

Planning Commission Report Form for Town Plan Adoption

The Town of Chelsea's Planning Commission will held a hearing on its draft town plan on August 22nd, 2023.

This report is required by 24 VSA section 4384 in regard to how the draft plan meets certain requirements.

How is the plan, as amended, consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of Title 24?

The draft plan has been written to address all goals in 24 VSA section 4302 and to be in conformance with the Regional Plan. The plan was done with public input in the form of open invitations to Planning Commission meetings beyond required notices. The draft has sections that address intermunicipal actions and is written to maintain a compact settlement pattern that would promote water quality, forests, and agriculture. The plan has policies that support childcare, affordable housing, multi-modal transportation, efficient energy use, flood resilience, recreation, preservation of unique areas, economic development, education of our residents, the upkeep of our buildings and property, and is based on current and expected conditions.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is 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?

The Plan does not alter the designation of any land area. The Plan does remove principal retail as an allowable use in the Rural Residential Area. The change will not result in significant traffic or land use pattern impacts and reflects the actual use of those lands today. This change will bring the Plan into conformance with the Regional Plan.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on (A) the municipal tax base; and (B) the need for public facilities?

The change in the Rural Residential will likely result in no change in demand for additional town roads or road upgrades. No effect is anticipated on other public facilities. Given that none of the land is used for principal retail, there is no anticipated effect on the tax base.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the amount of vacant land which is (A) already subject to the proposed new designation; and (B) actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.

The Plan does not alter the designation of any land area as uses have not changed significantly since the last Town Plan was adopted. All vacant land is subject to the current designations.

Prohibiting principal retail as a use in the Rural Residential Area decreases the availability of land for that use. There are few lots in the Chelsea Village Center Area could support principal retail, however much of the Chelsea Village Center Area is at risk of flooding.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after consideration of (A) appropriate alternative locations; (B) alternative uses for the area under consideration; and (C) the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated.

The Plan does not alter the designation of any land area as uses have not changed significantly since the last Town Plan was adopted. Current land uses are appropriate for the areas as designated. There is no anticipated impact of retaining current designations.

Prohibiting principal retail as a use in the Rural Residential Area decreases the availability of land for that use. There are few lots in the Chelsea Village Center Area could support principal retail, however much of the Chelsea Village Center Area is at risk of flooding.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the appropriateness of the size and 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 Plan does not alter the designation of any land area as uses have not changed significantly since the last Town Plan was adopted. Maintaining the current land uses is anticipated to help the Town retain its distinct historic character. Removal of the primary retail use in the Rural Residential Area will contribute to the maintenance of the historic center as the center of commerce. However, that area is prone to flooding and the Town will need to contact the Regional Planning Commission to consider where it would be appropriate to direct future retail development.