



Planning Director
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February 25, 2015

Re: Town Plan revision documents for a Planning Council public hearing on 7 April 2015

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Morrisville/Morristown Planning Council to inform you of an upcoming hearing to address revisions to the Morrisville/Morristown Town Plan. The Town Plan, while normally revised every five years according to guidelines in Vermont State Statutes, is being proposed to be updated by petition a year and a half after it was last adopted in July of 2013. The proposed 2015 changes to the existing Town Plan center around a small revision to its Land use Chapter. This one land use change, the subject of the aforementioned petition, has the effect of directing a zoning change for the Green Mountain Arena parcels off Bridge Street. The zoning would change for this 34 acre peninsula from Rural Residential Agricultural to a commercial business zone to support an auction facility along with the potential for other future development on this land area. The proposed changes to the Land Use Chapter regarding rezoning the Green Mountain Arena parcels can be found on pages 10 & 13 of the enclosed public hearing packet highlighted via red font. The full Land Use Chapter that is otherwise unchanged from the existing Town Plan can be found on pages 7 through 13. The proposed 2014 Town Plan update also includes a new chapter on Flood Resiliency. The Flood Resiliency Chapter is being appended to the petitioned Land Use Chapter so the revised Town Plan, if approved, includes all the required elements of a municipal plan per 24 VSA §4382. The proposed Flood Resiliency Chapter can be found on pages 14 through 16 of the enclosed public hearing packet. Pages 2 through 6 of the public hearing packet includes the public hearing warning and the reporting form detailing compliance with the statutorily defined state planning goals.

The Planning Commission wishes to have broad input from voters, landowners, businesses, organizations regarding this revised Town Plan. A public hearing will be held regarding the proposed Town Plan changes on **Tuesday 7 April at 7:00 PM in the Community Meeting Room of the Tegu Building at 43 Portland Street in Morrisville.** Future public hearings on this proposal will be held in the spring by the Morristown Selectboard and the Morrisville Village Trustees. The proposed Town Plan changes are included beneath this letter for your review if you so desire. If you have any questions regarding the Town Plan revision process or need additional information regarding the proposed changes, please feel free to contact me. The Morrisville/Morristown Planning Council looks forward to your participation in the upcoming public hearing process.

Sincerely,

Todd Thomas, AICP
Morristown Planning Director

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE PLANNING COUNCIL
APRIL 7, 2015 WARNED PUBLIC HEARING

ON REVISIONS TO THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, a/k/a TOWN PLAN

The Morristown/Morrisville Planning Council hereby provides notice of public hearing being held pursuant to State Law VSA 24, Chapter 117, §4303, 4381, 4382, 4384, 4385 and 4447 for the purpose of hearing public comments concerning revisions to the Morristown/ Morrisville Municipal Development Plan, a/k/a the Town Plan. State law requires that the Municipal Development Plan be updated at least every five years. The Municipal Development Plan was last revised on March of 2013. This Municipal Development Plan is being adopted in accordance with VSA 24, Chapter 117, §4303, 4381, 4382, 4384, 4385 & 4447.

A public hearing for the proposed Morristown/Morrisville Town Plan is scheduled for:

DATE: April 7, 2015

TIME: 7:00 PM.

PLACE: The Community Meeting Room of the Tegu Building at 43 Portland Street

Statement of Purpose: To provide the Town of Morristown/Village of Morrisville with a Municipal Development Plan that meets State of Vermont statutory requirements, furthers the planning goals contained in §4302 of VSA 24, Chapter 117 and provides a sustainable roadmap for the community's future.

Geographic Area Affected: A proposed zoning change from residential to commercial for the Green Mountain Arena parcels in the Land Use Chapter and a new Flood Resiliency Chapter that affects both the Town of Morristown and the Village of Morrisville.

Table of Contents: 1-Community Profile, 2-Statement Containing All Objectives & Policies, 3-Land Use, 4-Transportation, 5-Utilities & Facility, 6-Historic, Scenic & Archeological Resources, 7-Education Facilities, 8-Implementation Program, 9-Statement Concerning Development Trends & Adjacent Municipalities, 10-Energy, 11-Housing, 12-Economic Development, 13-Natural Resources, 14-Productive Resources, 15-Wellness, 16-Statement Regarding Capital Needs & 17-Flood Resiliency

Location of where full text may be examined: A copy of the full text of the proposed Town Plan is available at the Morristown Zoning Office at 43 Portland Street. A copy is also available for inspection a Lamoille County Planning Commission in Morrisville. For further information, and comments please contact Todd Thomas in the Morristown Zoning Office at 888-6373.

