WEST WINDSOR TOWN PLAN

Planning Commission Public Hearing: August 16, 2005
Approved by the Planning Commission: August 16, 2005
Adopted by the Selectboard: September 19, 2005
Approved by the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission:
September 20, 2005

Prepared by the West Windsor Planning Commission
With assistance from the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Chapter 1. Introduction 1
Tools 2
History of West Windsor 3
Population and Demographics 6
Chapter 2. Land Use 12
Current Land Use 12
Future Land Use 13
Chapter 3. Utilities and Facilities 18
Electric Utilities and Phone Service 18
Water and Sewer 18
Telecommunications 20
Chapter 4. Municipal Services and Government 23
Fire, Ambulance and Police Services 23
Town Government and Administration 25
Solid Waste and Recycling 28
Chapter 5. Education 30
Education 30
Chapter 6. Recreation 32
Recreation 32
Chapter 7. Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources 35
Natural Resources 35
Wildlife Habitat 38
Scenic Areas 39
Historic Resources 40
Chapter 8. Transportation 42
Transportation Inventory 42
Existing Traffic Conditions 44
Commuter Patterns 46
Road Policy and Maintenance 47
Chapter 9. Energy 51
Analysis 51
Chapter 10. Housing 54
Chapter 11. Economic Development 57
Introduction 57
Encouraging Home-Based and Small Businesses 57
Agriculture as a Business 58
Tourism/Vacation Home Development 58
Ascutney Mountain Resort 58
Commercial-Industrial Areas 59
Chapter 12. Relationship to Local and Regional Plans 61
Neighboring Towns 61
Southern Windsor County Region 61

Chapter 13. Town Plan Implementation 63

MAPS

Base Features 64
Natural Resources 65
Current Land Use/Land Cover.....66
Future Land Use.....67

APPENDICES

A – West Windsor Story 68
B – Survey Results.....72
C – Glossary 75

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

People are apt to think of West Windsor as a small, rural community largely insulated from change, but the town faces many of the complex economic, social, and environmental issues more commonly associated with an urban community. The purpose of this plan is to provide the town a means of anticipating and influencing the implications of these important issues for our community. While a Town Plan is not a law, it is a legal document upon which regulations may be developed. It provides benchmarks by which new development and planning projects may be measured and serves as an integral component of the Act 250 process. The Town Plan may encourage exploration of other, non-regulatory measures such as conservation easements and land acquisition that also may be useful in achieving town goals. The plan also reviews the status of town services and the condition of town properties to assess and prioritize needs.

Our town plan is the expression of our community values and vision and our blueprint to promote and protect this vision and these values.

Throughout 2004, the community participated in a town-wide survey and special meetings to discuss and establish our values and vision. The results form the foundation of our plan. The survey and results can be found in Appendix B.

West Windsor has decided, above all, that its highly valued features are its rural character and its natural surroundings. The Town is committed to protecting these highly valued features in spite of mounting development pressures to become more suburban like other towns in the Upper Valley.

It is clear that we value:

- A vibrant, neighborly community.
- Respect for each other.
- Our public institutions: our school, post office, library, town hall and public safety building.
- Our private institutions: the general store, ski area, Mt. Ascutney School.
- Our close relationship with the systems of nature and its beauty and all of its creatures and features.
- Scenic, canopied, dirt roads.
- The opportunity to live in harmony with nature as part of a naturally functioning ecosystem.
- Home businesses, farming, sugaring.
- Respect and protection for all wildlife.

- Remote, large, contiguous open spaces and corridors.
- Spiritual renewal from the wonders of nature.
- Clear night sky of stars and planets.
- Majestic views of Mt. Ascutney and the surrounding hills and fields.
- Open fields and forests.
- Outdoor recreation: particularly our trails for hunting, skiing, hiking, snowmobiling, horseback riding, and walking.
- Clean water, streams and brooks, wetlands, and vernal pools.
- Forested hillsides.

We understand and accept that along with our individual rights, we have important responsibilities. We are the stewards of our rural and natural heritage. We must dedicate ourselves to protecting and promoting that which makes West Windsor so special, for present and future generations.

