

# Dummerston Planning Commission

## Notes on Public Forum June 4, 2013

### Route 30 and Route 5 Corridors, Town Plan District Mapping

Moderator: Cindy Jerome:

Attendees: Planning Commission: Sam Farwell, Andrew McFarland, Bill Schmidt, Rich Cogliano, Annamarie Pluhar, Bev Tier, Deb Forrett, Cindy Wilcox

Public: Nelson Jilson, Claudia Teachman, George and Emilee Houghton, Ed Anthes, Charlotte Annis, Zeke Goodband, Steve and Maria Glabach, Bill Holiday, John Anderson, Lester Dunkle, Mark Whittaker, Tom Zopf, Greg Brown, Tom Bodette, Dave Blocher, Jack Mannix, Linsa W. Heclus, Alex Wilson, Bredna Davis, Sally Seymour

Introduction, purpose of the meeting is for questions and answers – is not a public hearing.

Alex: What is difference between Rural Commercial and Residential? Ed: Does RC include residences? Answer: Yes, residences are included in RC districts.

Steve Glabach – Thinks it's a good job on Route 30.

Discussion of RC area south of Stickney (owned by Dunkle son) and it's use as RC.

Jack Mannix: Interested in the Resource areas. Told a story about farm land getting bid up in Hatfield/S. Deerfield Mass. In general the value of farm land is going up. We should protect our agricultural lands. Bunker land in Vermont Land Trust is a perfect example of working together so that the land is preserved and the owner gets top dollar. Where's there's development taxes go up, where there is ag land taxes stay stable. Protecting the food/farm network can make us thrive. Happy to have his own land in Resource land, thinks it adds to his value.

Alex Wilson: Would love to see infrastructure to allow higher density development in the settlement areas, W. Dummerston.

Cindy Jerome asks about how the group feels about creating a water/sewer areas. Greg says it has some merit, would encourage development. There is option to partner with Putney to extend to area near Exit 4. (if Putney interested.) Water treatment and maintenance is a cost to the town.

Ed Anthes: Concerned about the RC in the north of Route 5, seems like it is more a Residential area. Apple orchard has great value as ag land. And also the Kathan Meadow area.

John Anderson: Exit 4, water and sewer are game changers, encourages development. Possibility to apply for a consortium grant from the state to develop water resources. Magnets for development. Are we willing to deal with the concentration and density it will develop? Job creation for Route 5 and 30 is a handful of jobs, but development at Route 4 would lead to real jobs that would support a family.

Bill Schmidt: Lawrence Orchard owner wants it to remain ag. Housing commission saw it as a great place for residences. RC .say DPC. Rich area – can support all of that.

Mark Whitaker: Wants to push for a balance.

Greg Brown: Makes the point that Dummerston's municipal tax rate is the second lowest in Windham County because we have low requirements. Development can raise taxes on all of us which is why we do care about what happens in the town.

Brenda Davis: Why do we need to make a decision now? We need to provide for the next generation.

Greg: Brown: 50 years of experience shows clearly that changes in land use over time leads to greater demands for services on the municipality which leads to increased taxes.

John Anderson: We need Bylaws, Town Plan, and all before a situation comes up. We can't afford to fight big people in court who have big pockets. We need to anticipate so we are prepared.

(Didn't catch name): trends in .. Swiss have pushed industry onto non ag lands. We want to keep trucks and traffic on the highways. How do we get ready for change that is inevitable? And not give away the keys to the kingdom?

Claudia Teachman: Hearing two things, some people are comfortable with these maps and some are not. Some are intensively thinking about Exit 4 land use district.

Ed Anthes: Recommends that the area around Johnson Curve be Residential and that the apple orchard be maintained as such.. not recommending what it should be specifically. It is a piece of Resource land to be reflected in the land use. Jack Mannix farm should be Resource. Hopes that the southern parcels will be preserved when the town is ready to do that, won't be now, but maybe in the future.

Caleb Farwell: Learned tonight that there is a vibrant community of farming and that it is on the upswing.

Charlotte Annis: Ag overlay would be one way of protection of ag lands.

Bev Tier: Most of Dummerston is green.

Bill Schmidt: We need balance in the Dummerston Route 5 corridor. Ag lands have the highest rating in town, told story of how the air strip was not allowed to pave a runway and now that the airstrip is closed the land has returned to ag use.

George Houghton: Wants his land to stay in Rural Commercial.

Nelson Jillson: I'm the last dairy systems repair in this part of Vermont. Not every parcel of land is a parcel the new farmers are looking for it.

Submitted by Annamarie Pluhar, Secretary