Morristown Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Plan Amendments

This report is in accordance with 24 VSA §4384 (c) which states: “when considering an amendment to a plan, the Planning Commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal and the report shall address the extent which the plan, as amended, is consistent with established goals in §4302 of this title.

The proposed 2015 Morristown Town Plan petition update is consistent with the goals found in §4302 of this title. Given the formidable foundation that the Morristown 2013 Town Plan provided, the proposed update only improves upon the promotion of public health, safety and the general welfare of the community. This 2015 update includes a new chapter on Flood Resiliency. While Morristown is relatively flood resilient right now, there is always more that can be done to prevent property loss from nature’s events.

The existing Town Plan protects against the overcrowding of land, traffic congestion and facilitates the growth of both the Town of Morristown and the Village of Morrisville. The recently approved Town Plan also strongly enforces important planning goals like maintaining the historic settlement pattern of the village, providing for a strong and diverse economy, providing a safe and efficient transportation system and maintaining and protecting the natural environment. The 2015 amendment to the Town Plan proposes only one land use change other than the aforementioned changes for Flood Resiliency. This one land use change, being done by petition, has the effect of directing a zoning change for the Green Mountain Arena parcels from Rural Residential Agricultural to a business zone that would support an auction facility.

If the proposal would alter the designation of any land area, the report should cover the following points:

- 1. The probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.***

This 2015 Town Plan update only proposes to directly change the zoning for the Green Mountain Arena parcels. These three parcels, which account for approximately thirty four acres of land area, are being singled out in the revised Land Use Chapter as an area where commercial zoning should be expanded immediately. The desired result of the petition is for a commercial zoning expansion for the Green Mountain Arena parcels so they can house an auction facility business for the new landowner. The auction facility would utilize the existing building on the property. The existing parking area may or may not have to be improved and or expanded for the auction use. This thirty four-acre land area is a peninsula in Lake Lamoille that is bordered by the Town’s Innovation Zone to the south, Village residential zones to the east and Rural Residential Agricultural Zoning to the west and north across the lake. Given the new landowners description of how the auction business will operate, any increase in traffic from the new auction facility from the arena’s prior recreational use should be relatively minimal. Even for large on-site auctions, the existing ACT 250 traffic conditions on the site that require traffic

flaggers for large events will ensure that any traffic impacts from large such events are mitigated. The fact that 20 acres of the 34 acre property have a conservation easement thereon will also mitigate traffic impacts as the property is further developed over the years (assuming the zoning change is approved).

2. *The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on the municipal tax base and the need for public facilities.*

Given that the proposed auction facility is planning to utilize the existing arena building on the property at 704 Bridge Street, there is likely a negligible change in property tax revenue when juxtaposing current conditions and an auction facility operating on the premises. However, if the arena building was to remain vacant over the years and the owner of the property was not allowed enough use of the property to justify reinvestment in the building, expected property tax revenues from the property would decline in tandem with the building's assessed value as it deteriorates.

Approving a Town Plan that proposed commercial zoning for the Green Mountain Arena parcels would help Morristown recoup some of the investments it has made to bring public infrastructure to this area over the last five years. Morristown has spent almost twenty thousand dollars on infrastructure upgrades and planning for this area. In 2011 the Town paid for a flyover of this section of Town to determine topography in two-foot contours. Morristown also contracted with a local engineering firm to develop plans for a sewer extension across the Long Bridge into the Town to serve a redeveloped Green Mountain Arena as well as the undeveloped land areas already zoned for business to its south. State permits are already in hand for the sewer pump station on the west side of the Long Bridge that will need to be constructed with the sewer line extension. Such a pump station and sewer line extension will benefit the Village as additional customers are brought onto the sewer system which helps improve the affordability of the new multi-million dollar sewer plant for all rate payers. Morristown also paid to extend streetlight infrastructure down to the Green Mountain Arena parcels within the last few years.

It is doubtful that new road infrastructure would be needed to service an auction facility operating on the Green Mountain Arena parcels. However, the sidewalk that terminates to the east of the Long Bridge may need to be extended west along Bridge Street to the new auction facility. Within the last two years, the Planning Commission denied a request from an adjacent landowner to 704 Bridge Street LLC for the Town to construct a sidewalk across the Long Bridge at the Town's expense. The Town and the Village have also declined to build the Long Bridge sewer extension and pump station at taxpayer expense in the same time period due to fiscal constraints. If the expense for a sidewalk (if needed) and/or the sewer infrastructure were to be pushed back onto the taxpayers for the proposed auction facility, the cost of such a zoning change would be prohibitive. Conversely, a private investment in extending Village

infrastructure into the Town should be looked at as a tangible benefit of the proposed Town Plan change to allow an auction facility to operate on the Green Mountain Arena parcels.