This is our mission statement and these are our guiding principles. When change is proposed, we must first affirmatively answer the question "Will this action improve our community and promote and protect our values and vision?"

What makes West Windsor special to the region is our natural surroundings and rural character. It is these that form the core of our values and that which this plan seeks to promote and protect. We must be ready and willing to promote our vision and values and protect them when threatened.

TOOLS

To implement and protect our values and vision, the Town should review, consider and adopt when appropriate the following tools:

- Subdivision Review;
- Site Plan Review;
- Expanded Conditional Use Review Standards;
- Minimum frontage on town highway or equivalent – no easements;
- Discourage new town highways except in growth areas;
- Limit steepness and length of driveways;

- Limit the number of new housing starts and give certain areas priority for growth;
- Capital Improvement Plan;
- Increase the minimum lot size outside the village;
- Create growth rings or equivalent for future growth; direct location and rate of growth;
- Inventory and prioritize natural areas, habitat, views, historic sites, trails and create overlay districts;
- Develop a historic or design review district for the village;
- Village density and open space protection;
- Consider land capacity/carrying principles for future development;
- Consider the increase in second homes and their effect on our community;
- Screening and visual impacts should be of paramount consideration in all new development;
- Enlist individuals or groups to promote and protect specific community and natural values, e.g. views, vernal pools, water, deer, village, etc.;
- Encourage unobtrusive cell coverage and high speed internet and;
- Consider ridgeline development rules.

HISTORY OF WEST WINDSOR

West Windsor originally was the West Parish of Windsor. On July 6, 1761, Josiah Willard of Winchester, New Hampshire "sued out" a six mile square grant for Windsor from Benning Wentworth, governor of New Hampshire, in the name of King George III of Great Britain. It was seven years later that the second division of house lots was mapped for the entire grant, setting the tone for dividing the township into two parishes.

It was not long before a crude church was built, and a cemetery was established high on a hill by the well-traveled track, which led west through the township. Settlers were "making pitches," buying land, and establishing their subsistence farms. The first central hamlet of the West Parish was the cluster of homes in the bowl of hills just west of the church. So many members of the Shedd family settled there, that the tiny community, with its tannery, potash works, blacksmith, store (complete with library), tavern, and school, has always been known as Sheddsville.

Settlers in the hills carved rough roads to sawmills and gristmills in the soggy valley along Mill Brook. By 1810 a filling and carding mill was using waterpower to process the wool from sheep that were thriving on the rocky hillsides. As mills drew settlers to the valley, and Return Brown

built his brick home with seven chimneys near where Potash Brook flows into Mill Brook, the community grew and thrived. By this time, children in the large families had the opportunity to get a basic education, for there were eleven one-room schoolhouses scattered throughout the township.

When Merino sheep were imported into Vermont by Consul-General William Jarvis of Weathersfield, local farmers began to enlarge and improve their flocks. As the more successful farmers bought out smaller farms, many families moved west to land that was more fertile and more easily cultivated.

Over the years there had been underlying friction between the urban East Parish on the river and the agricultural West Parish. Much of the problem had to do with money, roads and caring for the indigent and poor. By an act of the Vermont legislature, the two parishes were legally separated November 4, 1814. Less than a year and a half later they made up their differences and were rejoined on March 1, 1816.

The sheep industry continued to flourish until the middle of the century when there were over 7,000 sheep denuding the once forested hills. Some of the farmers who were concentrating on breeding their sheep for even higher wool quality were selling prize rams not only to shepherds in our own western territories, but also to sheep-men in Australia and South Africa.

Friction continued between the two parishes. In 1848 they were again legally separated. Since that time they have remained two distinct townships. The first census taken after West Windsor was an independent township records the town as having 1,002 inhabitants.

In the late 1800's, as the sheep industry waned, the dairy business began to grow. A cheese factory bought milk from the local farmers. Several varieties of cheese were made and sent by rail to the Boston market. As refrigeration improved and more cows were taking over old sheep pastures, a creamery was established which also shipped milk to Massachusetts. By 1930, at the height of dairying, West Windsor's population had dropped to 512. There were 94 herds of cattle, and a total of 1,148 cows. That same year there were 91 students in the four existing schools.

