian safety Master Plan for the North Ferrisburgh Village

- Draft a Master Plan for the Village of North Ferrisburgh that creates both a safe walkable community and provides for Flood Resilience.

Who: Planning Commission and hired Consultant; Work with Town of Charlotte to draft Plan.

Why: Both pedestrian safety and flood resilience have been identified as major concerns for residents

When: Begin as soon as possible

TASK 8. Protect Natural Resources including important forests, natural areas and River Corridors.

- Maintain a task force to inventory wildlife corridors and other important habitat areas.
- Review and update Land Use Regulations as they relate to important wildlife habitats.

Who: Conservation Commission, and Planning Commission.

Why: Required under state law; Protecting the habitats of other species helps enhance and protects our own living environment.