3. *The amount of vacant land which is already subject to the proposed new designation and the amount of land actually available for that purpose and the need for additional land for that purpose.*

In order to accommodate the retail end of the proposed auction facility use, the most likely zoning that would be extended to the Green Mountain Arena parcels is the Commercial Zone. This is the predominant zoning for the North End / Uptown of Morristown. There is approximately 40 acres of vacant commercially zoned property in Morristown. A vast majority of this commercially zoned land is available for sale on the CCS owned Langdel Farm Parcel. This sizeable amount of available land area was cited as to why the 2013 Town Plan did not propose to add significantly more commercial zoning for retail uses to the market. However, the arena building at 704 Bridge Street is unique in Town as it offers a large structurally sound building shell that could be tailor-made to a new business therein. This situation is rare in Morristown and is not readily available on other commercially zoned properties which largely consist of raw land.

4. *The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after careful consideration of the appropriate alternative locations, alternatives used for the area under consideration and the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated.*

As previously stated, there are no other similarly sized buildings that are commercially zoned that could house the proposed auction facility. The vast majority of the Town's Commercial Zone that is for sale consists of raw land. It is highly doubtful that an auction facility could be built elsewhere in a similarly sized building for less of an investment than the new landowners purchase price for the Green Mountain Arena Parcels.

The historic use of the Green Mountain Arena Parcels as a recreation center is the primary alternative use for this land area other than the proposed zoning change for business use. The arena building located at 704 Bridge Street was permitted under the Recreation Facility/Outdoor use. However, the new landowner has no intentions of continuing the permitted recreation use on his property.

The Green Mountain Arena Parcels are situated in an environmentally sensitive area. A significant portion of the land is already protected via a 20 acre conservation easement that extends 253 onto the property from the Lake Lamoille shoreline. Outside the protected conservation area on the developable portion of the property there are mapped wetlands and a medium priority habitat block. Wetlands and a mapped rare species area can be found inside the conservation area. As the proposed auction facility plans to simply utilize the existing footprint of the arena, negative environmental impacts will likely be limited, especially if the proposed auction facility is serviced by a sewer line extension. However, due care for these

environmental sensitivities will need to be taken when the site is further developed as allowed under the commercial zoning proposal.

5. *The appropriateness of the size of boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability and existing development in the area.*

The Green Mountain Arena parcels house the arena, associated parking and a natural trail system. The natural trail system is located almost exclusively in the twenty acre conservation easement area. While the proposed auction facility plans to only use the existing developed footprint of the arena, it is unclear if additional parking would be needed or required on-site for this use. Outside of the arena building and its associated parking area, there is additional land that could be developed on the property. The capacity of the land should not be an issue for the Green Mountain Arena Parcels as this property is a short distance from the Village's new sewer plant. Like the Innovation Zone across the street from the arena, Class 1 Development would very likely be a requirement of any zoning change that added Commercial Zoning to the Green Mountain Arena parcels. Assuming that the sewer line was indeed extended across the Long Bridge and due care was given to the aforementioned environmental factors on the property during the development process, additional development of the Green Mountain Arena parcels would be possible and encouraged if the Commercial Zone requirements were added to this land area.

Land Use

Morristown covers approximately 50 mi.², or 34,176 acres. Morristown's land use is predominantly residential and agricultural. Downtown Morrisville remains as a relatively large urban core. Uptown Morristown, specifically the land around the junction of Route 100 and Route 15, is currently a fast-growing retail and commercial district. New commercial growth is almost entirely concentrated in the Uptown section of Morristown. New residential growth remains strongest along the outskirts of the Village. Morristown's land use should continue in the same pattern, maintaining the historic residential and agricultural land uses in the Town and concentrating business and commercial uses in the Village and in the various business zones.

Morristown is a compilation of a few distinct areas. The Route 100 corridor at the southern edge of the Village, recently recognized as the new Lower Village Gateway Commercial Zone, hosts an interesting mix of small commercial enterprises and home industry, along with residential lots with varying sizes. This section of Route 100 is presently being altered by the construction of the Morrisville truck route. When construction on the truck route is complete, it is expected that traffic-flow through this area and through the Village will change significantly.