In 1946, when skiing began to be a popular sport, a rope tow pulled avid skiers up a hill south of Brownsville at the base of Mount Ascutney. From that early start, a substantial family ski area was developed with tows, snowmaking, chair lifts, central lodges, and an ever-increasing number of trails. The operation changed hands a number of times, each time expanding until it had a hotel, fitness center, and many condominiums.

As of the 2000 U. S. Census, there were 1,067 residents in West Windsor. In the central village of Brownsville there is one church, one school, one general store, the town hall, and the West Windsor Historical Society, headquartered in the old grange hall. Though West Windsor is no longer considered an agricultural-farming community, there are many homeowners who have gardens and animals. There are many small businesses and cottage industries throughout the township. Most West Windsor workers commute to work in other towns. Many residents are retired. A number of second homes are owned by people from away. There are quite a few who have horses and have settled in the area because of the many dirt roads.

In 1991 the town took time to locally celebrate in style Vermont's Bicentennial birthday. The yearlong celebration included creating a local Bicentennial Trail in the town forest on Mount Ascutney. The town was in transition to times where not everyone knew their neighbors.

During the early 1990's, the Mount Ascutney Resort went into bankruptcy thanks in great part to changes in federal tax deduction rules. The town and school continued to budget and spend based on a grandfathered Grand List which included all of the resort property which made up a substantial portion of the total Grand List. The town had been assured the taxes, including related interest and penalties due on the resort property would be given the highest priority by the bankruptcy court. The bankruptcy extended over several years and when the court sold the resort property en masse the town only received a portion of the total taxes and penalties due. This left the town deeply in debt and the local banks were not at all anxious to lend the town operating funds in anticipation of taxes. Bold action was taken by the Select Board. The town raised the property tax rate enough to pay off the town's borrowing debt in a single year. The taxes came in, the debt was paid off.

As a result property values over the next few years grew in leaps and bounds and the town rebounded. As the town approached 1995 and the decade beyond, horse farms and high-value second homes continued to be built in many rural areas of the town. The last "milking" farm went out of business. The social impact of nearby Dartmouth College and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital grew larger.

In 1998, the town celebrated in grand fashion its sesquicentennial. The year 2000 was greeted at midnight with tremendous apprehension, even in West Windsor, fearing numerous disasters including a world-wide computer failure. With the fire station manned, and other emergency agencies totally prepared for horrendous events, nothing happened.

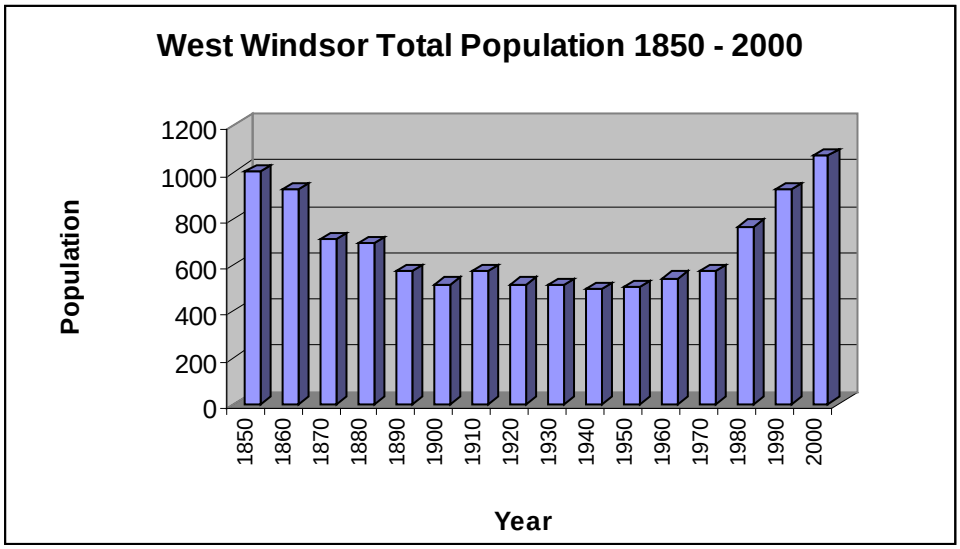
The resort has now had a single owner for more than ten years and continues to do well with an expanded ski area, a vibrant convention business, and vacation facilities. The town's decision to "not pave" any additional roads has also made the town stay "rural" and thus making all property even more desirable and valuable. The increase in the grand list allowed over the past decade for acceptable funding for local projects such as restoration of the town hall, and the construction of a new town garage. The village of Brownsville has had many of its buildings beautified and expanded including such buildings as the church and school.

