



TOWN OF WESTFIELD
38 School Street ♦ Westfield, VT 05874

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Attention: Planning Commission, Town Clerk, Selectboard

Please find attached the proposed Westfield Town Plan amendment and accompanying maps. The Plan amendment Report and Notice of Public Hearing are included below.

When adopted, this plan will replace the municipal plan expiring December 9, 2018. The plan amendment updates data and information in the existing plan and includes three new sections: Flood Resilience, Wildlife Habitat, and an expanded Energy section to include Substantial Deference.

The Planning Commission has warned a Public Hearing for Wednesday, December 5, 2018, 6:30 p.m., at the Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Road (corner of School Street). Per statutory requirements, we submit these documents for your review. We welcome your participation and comments. Written comments may be directed to the Westfield Planning Commission Chair, c/o the Town of Westfield, 38 School Street, Westfield, VT 05874 or sent to westfieldvtplanning@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Westfield Planning Commission

Pat Sagui, Chair
Loren Petzoldt, Vice Chair
Brian Dunn
Yvan LaPlume
Shawn Baraw

TOWN OF WESTFIELD
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given to the residents of the Town of WESTFIELD, VT that the Westfield Planning Commission will hold a public hearing in the Westfield Community Center (59 North Hill Rd) on Wednesday, December 5, 2018, at 6:30 p.m.

This hearing will be held for public review of and comment on the proposed amendment to Westfield Town Plan pursuant to Title 24 VSA, Chapter 117.

The purpose of the Westfield Town Plan is to establish a coordinated, comprehensive planning process to guide decisions made by the Town. The proposed amendment to the plan, if and when adopted, will affect all lands within the Town.

CONTENTS OF THE WESTFIELD TOWN PLAN

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| 1. Introduction (and vision for the next eight years) | 11. Land Use |
| 2. Water Resource | 12. Development Trends and Plans for Adjacent Towns & the Region |
| 3. Flood Resilience | 13. Implementation Plan |
| 4. Facilities and Services | APPENDIX A: Plan Maps |
| 5. Education | |
| 6. Economy | |
| 7. Housing | |
| 8. Transportation | |
| 9. Energy | |
| 10. Wildlife Habitat and Significant and Natural and Historic Features | |

Copies of the proposed plan amendment are available at the Town Clerk's office at 38 School Street. Office hours are Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A copy of the plan amendment is also available online at www.nvda.net/westfield.php.

Written comment on the plan amendment should be directed to the Westfield Planning Commission.

Email: westfieldvtplanning@gmail.com.

Mail: Attn: Westfield Planning Commission, 38 School Street, Westfield, VT 05874.

Dated in Westfield, Vermont, November 2, 2018.

TOWN OF WESTFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION

Town of Westfield, Vermont

Municipal Plan Amendment Planning Commission Report November 1, 2018

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384(c):

*“When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal.” **The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in §4302 of this title.***

The proposed plan amendment updates the December 2013 Town Plan, which was deemed consistent with the goals of 24 VSA §4302 and approved by the regional planning commission in 2015. The proposed plan amendment has been updated to meet new statutory requirements, including information on priority forest blocks and wildlife connectivity blocks; and flood resilience.

The plan has also been amended to meet the requirements for substantial deference under Act 174. The plan contains energy usage information across sectors, targets and strategies in support of statewide 2050 energy goals, and maps. The proposed plan contains general siting considerations for renewable energy generation. The Town of Westfield intends to seek certification of compliance with enhanced energy planning standards upon approval of the plan.

The proposed amendment includes recommendations for Village Center designation.

Considerations for change of designation of any land area:

- 1. 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 proposed amendment is likely to reinforce desired development patterns of compact village centers surrounded by open countryside and low densities of development. This is due to two recommendations:

- **Village Center Designation:** tax credits and priority consideration for grant funding opportunities may help encourage reinvestment in the existing village center.
- **Continued support for low-density development in other areas:** The plan maintains the existing density for all zoning districts. However, the plan does suggest exploring more flexible alternatives to minimum lot sizes. Alternatives include clustering, the use of conservation easements, enrollment in Current Use, and permitting for accessory housing/tiny houses, and for interior modifications of existing houses to support aging in place through home sharing.

2. The long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on:

(A) the municipal tax base; and

It is possible that Village Center Designation may add to the tax base by providing incentives for adaptive reuse for income-producing properties. It is not possible to quantify the effect on the tax base.

(B) the need for public facilities;

The plan recommends a park and ride, near the village center on Route 100; EV charging stations in the village and/or park and ride. Access to funding for this infrastructure could be improved by Village Center Designation. The plan recommends exploring need and options for shared office space to encourage home-based businesses with inadequate internet access; conducting a feasibility study to convert the former Scenic View Care facility into affordable housing, and; exploring options to improve walkability and pedestrian/cyclist safety in the village center.

3. The amount of vacant land which is:

(A) already subject to the proposed new designation; and

There is no vacant land subject to a new designation. The proposed designations are for existing village center development.

(B) actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.

This is not applicable.

4. 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 proposed Village Center designation areas will be determined in accordance with the Village Center program guidelines, e.g. compact centers of development with a mix of uses. There are no alternative locations to be considered.

5. 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.

See 4C above.

The proposed plan amendment contains a Flood Resilience section to comply with state mandates and ensure ongoing compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. The proposed plan amendment contains the following recommendation: *Consider regulation that protects erosion-prone and floodwater storage areas.* However, no specific regulatory measures are proposed at this time.