Further south on Route 100, the land surrounding the Morrisville-Stowe airport, which has recently been rezoned as the Airport Business Zone, is largely undeveloped. Morristown supports commercial development in the new Airport Business Zone, as the continued residential growth around the airport posed a threat to its viability. South and north of the Airport Business Zone, Route 100, along with Stagecoach Road and Randolph Road, serves as the main corridor between Stowe and Morrisville. Morristown should ensure that the existing rural character of Route 100 south of the Airport Business Zone (along with Stagecoach Road and Randolph Road), which is characterized by existing residential development interspersed with large tracts of open land and agricultural land, remains intact. The visual appeal of the open land between the Stowe town-line and the airport should be preserved as much as possible through incentivizing techniques such as planned unit developments, conservation easements and the acquisition of open land. Where additional residential development does take place on these arterial roads that connect Morrisville with Stowe, care should be taken to preserve the existing vistas, open space and agricultural land. The Planning Council should work to adopt a planned residential development subdivision bylaw that is density neutral, but allows for the development of smaller lots in exchange for the permanent protection of open space. Without implementing such a technique, Morristown's undeveloped and agricultural lands will always be threatened by expanding residential development that is unlikely to include the protection or creation of any open space.

Downtown Morrisville remains a very compact area characterized by a mixture of commercial and residential use. Thanks to recent zoning changes, the buildings in the downtown are once again starting to mirror their more historical use, with commercial use of the ground floor and apartments in the rear and on the second and third floors. Morristown strongly supports mixed

uses in downtown Morrisville and supports all projects that enhance the continued vitality therein.

With the pending completion of the Morrisville truck route, the impacts of the resultant traffic pattern change must be considered in terms of land use and zoning. For example, Bridge Street between downtown and the truck route should be evaluated for additional commercial uses due to the expected 254% traffic increase. Conversely, the zoning for Brooklyn Street with a projected 80% drop in traffic may also need to be reevaluated.

The Planning Council should also evaluate ways to create a safer and more pleasant pedestrian experience in downtown Morrisville once trucks are removed from the Village. New additions to the public infrastructure in the downtown, such as sidewalk bulb-outs and street trees, should be introduced on Portland Street, Bridge Street and Main Street in places where truck turning radii made them impossible in the past. To facilitate the metamorphosis of the Village into a place for pedestrians instead of the domain of large trucks, potential routes for sidewalks, trails and bike lanes should also be identified. The pending permitting of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail presents a tremendous opportunity to link downtown Morrisville with local, regional and statewide recreational resources. This is a recreational and economic opportunity that should not be missed as the Village creates a sense of place for itself once trucks are removed from its roads.

In the residential neighborhoods directly adjacent to downtown Morrisville, large single-family homes have been turned into multi-family dwellings. While the conversion of these homes into multifamily dwellings is not problematic in principle, the large numbers of homes converting from ownership housing to rental units remains a concern. Such buildings in the Village retain their historic character to varying degrees. The Morrisville National Historic Register District encompasses large sections of downtown Morrisville. The Village also has four historic districts that are recognized by the State.

The area immediately south of the Village's main residential district on Washington Highway is the Town's Special Use Zone. This zoning district serves as the Town's (and the region's) seat for medical care via the location of Copley Hospital and supporting services therein. Enough undeveloped land remains in the Special Use Zone to accommodate the area's future Healthcare Facility use needs. Therefore, the zoning line between the Special Use Zone and the surrounding residential zones should be strictly respected.

Brooklyn Street provides the transition from downtown Morrisville to surrounding residential properties on the outskirts of the Village and ultimately to the heavily commercialized Uptown area of Morristown. Uptown Morristown is still geared towards automobile use and has limited pedestrian access. However, the Morristown North End Business District Circulation Study, dated September 30, 2011, provides a master plan to improve traffic flow, bicycle and pedestrian access and the general appearance of this area. Morristown supports all development in Uptown

Morristown that complies with the recommendations of this master plan. Development in the section of Uptown studied by this master plan that is contrary to the recommendations included therein shall be opposed.

Morristown Corners and Cadys Falls are historic villages located in the Rural Residential Agricultural (RRA) Zone of Morristown. Their current inclusion in the RRA Zone does not do justice to these unique village clusters. In fact, the underlying zoning in each area, via §430 Non-Conformities, threatens the continued existence of businesses like the small food market or bookstore in Morristown Corners that gives the area its special character. The Morristown Planning Council should evaluate creating rural village zoning districts to protect the historical and existing character of Morristown Corners and Cadys Falls. In addition, both Morristown Corners and Cadys Falls are still served by community water systems that should be evaluated for a possible connection to the Morrisville Water and Light water system.