The town continues to support and actively promote the preservation of its rural character. It enjoys a vibrant resort business and has a balance of small construction trades, and numerous other home businesses. The full-time residential population is over 1000 and thus has reached the population the town had prior to the Civil War.

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS[1]

Population

The town of West Windsor has experienced a high rate of population growth in the past 3 decades. Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the rate of growth between 1970 and 1980 was 33.6 percent. The rate of growth between 1980 and 1990 was 21.0 percent and the rate of growth from 1990 to 2000 was 15.6 percent. The total population has doubled since 1970, from 571 to 1,067.

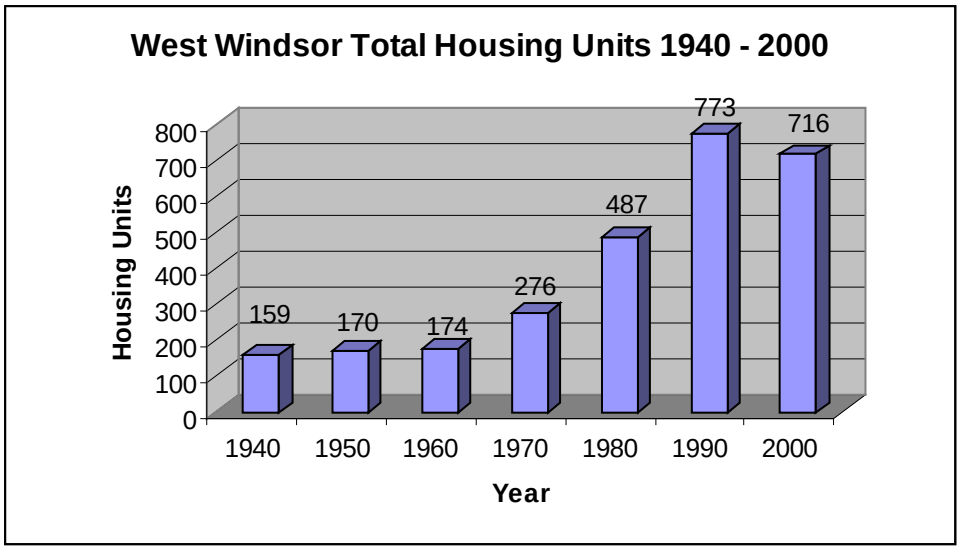


YEAR	POPULATION	YEAR	POPULATION
1850	1002	1930	512
1860	924	1940	494
1870	708	1950	504
1880	690	1960	539
1890	570	1970	571
1900	513	1980	763
1910	569	1990	923
1920	514	2000	1067

Housing

The total number of housing units from 1970-2000 grew 159.4 percent - the fastest rate of growth in the region. However, the total number of housing units decreased from 773 in 1990 to 716 in 2000. This decrease may relate to the bankruptcy of the ski resort in 1993.

[1] Based on U.S. Census of Population and Housing (1850-2000), VT Department of Taxes, UVM Center for Rural Studies



The median value of an owner occupied housing unit has tripled since 1980 from$53,700 to $173,700 in 2000, which represents the greatest increase in the region. Woodstock is the only surrounding town with a higher median housing unit value ($190,400) in 2000. West Windsor also has the highest median rent in the area at $744 per month in 2000.

MEDIAN HOUSING UNIT VALUE 2000

ANDOVER	$161,200
BALTIMORE	$100,000
CAVENDISH	$91,900
CHESTER	$106,800
HARTLAND	$130,300
LUDLOW	$120,600
READING	$127,900
SPRINGFIELD	$82,300
WEATHERSFIELD	$94,300
WEST WINDSOR	$173,700
WINDSOR	$86,400
WOODSTOCK	$190,400

Source: U.S. Census 2000

MEDIAN GROSS RENT 2000

ANDOVER	$538
BALTIMORE	$575
CAVENDISH	$513
CHESTER	$512
HARTLAND	$621
LUDLOW	$520
READING	$575
SPRINGFIELD	$469
WEATHERSFIELD	$576
WEST WINDSOR	$744
WINDSOR	$490
WOODSTOCK	$669

Source: U.S. Census 2000

Economy

The 2000 Census reports that those living in the town of West Windsor have the highest median per capita income, median household income, and median family income in the region at $28,360, $54,792, and $63,456 respectively.

