



**Planning Commission
Town of Halifax, Vermont
PO Box 127
West Halifax, VT 05358**

RECEIVED

JUL 22 2013

Agency of Commerce and
Community Development

July 18, 2013

Re: Proposed Town Plan Amendments

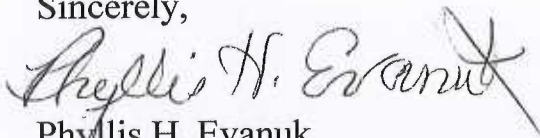
Dear Planning Commission Chair:

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, §4348, notice is hereby given that the Halifax Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Saturday, August 17, 2013 at 10:00 AM at the Town Offices at 246 Branch Road, West Halifax.

The purpose of the public hearing is to consider the adoption of revisions to the Halifax Town Plan. The full text and revised maps are enclosed.

We invite your comments and suggestions on the proposed amendments in writing to the above address prior to the hearing date, or in person at the public hearing.

Sincerely,



Phyllis H. Evanuk
Secretary to the Planning Commission

Enclosures: Revised Town Plan
Revised maps

**Halifax Town Plan
Amendment Report
July 18, 2013**

This report is written in accordance with requirement of the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A Chapter 117 §4384 (c) which states:

“When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in §4302 of this title.”

The proposed amendments to the Halifax Town Plan include updated demographic data, updated maps, and some revisions to the narrative sections, policies, and recommendations.

The Town Plan as re-adopted by the voters in March of 2010 included a proposed *Transitional Conservation District* which has been removed from this proposal. This change will have no impact on the overall pattern of land use. It was proposed as a 500’ strip bordering the Conservation District and had the same development regulations as the Conservation District with the exception of acreage and frontage requirements. The 500’ strip has been returned to the original Conservation District.

The existing Town Plan has served the town well and the Planning Commission is in agreement that it is a solid base upon which we plan to expand our vision for the town, especially in the areas of renewable energy resources, accessibility of broadband to all residents, and with the ageing population the needs of senior citizens that will allow them to remain in Halifax.

The Planning Commission will seek interested and knowledgeable citizens to explore those areas of the Town Plan that may be expanded upon in the next iteration of this document.

**Draft for Public Hearing
Saturday, August 17, 2013**

Halifax Town Plan
Town of Halifax, Vermont

**Prepared by
Halifax Planning Commission
and
Halifax Selectboard**

**Adopted June 15, 2004
and
Readopted March 2, 2010**

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE TOWN PLAN

The Halifax Town Plan identifies the means by which the Town proposes to guide its growth and development. The official adoption of the Town Plan represents a conscious community decision about the town's future character, priorities for land use and conservation of natural resources.

The goals, policies and recommendations in this Town Plan reflect the wishes of Halifax residents and should be used along with the Town Plan Maps to provide guidelines to the Planning Commission and Selectboard in developing local regulations and ordinances. The Town Plan should also guide the regional planning commission and state agencies in their planning efforts, assist the District Environmental Commission in judging applications submitted under Act 250, and guide those persons interested in subdividing and developing land in the town.

The Halifax Town Plan has been prepared under Subchapter 5 of the Vermont Planning and Development Act (Chapter 117 of Title 24 V.S.A.) as amended. This Town Plan becomes effective after the required public hearings, upon adoption by the voters of Halifax. Under Vermont law, a Town Plan expires five years from the date of adoption. Upon expiration of a Town Plan, all zoning bylaws then in effect remain in effect, but no amendments can be made. The town must revise the Town Plan where necessary, and readopt or replace its Town Plan every five years.

Planning is an ongoing process. Once adopted, the Town Plan continues to be revised every few years to account for new information about the Town, new public needs and desires as expressed by the citizens of Halifax and new or modified requirements of the state. This review is one of the main responsibilities of the Halifax Planning Commission. A Town Plan can be modified and formally amended through public hearings and adoption by the voters) at any time during the five-year period. The Halifax Planning Commission therefore should convene a sub-committee of volunteers who are Halifax residents, and may or may not include members of the Planning Commission, to continue the work of researching, revising and rewriting the Town Plan in preparation for ongoing periodic reviews and updates to ensure the plan remains responsive, relevant and effective.

INTERPRETATION OF THE TOWN PLAN

In situations where the interpretation of the Town Plan is needed or required, it shall be the task of the Halifax Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Halifax Selectboard, to conduct a review and issue an interpretive judgment. Throughout the text of this Town Plan many of the policy statements include imperative verbs. "Should" or "may" means that a policy is encouraged but not mandated, whereas "must" or "shall" means that the Town has strong intentions of ensuring that a policy is implemented.