There are a handful of residential sections of Morristown characterized by undeveloped land and large lots that are experiencing development pressure for residential growth, including second homes. The Planning Council should evaluate these sections of Morristown (such as Mud City, the rural sections of Vermont Route 12, Vermont Route 15 A, and Vermont Route 100 south of the airport) to determine if land conservation, Planned Unit Developments, larger minimum lot sizes and other similar land conservation techniques could be employed to retain the existing rural and natural feel of these areas. Employing such land conservation techniques could relieve development pressure in areas where the Town's Sewer Service Management Area is the main impediment to unplanned growth and/or sprawl.

The Route 15 corridor, as it traverses the northern section of Morristown, is a mixture of agricultural, residential and commercial uses on varying lot sizes. Route 15, at its intersection with Route 100, currently contains large areas of developed and undeveloped land in the Commercial Zone. The Langdell Farm parcel, located at the corner of Route 15 and Center Road, contains undeveloped commercially zoned land that seems poised for relatively rapid development. The Planning Council should review the zoning for this area to ensure that the development proposed therein meshes with the vision laid out by this chapter of the Town Plan and the aforementioned North End Circulation Study. The Planning Council should also immediately begin the zoning change process to bring this commercial zone east onto a two-acre portion of the Lanphear Farm parcel. The Planning Council should also take special care to review the setbacks and residential density requirements currently designated along Route 15, Center Road, Trombley Hill Road and Frazier Road in the Commercial Zone to ensure that these regulations work with the existing properties in this area and to lay the groundwork for the development on the Langdell Farm parcel, which will be a benefit to the landowners and Town.

To the east of Route 15's commercially zoned frontage, development gets increasingly dispersed with agricultural operations, a few small businesses and residential use, all with relatively large land areas. The far northeast corner of Morristown is designated as the Special Industrial Zone

due to the presence of three-phase power and good highway access. This area can accommodate industrial facilities which are inappropriate in the more densely settled industrial districts, such as commercial wood processing and gravel extraction. Development in this area must be well-planned and done in environmentally sensitive manner, as a large deer yard of statewide significance exists just north of Route 15.

As the industrial park on Harrel Street and Industrial Park Drive has been largely built out, there is an immediate need for additional land zoned for new light industrial growth in Morristown. It is of paramount importance to Morristown's ability to retain and attract jobs that land for light industry uses is available for purchase, which allows these companies to remain in Morristown and grow their businesses. The Selectboard should prioritize the investigation of the development of a municipally owned industrial park within existing business zones to ensure that companies who want to expand or relocate to Morristown have the opportunity to do so. Any new business zone or industrial park that is created should be served by municipal water and sewer to successfully attract new industry and should be located as close to the Village as possible. Providing municipal facilities such as sewer and water to any new area zoned for light industrial growth should be an immediate goal of both Morristown and Morrisville. However, the Conservation Commission's concerns expressed about sprawl and instead encouraging infill development should be heeded when contemplating land use changes.

It has been assumed for many years that the Business Enterprise (BE) zone would be the home to new business ventures and possibly even the aforementioned new industrial park. However, it has recently become clear that the current landowners in the BE zone do not want to sell or develop their property. Therefore, business zoning must be immediately expanded to viable lands where development can happen quickly, as there is clear evidence of pent-up demand. By petition, this expansion of business zoning should include the Green Mountain Arena parcels located at 704 Bridge Street. The Planning Council is open to suggestions regarding lands that could be used for business purposes, but should begin to examine the following list of additional properties where the expansion of Airport Business, Industrial & Business Enterprise zones can take place and development can happen quickly. Of these areas, one or two at most, may be chosen as a site for expanded business zoning, provided that Bishop Marshall's land in the Business Enterprise Zone remains off the market:

- the Cheng property across from the Bishop Marshall School;
- the Village of Morrisville parcel between Trombley Hill Road & Center Road;
- extending the BE zone southward so it connects with the Airport Business Zone;
- parcels 103 & 156 at the intersection of Golf Course Road, Goeltz Road & LaPorte Road;
- redrawing the existing industrial zone boundary near the intersection of Needle Eye Road and Vermont Route 15W so it splits parcel 35-1.

In addition to ensuring that areas hosting new business growth are served by municipal services, the continued expansion of municipal services in the Commercial Zone and Industrial Zone

should remain a joint priority for both municipalities, with the goal of continuing to capitalize on opportunities to best utilize existing municipal services.

