

RELATIONSHIP TO ADJACENT TOWNS, WINDHAM REGION AND THE STATE OF VERMONT

Vermont's Growth Management Law, Title 24 VSA Chapter 117, passed in 1988, set up a system for communities to work in concert with their neighbors, and with agencies of State government, to shape the future. As envisioned, decisions on local growth issues are to be made by the local communities, and decisions of regional significance are to be made by the regions communities acting in concert. Each State agency action and program that affects land use is to be based on agency plans developed in consultation with communities and regions.

To achieve a unified vision for the future, plans at all levels are to be consistent with the Vermont planning goals and compatible with one another. Town Plans are to be compatible with the regional plan and with approved plans of other municipalities in the region. As defined in the law, for one plan to be compatible with another, the plan in question, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan.

Compatibility with Town Plans

Dummerston shares boundaries with Brattleboro, Marlboro, Newfane, Brookline, and Putney. The Connecticut River separates Dummerston from Chesterfield and Westmoreland, New Hampshire. The status of Town Plans for Vermont towns is as follows:

- Brattleboro Town Plan adopted February 9, 2013
- Marlboro Town Plan adopted October 10, 2013
- Newfane Town Plan adopted July 22, 2013
- Brookline Town Plan adopted January 9, 2013
- Putney Town Plan adopted December 16, 2015

This Plan strives to support the goals and policies of the neighboring towns as well as strengthen the relationships with those towns to work on issues that are a common concern. The Dummerston Town Plan is compatible with the town plans of neighboring towns. The future land use districts do not conflict those in the neighboring towns. The lands on the border are similarly designated to perpetuate the rural land uses that currently exist and where applicable, protect the value natural resources and physical constraints of the landscape. Along Route 5 at the Putney border, the land is designated to support growth in Putney Village and to maximize existing infrastructure.

Compatibility with the Windham Regional Plan

The Windham Regional Plan (adopted September 30, 2014) is intended to provide guidelines for the planning and coordination of change and development which will, in accordance with present and future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the region. The Dummerston Town Plan supports and complements the land use and development goals of the Regional Plan.

There are some differences between the proposed land use map in the Windham Regional Commissions Plan and the future land use map in the Dummerston Town Plan. Dummerston has classified several areas as Residential while the Regional Plan categorizes these areas as Rural Residential. In the context of Dummerston, these areas are some of the more compact

development areas. However, on a regional scale, they are not compact areas when compared to the villages and downtowns that serve the region. This apparent discrepancy is ameliorated because at the local level the plan helps create compact settlement areas separated by countryside and provides for intensive residential development in areas related to community centers which is one of the planning goals of the State of Vermont.

The corridors along Routes 5 and 30 appear to display another incompatibility between the Regional and Dummerston plans, but here as well it is ameliorated by a thorough local planning process and its results. While the Regional Plan classifies the land in these corridors as Productive Rural and Rural Residential, the Dummerston plan includes some areas classified as Rural Commercial. Prior to the 2014 town plan update these corridors were classified entirely as Rural Commercial. The planning process for the 2014 update included extensive study and many public meetings with a high level of public participation on the subject of land use in the corridors, a process lasting four years. The resulting compromise was a significant reduction in the amount of land classified as Rural Commercial in the corridors, though certain areas remain. This made the 2014 Town Plan much more compatible with the Regional Plan than the 2010 Town Plan was. The planning process for the current Town Plan did not include an update of the Land Use district mapping because the previous planning process was so recent and thorough.