



Dummerston
Vermont

TOWN PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Dummerston Town Plan

The Dummerston Town Plan is designed to provide guidelines for planning the future of the Town of Dummerston so that community actions, whether private or public, will:

- conform to the wishes of its citizens;
- avoid the adverse and sometimes irreversible effects often associated with purely random development;
- be in harmony with the planning measures of the State, the Windham Region, and neighboring towns.

The Town Plan is to be used by public officials, businesses, landowners, and residents in a number of ways:

- To provide a source of information about the Town.
- To encourage individual and community actions in all areas covered by the Plan that are in the environmental, economic and social interests of the Town.
- To recommend future community programs, actions, and studies that will help to ensure a continuous planning program.
- To provide a framework for zoning and any other bylaws or ordinances the Town may adopt.
- To guide local decision-making in the review of development proposals, including site plan, conditional use, and subdivision reviews.
- To serve as a basis for responding to development proposals requiring Act 250 permits or any other similar State or Federal review proceedings.

How the Town Plan was Developed

The Dummerston Planning Commission is responsible for preparing the Town Plan. This plan is an update of the 2014 Dummerston Town Plan. The Plan is designed to comply with the standards of Title 24 V.S.A. (Vermont Statutes Annotated) Chapter 117 with respect to the content of the Plan, consistency with Vermont's planning goals, and compatibility with the Town Plans of nearby towns and the Windham Regional Plan. Technical assistance was provided by the Windham Regional Commission.

It is important that the plan reflect the wishes of Dummerston residents. For this reason, the planning commission held public forums to get feedback from residents on this update. The planning commission also received input from the Conservation Commission, Housing Advisory Commission, Energy Committee, town officials, and other volunteers.

Process for Adoption, Modification, and Updating

Formal adoption of the Town Plan will take place after public hearings of the Planning Commission and the Selectboard. The Plan is adopted by a majority vote of the Selectboard. A Town Plan expires eight years from the day of adoption.

Planning is an ongoing process. Once adopted, the Town Plan will need review every few years in order to account for new information about the Town and new public needs and desires as expressed by the citizens of Dummerston. This review is one of the main responsibilities of the Dummerston Planning Commission. A Town Plan can be modified and formally amended (through public hearings) at any time during the eight-year period.

Organization of the Town Plan

The Dummerston Town Plan is divided into chapters on various topics. Each chapter includes Goals, which are statements of the end results or conditions desired by Dummerston. They are also expressions of the community's environmental, cultural, and social values. Each chapter also contains Policies, which help define the direction the Town will take and Action Steps which provide the Town a method of implementing the specific policies. The Action Steps also indicate the board or commission that is most appropriate for carrying out the action.

Interpretation of the Town Plan

In situations where the interpretation of the Plan is needed or required, it will be the task of the Dummerston Planning Commission, in conjunction with the Selectboard, to conduct the review.

Throughout the text of this Town Plan many of the Policy statements and Action Steps include imperative verbs. Should or may means that a requirement is encouraged but not mandated, whereas must or shall means that the Town has strong intentions of ensuring a requirement is accomplished. Policy is defined herein as a guideline for achieving short-term and long-term goals.

GOALS OF DUMMERSTON

The following goals shall serve to guide Dummerston in its overall planning process. These goals are statements of the end results or conditions desired by Dummerston. They are expressions of the community's economic, environmental, cultural and social values. In developing this list of goals, the Dummerston Planning Commission included goal statements from previous Town Plans adopted by the community, and considered the Vermont Planning Goals as set forth in the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (Chapter 117 4302). The stated goals shall serve as the foundation of this Town Plan and are further clarified and defined by policies and Action Steps found in the various chapters. The Planning Commission will work with officials (elected and appointed) and other committees to achieve these goals.

DUMMERSTON COMMUNITY PROFILE

Goal 1 — Maximize opportunities for all residents to participate in all public processes.

LAND USE

Goal 1 — Achieve a balance between development activities, preservation of natural resources, and undeveloped land in Dummerston.

Goal 2 — Protect the natural environment and its economic, ecological, and aesthetic benefits.

Goal 3 — Promote intensive land uses and development only in areas where adequate public services and facilities are available.

WORKING LANDSCAPE

Goal 1 — Preserve agricultural lands for agricultural use and maintain a strong agricultural economy.

Goal 2 — Preserve important forest land for sustainable forestry practices and support forest-based industries.

Goal 3 — Support the continuation of the Use Value Appraisal Program as a way of retaining large tracts of farmland and forest land.

CONSERVED AND PUBLICLY OWNED LANDS

Goal 1 — Encourage preservation of undeveloped land as an important element in shaping Dummerston's development pattern and in preserving its aesthetic and environmental quality.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Water and Wetland Resources

Goal 1 — Protect surface and ground water quality and quantity for drinking and other domestic uses, for fish and wildlife habit, and for recreational use.

Mineral Resources

Goal 1 — Identify and balance the benefits and uses of sand, gravel and other mineral and earth resources against the impacts associated with the extraction, processing and transportation of such resources.

Ecological Landscape

Goal 1 — Protect and enhance biological diversity in Dummerston.

Goal 2 — Engage townspeople in protecting natural resources.

RECREATION, SCENIC, HISTORIC, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goal 1 — Be stewards for recreational and scenic resources essential to Dummerston's community character.

Goal 2 — Preserve and protect historic and cultural properties and sites.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND UTILITIES

Goal 1 — Provide for the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Goal 2 — Provide an efficient system of community facilities and services.

FLOOD RESILIENCE

Goal 1 — Enhance flood resilience through the protection and restoration of river corridors, floodplains, wetlands, and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion.

Goal 2 — Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal 1 — Provide for safe, economical, and energy-efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural and social environment.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1 — Support and promote the town's current economic base to retain existing employment opportunities and increase availability of good quality employment opportunities.

ENERGY

Goal 1 — Dummerston will reduce total per-capita non-renewable energy consumption 40% by 2030 from a 2010 baseline.

Goal 2 — Renewable electricity generation in Dummerston will achieve 20% of town wide electricity consumption by 2030.

HOUSING

Goal 1 — Create flexibility and diversity in Dummerston's housing stock.

EDUCATION

Goal 1 — Provide quality education for all people in Dummerston.

Goal 2 — Ensure that high quality, affordable child care is accessible to all children.