During new development in lands zoned as BE, as well as with the continued development of the Industrial and Commercial zones, stormwater management is an issue that should not be ignored at a local level. Although a robust State permitting system exists for large development sites that disturb more than 1 acre of land, it is in Morristown's best interest to ensure that sites that disturb less than 1 acre of land use best management practices for stormwater. Particularly the inclusion of low impact development techniques in new development proposals that disturb less than 1 acre of land (such as rain gardens, disconnecting roof runoff and the utilization of natural land features and processes) should be encouraged by local regulation. The Planning Council should evaluate whether offering a limited density bonus, or other type of "carrot" incentive could further the use of low impact development techniques in Morristown.

Policies:

Morristown should maintain its small-town character and its neighborhoods, while planning for anticipated growth and recognizing that the prosperity and growth of the Village and the Town are interconnected and the decisions made by one entity ultimately impact the other.

Morristown's land use should continue in the same pattern, maintaining the historic residential and agricultural land uses in the Town and concentrating business and commercial uses in the Village and the various business zones.

Morristown supports commercial development in the new Airport Business Zone, as the continued residential growth around the airport posed a threat to its viability.

Morristown should ensure that the existing rural character of Route 100 south of the Airport Business Zone, along with Stagecoach Road and Randolph Road, which is characterized by existing residential development interspersed with large tracts of open land and agricultural land, remain intact.

Morristown supports all development in Uptown Morristown that complies with the recommendations of the Morristown North End Business District Circulation Study, dated September 30, 2011.

Development in the Uptown section of Morristown that is contrary to the recommendations included in the North End Business District Circulation Study master plan shall be opposed.

Morristown strongly supports mixed uses in downtown Morrisville and supports all projects that enhance the continued vitality therein.

Timely consideration should be given to facilitating and providing municipal facilities such as sewer and water to new areas zoned for light industrial growth.

The continued expansion of municipal services in the Commercial Zone and Industrial Zone should remain a top priority for both municipalities

Objectives:

The Selectboard, Village Trustees, Planning Council and Development Review Board should continue to ensure that policies and regulations are administered fairly and expediently.

Morristown should carefully evaluate the zoning of new lands being considered for development.

Review Village and Town zoning and clearly define the purpose of each district, then bring the regulations into line with these purposes. Specifically address setbacks, heights, landscaping & signage which is compatible with existing neighborhood structures; conditional and permit uses; environmentally sensitive areas such as wildlife habitat, shorelines and public water source protection areas.

Morristown should ensure that areas characterized by existing residential development interspersed with large tracts of open land and agricultural land remain intact. The visual appeal of the open land between the Stowe town-line and Morrisville should be preserved as much as possible through techniques such as conservation easements and the direct acquisition of open land.

The Planning Council should work to adopt a Planned Residential Development subdivision bylaw that is density neutral, but allows for the development of smaller lots in exchange for the permanent protection of open space.

Given the pending completion of the Morrisville truck route, the Planning Council should evaluate the zoning for Bridge Street and Brooklyn Street and plan for ways to create a safer and more pleasant pedestrian and bicycle experience in downtown Morrisville once trucks are removed there from.

New additions to the public infrastructure in the downtown, such as a sidewalk bulb-outs and street trees should be introduced on Portland Street, Bridge Street and Main Street in places where truck traffic made them impossible in the past.

Morristown believes that the conversion of large Village homes into residential units (often with absentee landlords) is undesired. The Planning Council should look for ways to encourage property owners to live in the Village.

The Morristown Planning Council should evaluate creating rural village zoning districts to protect the historical and existing character of Morristown Corners and Cadys Falls.

The Morristown Corners and Cadys Falls community water systems should be evaluated for a possible connection to the Morrisville Water and Light water system.

The Planning Council should evaluate if something different than the current two-acre minimum lot size is more appropriate in areas like Mud City and on the land adjacent to Vermont Route 12, Vermont Route 15 A and Vermont Route 100 south of the Village.

The Planning Council should review the zoning along the commercially zoned areas of Route 15 to ensure that the development proposed therein meshes with the vision laid out by the land use chapter of the Town Plan and the aforementioned North End Circulation Study.

The Planning Council should review the setbacks and residential density requirements currently designated along Route 15, Center Road, Trombley Hill Road and Frazier Road in the Commercial Zone to ensure that these regulations work with the existing properties in this area and lay the groundwork for development that is seen as a benefit to the landowners and the Town.