MEDIAN INCOME 1999

TOWN	MEDIAN PER CAPITA INCOME	MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
ANDOVER	$21,744	$50,625	$42,273
BALTIMORE	$17,260	$46,964	$44,375
CAVENDISH	$18,420	$41,591	$34,727
CHESTER	$19,661	$47,083	$39,417
HARTLAND	$23,715	$55,354	$49,388
LUDLOW	$24,708	$44,375	$36,969
READING	$20,504	$48,636	$44,306
SPRINGFIELD	$18,452	$42,620	$34,169
WEATHERSFIELD	$21,647	$46,282	$42,057
WEST WINDSOR	$28,360	$63,456	$54,792
WINDSOR	$17,640	$43,551	$33,815
WOODSTOCK	$28,326	$57,330	$47,143

Source: US Census 2000

The town also has the lowest school tax rate in the area in 2004 at $1.09 (residential rate per $100), and the second lowest municipal property tax rate in 2004 at $0.30 (rate per $100), behind Ludlow at $0.22.

AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TAXES, 2003

TOWN	2003 TAXES
ANDOVER	$2,580.00
BALTIMORE	$1,820.00
CAVENDISH	$2,318.00
CHESTER	$2,793.00
HARTLAND	$2,938.00
LUDLOW	$2,381.00
READING	$2,739.00
SPRINGFIELD	$2,612.00
WEATHERSFIELD	$2,647.00
WEST WINDSOR	$2,531.00
WINDSOR	$2,887.00
WOODSTOCK	$5,794.00

Source: UVM Center for Rural Studies

EFFECTIVE PROPERTY TAX RATE (RATE PER $100) 2004

TOWN	SCHOOL/ RESIDENTIAL	SCHOOL/ NONRESIDENTIAL	LOCAL AGREEMENT	MUNICIPAL
ANDOVER	1.19	1.37	0.0000	0.40
BALTIMORE	1.29	1.35	0.0000	0.98
CAVENDISH	1.48	1.41	0.0000	0.50
CHESTER	1.37	1.36	0.0000	0.69
HARTLAND	1.35	1.40	0.0000	0.37
LUDLOW	1.35	1.42	0.0000	0.22
READING	1.72	1.64	0.0000	0.35
SPRINGFIELD	1.36	1.44	0.0000	1.29
WEATHERSFIELD	1.29	1.41	0.0022	0.66
WEST WINDSOR	1.09	1.32	0.0000	0.30
WINDSOR	1.43	1.47	0.0086	1.30
WOODSTOCK	1.44	1.46	0.0149	0.34

Source: VT Department of Taxes

GOALS

1. **Protect the land uses which are so much a part of West Windsor's rural character by preserving open pastures intermixed with woodlands, wildlife habitats and village historical buildings and features.**

West Windsor can be described as possessing the pastoral beauty embodied in this reference to "rural character", however, ours is not a typical small Vermont town in this regard. There exists in West Windsor a major resort complex (Ascutney Mountain Resort) in the southeastern corner of town. It is an asset, important to the community, for which adequate provision must be made in this plan; but the resort also makes the protection of rural character a much more complicated task. The visual impact is one facet of this phenomenon, but secondary growth pressures stemming from the presence of a four-season resort can run counter to a quest for maintenance of rural character. The village itself is one of the most prominent historical features of the town. Finding ways to address these pressures – strategies need to be devised that will protect the relatively passive nature of a rural life-style from the more dominant energies that emanate from industries such as these – will be a principal focus of this plan.

