

Town of Rutland Planning Commission

TOWN OF RUTLAND MUNICIPAL PLAN

AMENDMENT :

WRITTEN REPORT

REVISED MARCH 24, 2016

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

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 Town of Rutland Municipal Plan has been updated in accordance with the goals set forth in 24 V.S.A. §4302 as well as with the recommendations in the Town of Rutland's Enhanced Consultation by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission on May 2, 2013.

The majority of the changes made to the plan are to comply with state planning goals, to reflect changes that have occurred in the Town of Rutland, and to be consistent with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC) *Regional Plan*.

The updated plan includes a new Land Use map, revises and expands its AGR40 Land Use Agricultural District to incorporate Agricultural and Forestry Working Lands, and adds to the Natural Resources chapter so as to designate Open Spaces and Scenic Resources throughout the town.

The Town of Rutland Planning Commission held a community forum, held several working sessions, and requested input from several civic organizations including the elementary school, library, police department, fire department, and emergency responders to help create this plan.

New Land Use Map

24 V.S.A. §4384(c) also requires that when the designation of any land area is altered, that the report covers the following points:

- (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 new Land Use Map changes the designation of some parcels but does so in a way that primarily consolidates adjoining parcels into similar designations. For instance, five disconnected parcels of Conservation lands would be consolidated into 11 contiguous parcels. Some farmland parcels that were designated Commercial or Residential Commercial are now Working Lands: Agriculture/Forestry. The probable impact on the surrounding areas of the new Land Use Map would be minimal since it reflects current uses of the parcels.

Town of Rutland Planning Commission

TOWN OF RUTLAND MUNICIPAL PLAN AMENDMENT : WRITTEN REPORT REVISED MARCH 24, 2016

(2) 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 long-term cost would be negligible because the parcel changes are not likely to affect the municipal tax base or the need for additional public facilities. The long-term benefit to the municipality would be the potential for value-added agricultural and forestry enterprises in the Working Lands District.

(3) 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.

Vacant land would mostly improve the changes that have been made in parcel designation. That is most apparent in the Conservation District which goes from five disjointed parcels to 11 contiguous ones, some of which were Residential previously. An added benefit to the town is that conserved vacant land creates more habitat for wildlife and plants and enhances water quality.

(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 suitability of the changes in the Land Use Map is very good considering alternative locations, uses for the area under consideration, and the lack of probable impacts on other areas similarly designated since it would primarily reflect current uses of the parcels.

Town of Rutland Planning Commission

TOWN OF RUTLAND MUNICIPAL PLAN AMENDMENT : WRITTEN REPORT REVISED MARCH 24, 2016

(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.

The size and boundaries of the changes in the Land Use Map would be appropriate and minimal with respect to the area required and land capability. The impact on existing development, such as residential development, would be more consequential given that some parcels would be conserved and, in others, development density would be significantly lowered.

Revised and expanded AGR40 Land Use Agricultural District

V.S.A. §4384(c) also requires that when the designation of any land area is altered, that the report covers the following points:

(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 probable impact on the surrounding area of the new Agricultural and Forest Working Lands District would be minimal since most of the changes reflect current use. The probable pattern on the overall pattern of land use would be beneficial because the scenic qualities and features of these parcels now in agricultural and forestry use would be preserved.

(2) 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 long-term cost would be negligible because the changes in land use designation would not likely to affect the municipal tax base or increase the need for additional public facilities. The long-term benefit to the municipality would be the potential for value-added agricultural and forestry enterprises and the ecological benefits of having more connected conserved land parcels.

(3) The amount of vacant land which is:

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

Town of Rutland Planning Commission

TOWN OF RUTLAND MUNICIPAL PLAN AMENDMENT : WRITTEN REPORT REVISED MARCH 24, 2016

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

Vacant land would be most impacted in the Conservation District which in one case goes from five disjointed parcels to 11 contiguous ones creating the added benefit to the town of more habitat for wildlife and plants. For those parcels of vacant land in the new Agricultural and Forest Working Lands District and formerly in Residential/Commercial District, there would be some impact due to stricter restrictions on residential development density. On these parcels, development density goes from up to two residential units or one commercial unit per acre to one residence in any lot up to 10 acres; lots above 10 acres, one residence per 10 acres – except for clustered residential development where development density is not less than two acres per singly family structure.

(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 suitability of the changes in the new Agricultural and Forest Working Lands District is good considering alternative locations, alternative uses and the lack of significant impacts on other areas similarly designated.

(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.

The size and boundaries of the changes in the new Agricultural and Forest Working Lands District are appropriate and minimal with respect to the area required and land capability. The impact on existing development, such as residential development, would be more consequential given that some parcels would be conserved and, in others, development density is significantly lowered.

Town of Rutland Planning Commission

TOWN OF RUTLAND MUNICIPAL PLAN AMENDMENT : WRITTEN REPORT REVISED MARCH 24, 2016

Addition to the Natural Resources chapter designating Open Spaces and Scenic Resources throughout the town

24 V.S.A. §4384(c) also requires that when the designation of any land area is altered, that the report covers the following points:

(2) 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 probable impact on the surrounding area of the addition to the open spaces and scenic resources section of the Municipal Plan would be minimal because even though it provides guidance on limiting development in these areas, it does not significantly change the overall pattern of existing land use.

(2) 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 long-term cost would be negligible because it is not likely to affect the municipal tax base or the need for additional public facilities. The long-term benefit to the municipality would be the potential for value-added agricultural and forestry enterprises and the ecological benefits of having open spaces and scenic areas of the town.

(3) 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 probable impact on vacant land from the addition to the Open Spaces and Scenic Resources section of the Municipal Plan would be minimal because even though it provides guidance on limiting development in these areas, it does not significantly change the existing overall pattern of land use.

Town of Rutland Planning Commission

TOWN OF RUTLAND MUNICIPAL PLAN AMENDMENT : WRITTEN REPORT REVISED MARCH 24, 2016

(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 suitability of the land use changes in the Open Spaces and Scenic Resources section of the Municipal Plan is good considering alternative locations, alternative uses and the lack of significant impacts on other areas similarly designated.

(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.

The size and boundaries of the land use changes included in the additions to the Open Spaces and Scenic Resources section of the Municipal Plan are appropriate and minimal with respect to the area required and land capability since they would not change existing land use patterns.