The Selectboard and Village Trustees should evaluate if the creation of a special tax zone with the goal of expanding municipal water and sewer infrastructure to benefit new development and job and business growth, is a strategy that should be implemented to ensure growth in a fair and efficient manner.

The Selectboard should prioritize the investigation of the development of a municipally owned industrial park within existing business zones to ensure that companies who want to expand or relocate to Morrystown have the opportunity to do so.

Business zoning must be immediately expanded to viable lands where development can happen quickly, as there is clear evidence of pent-up demand. By petition, this expansion of business zoning should include the Green Mountain Arena parcels located at 704 Bridge Street. The Planning Council is open to suggestions regarding lands that could be used for business purposes, but should begin to examine the following list of additional properties where the expansion of Airport Business, Industrial & Business Enterprise zones can take place and development can happen quickly. Of these areas, one or two at most, may be chosen as a site for expanded business zoning, provided that Bishop Marshall's land in the Business Enterprise Zone remains off the market:

- the Cheng property across from the Bishop Marshall School;
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- parcels 103 & 156 at the intersection of Golf Course Road, Goeltz Road & LaPorte Road;
- redrawing the existing industrial zone boundary near the intersection of Needle Eye Road and Vermont Route 15W so it splits parcel 35-1.

The Planning Council should evaluate whether offering a limited density bonus, or other type of "carrot" incentive could further the use of low impact development techniques (such as rain gardens, disconnecting roof runoff and the utilization of natural land features and processes).

Flood Resiliency

Morristown's Flood Risk by the Numbers

Both Morristown and Morrisville, although having significant land areas susceptible to flood and fluvial erosion, are lucky to have the vast majority of structures therein out of harm's way. In fact, Morristown only has twelve e911 structures located in a Special Flood Hazard Area. Morrisville has an additional six e911 structures located in a Special Flood Hazard Area. In Morristown and Morrisville, less than 1% of community structures are located in the Special Flood Hazard Area. Compared to other similarly sized communities in Vermont, especially communities with a river like the Lamoille therein, Morristown and Morrisville are flood resilient communities. In fact, Morristown fares especially well when compared to neighboring communities in the county like Cambridge and Johnson where flooding is a significant community concern. With that being said, Morristown can do more to ensure that the few structures it has in the Special Flood Hazard Area have Flood Insurance. Currently, only 17% of the structures located in Special Flood Hazard Areas in both Morristown and Morrisville have Flood Insurance.

A discussion about Morristown's flood resiliency is not complete without examining public infrastructure such as the roadway system. Morristown's roadway system has experienced two loss events within the last five years during federally declared disasters. The first and most significant loss event was the spring floods of 2011 caused by heavy rains on top of a late and substantial mountain snowpack. The second loss event, which was much less severe in Morristown than in other parts of Vermont, was Tropical Storm Irene. Outside of these two recent events, one would have to go back to the 1990s and then the 1980s to find the previous two such loss events. Given the relative lack of loss events, it can be assumed that the town's roadway system is relatively flood resilient. It should be noted that the town's roadway system remains flood resilient despite its refusal to adopt to the State's 2013 Town Road and Bridge Standards. The State Town Road and Bridge Standards were not designed to deal with the rural mountain roads found outside the village. Adopting the Town Road and Bridge Standards would drive the town's highway budget to unsustainable levels and potentially put the ability of the town to harvest gravel from the Duhamel Pit at risk.

While the State Town Road and Bridge Standards offer little assistance to Morristown becoming more flood resilient, the town can still do more to prevent future loss events related to the roadway system. Given the changing weather patterns in recent years, it is critical that Morristown looks to address known trouble spots during high water events using local resources and grants when available. An example of a known high water trouble spot is the culvert for Ryder Brook under Goeltz Road. This culvert is inadequately sized and during large rain and melt events, this culvert has a propensity to back up and cause flooding upstream. Morristown supports all efforts to replace this undersized and failing culvert with a span as quickly as possible.