2. **Encourage agricultural activity in West Windsor.**

Fields and pastures that were once prominent features of a healthy agricultural economy are rapidly disappearing under a spreading mantle of scrub timber. Under these circumstances, realization of this goal in any time frame is highly speculative, unless powers far beyond the control of this community change radically, making agriculture a valuable occupation once again. There is now the presence of many horse farms and also an alpaca farm. West Windsor's policies can support this goal by protecting agricultural lands and working to ensure that those economic forces over which we have some influence support the continuance of agricultural enterprises in town. Managed woodlots, maintenance of mown fields and alternative (i.e. non-dairy) forms of agricultural land use should be encouraged. Identification of the means to do these things will be another focus of this plan.

3. **Allow for reasonable, compatible growth of the resort and small-scale commercial industries in the locations where they presently exist, yet limit the potential for undesirable impacts from these large enterprises on the rest of the town. At the same time, provide for the development of small, primarily home-based businesses and/or light industry in other areas of the town.**

Reference has already been made to the fact that large, capital intensive activities such as those presently located in West Windsor can be a mixed blessing to a community like ours. This is not a condition we should necessarily regret, or seek to reverse. In fact, the presence of these major industries is part of what makes our community unique. Yet the balance we have is a delicate one, easily disrupted unless the community establishes limits on the primary and secondary impacts of these industries. It is the town's policy to take a clearheaded look, with the help of the principals of local businesses, at how best to maintain our mutual interest in preserving this balance and to provide ample opportunity for the small, primarily home-based enterprise to flourish elsewhere in the town, as residents seek to initiate such entrepreneurial activities.

Within easy reach from West Windsor are several large commercial centers which serve this entire region. While we do not need to have most of these services replicated in town, certain of

them are appropriately located here, some to support the resort and others to serve the entire community. In this plan we will try to identify which services these are and where they are best sited to maintain our small town character.

4. **Maintain the quality of municipal services commonly provided in rural communities, while avoiding the proliferation of other services more common in urban areas with their attendant capital and operating costs.**

Part of rural living implies coping with relatively limited municipal services. Historically, these have been largely limited to education and highway maintenance, with other services provided either on a part-time or voluntary basis (police and fire protection), or simply left to individual residents to provide (septic disposal and water supply). This is now the case in West Windsor, and it should remain so until a majority of residents perceive a need for change. The town should continue to provide services based on the ability to be affordable and to not impact the rural character that makes West Windsor desirable and unique. In this Plan we try to sort out some of these issues and identify how growth should influence this goal.

CHAPTER 2. LAND USE

There are two basic considerations for deciding the most appropriate use of land in West Windsor: first, what use(s) best reflect the values and visions of the community of West Windsor, including residents, visitors, seasonal homeowners and wildlife; and second, what use(s) the land can reasonably support given natural resource and environmental constraints. Additional considerations are habitat, historic land use patterns, historic review within the Village, cultural values and the relationship between development and the efficient and cost-effective provision of public services. Together, these factors form the basis for West Windsor's land use plan.

CURRENT LAND USE

West Windsor barely remains a small town with a traditional Vermont village that is surrounded by rural areas. The unincorporated village of Brownsville has a mixture of commercial and residential uses, as well as public services including a library, post office, elementary school, Grange Hall and municipal offices. Most of the existing buildings in the village are small in scale, fairly close to the roadway and to each other, and blend architecturally. Proximate to the village is the Ascutney Mountain Resort, consisting of a ski area, base lodge, hotel and restaurants, various ski services and clusters of seasonal housing units. The resort area is served by a private sewer system to Windsor, while Brownsville and the rural areas are served by on-site septic systems. Industrial activity is primarily limited to the former talc plant south of VT Route 44 at the Reading town line. The remainder of West Windsor is primarily rural in nature with low density development.

Mount Ascutney is the prominent feature of the landscape, although it is located in three towns: West Windsor, Windsor and Weathersfield. The Ascutney Mountain Resort is located entirely in West Windsor, on the northern side of the mountain. There are also telecommunications facilities located near the summit. In West Windsor, much of the remainder of the mountain is undeveloped and under town ownership – the West Windsor Town Forest. Recent residential development in the town shows a strong tendency to locate in areas with views of the mountain.

