

Vision for Westford Town Center Revitalization

Based on community inputs through surveys and public engagement, it has become evident that many residents of Westford would like to see a more vibrant town center. Some residents are concerned about growth impacts to the town's character and overcrowding. During the 1850s the town center had 2 Churches, Town Hall, Doctor, Tannery, School, 2 Stores, Post Office, 2 Mills, Blacksmith, and a Cabinet Shop. There was a total of 39 homes and businesses. Today the town center has a Library, Town Office, Country Store, 2 Meeting Houses, and 3 vacant structures for a total of 28 buildings.

The Westford Planning Commission is leading an effort to investigate the developability of town lands and private property. The vision includes researching and identifying possible solutions to the following:

- Wastewater to service municipal buildings, existing and future residences, and commercial business.
- Stormwater runoff and management infrastructure in the town center that meets or exceeds existing Vermont Water Quality Standards.
- 4-6 perpetually affordable housing units for young families and Vermont's aging population
- 2-4 commercial, retail or professional office spaces.
- Brownfield corrective action plan development and cleanup of contaminated sites within the town center.
- Potable water solutions to serve municipal buildings and residences.
- Robust diversified tax base that creates a stable grand list.
- Public access to the Browns River with unobstructed downriver access to the Lamoille River.
- Pedestrian safety, footpaths, accessibility, and public parking.
- Maintain the town's rural and historical character.

To help focus the vision and define objectives the Commission will conduct in-depth investigations into the developability of municipal and private property between the Library and Cambridge Road. The Commission will also complete a Preliminary Engineering Report for a potential community wastewater system that would be located at the Maple Shade Town Forest (formerly known as the Jackson Property) on Brookside Road. Any preliminary site plans and streetscapes will be designed around maintaining the Town's rural character and conform to the form-based code.

The Planning Commission intends to achieve this by leveraging community volunteers, normal budget expenses, grant awards and other community resources. The Commission will share findings with residents, town boards and other interested citizens openly and transparently. There will be ongoing and comprehensive public outreach efforts to communicate progress and foster community engagement.