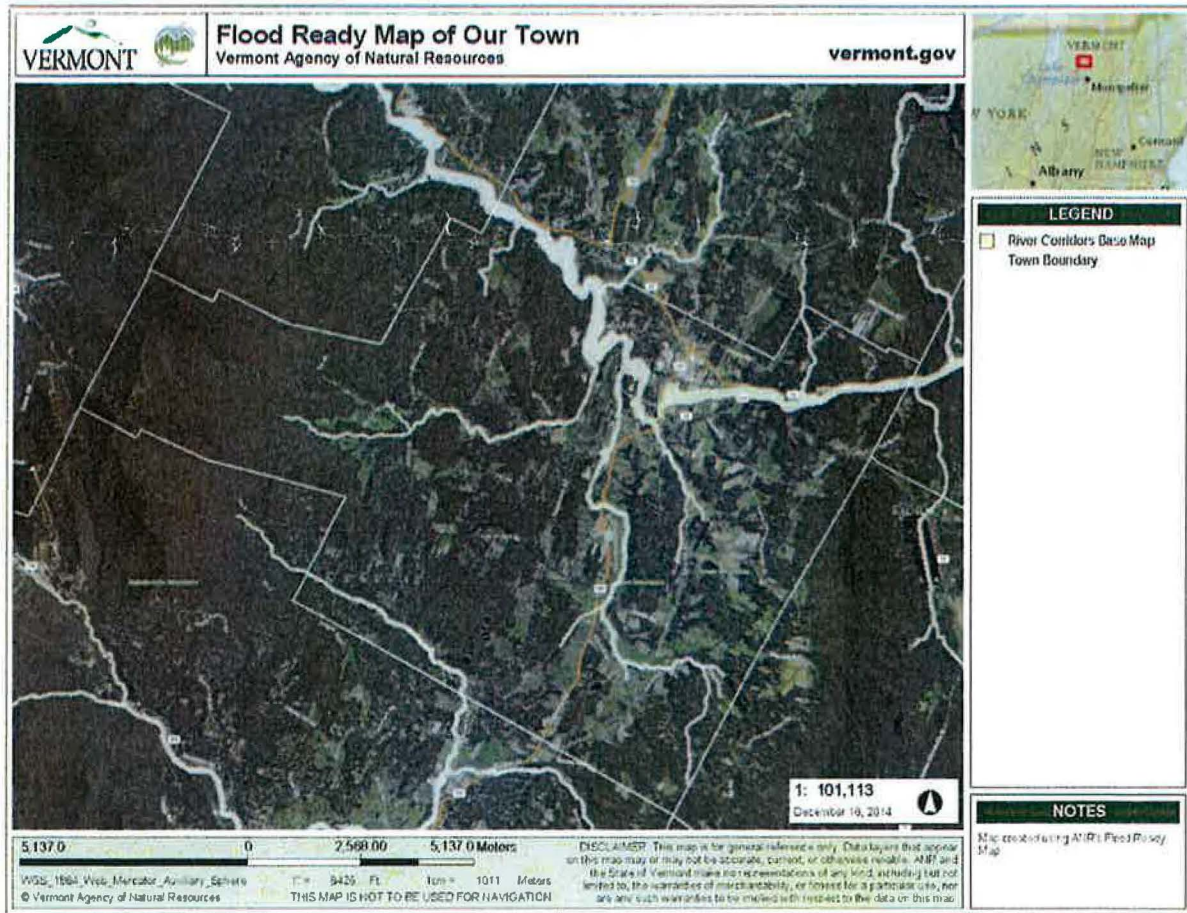
Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town has worked to maintain an updated FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan. The purpose of this plan is to identify all hazards facing the community and develop strategies to

begin reducing risks from these identified hazards. Morristown's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was last updated in March of 2014 and is hereby incorporated into this Flood Resiliency Chapter.

Flood Hazard and Fluvial Erosion Mapping

Morristown accepts and adopts the below map showing fluvial erosion hazard areas based on river corridor maps provided by the Agency of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 VSA §1428(a).



Policies:

New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided if possible. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.

Morristown should continue to enforce its Flood Hazard Regulations based on FEMA Flood Plain Mapping to ensure participation National Flood Insurance Program.

Development on slopes greater than 25% and ridgelines should be carefully controlled to avoid adverse impacts on water quality, hydrology and public safety.

The Morristown Conservation Commission should work with private landowners to protect and enhance vegetated stream buffers along the town's watercourses. The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should also be encouraged.

Continued flood emergency preparedness and response planning shall be encouraged, including ensuring that Morristown's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan remains approved and up-to-date.

Objectives:

The Town will maintain, and update as needed, its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Morristown Planning Council should continue to require the 50-ft. structure setback from all Shorelines in its zoning bylaw and evaluate if a vegetative buffer should be a requirement within said setback.

The Morristown Planning Council should look to update its Flood Hazard Regulations to require the freeboard suggested as a best management practice by the National Flood Insurance Program.

Morristown should support any opportunity to have its remaining undetermined flood zones studied and mapped by FEMA.

Morristown should consider participating in FEMA's Community Rating System in order to reduce flood insurance premiums for affected property owners.