The majority of the land area in the town is forested or open lands. Steep slopes, undeveloped ridgelines and wetland areas add to the scenic beauty of West Windsor, and provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. The pastures and agricultural fields along VT Route 44 and Mill Brook provide some of the most valued scenic resources in town.

Of West Windsor's 15,934 total approximate acres, 18.4 percent are agricultural lands, 7.1 percent are non-agricultural open space lands and 54.8 percent forested. Nearly 11 percent is currently used for outdoor recreation, primarily consisting of the Ascutney Mountain Resort. Less than 9 percent is currently developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional uses. Public lands include West Windsor Town Forest (1,186.2 acres) and State-owned Little Ascutney Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Little Ascutney WMA is 673.4 acres in total, with a majority of the land holding in Weathersfield.

FUTURE LAND USE

In order to implement the goals, policies and recommendations of this Plan through zoning and other measures, the following land use categories are established and shown on the Future Land Use Map. The basis for the land use categories is the development of sustainable land use measures, protection of valuable resources and efficient use of the town's limited infrastructure and taxpayer dollars. Generally, land within the delineated areas is suitable for the uses and densities proposed in this Plan. However, the physical characteristics of certain individual properties may be such that environmental considerations could further limit development. Therefore, the descriptions of appropriate land uses and densities should be interpreted generally – individual properties may have additional limitations.

Results from a 2004 survey of residents indicate that protecting the rural character, open spaces, historic buildings, and natural and scenic resources is a priority. A majority of survey respondents also indicated that the town should seek to protect each of those resources, and development along the ridgelines should not be allowed.

Along with the suitability of the land for development and protection of valuable natural resources, the efficient provision and expansion of public services provide the basis for West Windsor's land use categories. Directing growth to areas most effectively and efficiently serviced by utilities, roads and schools will help the town achieve its stated goals of maintaining its rural character and controlling the cost of public services. Policies and regulations which encourage growth towards the village area are consistent with these goals, however, if development pressures exceeds the Town' ability to provide services and/or is having a negative impact on the town's rural character, the town may place limitations on the number of building permits issued on a annual basis. In general, the future growth shall be encouraged in high density areas first and rural areas last.

All new development should blend in to the existing landscape, making every effort to avoid the appearance of "suburban style" development. New development should also seek to maintain existing natural resources and open spaces, and preserve the scenic resources and working landscape that resident's value.

Future Land Use Categories

Categories for future land use in West Windsor are displayed on the Future Land Use map and are described below:

Primary Growth Area / Village

The primary growth area, as defined in the Future Land Use Map, is where future growth shall be encouraged first. This area generally, includes the village of Brownsville and the Ascutney Mountain Resort base area. A mix of commercial and higher density residential development should be directed toward the village of Brownsville. Increased density in the village must also include open space and public recreational facilities in order to be successful. A mix of residential and ski-related commercial uses should be directed toward the resort base area.

Minimum lot sizes shall be determined by whether the area is served by sewer, on-site septic systems, or requirements to meet health regulations pertaining to waste disposal. The character

of the area, scale, architectural style and setbacks of new development shall retain the character of the area in which it is located. The village and ski resort areas shall maintain their separate and distinct appearances and character.

The village of Brownsville currently has a mixture of moderate density residential, commercial and institutional uses. Commercial development has historically been located in the village area, and is encouraged to occur in this area because of historic settlement patterns. There are currently no public water or sewer services in the village. The village shall be the focus of growth for West Windsor, while retaining its character, and historic and natural features. A sewer system may be required to accommodate future development in this area and to protect water quality. Commercial development in the village area should be interspersed with higher density residential and institutional uses. This area is intended to continue the long tradition of Vermont's downtowns and village centers. Development in this area should be of the highest density in the town, and the circulation system should accommodate pedestrians and other non-motorized travel. New development should not detract from the historic character and aesthetic qualities of the village. Parking should be encouraged in the rear or side of commercial and institutional buildings.

Ascutney Mountain Resort is a four-season destination, offering skiing, snowboarding, biking, tennis, miniature golf, hotel, condominiums, three restaurants, conferences and special events. The base area of the Ascutney Mountain Resort currently has a mixture of moderate density ski resort accommodations and related commercial and seasonal residential uses. This area is currently served by a water and sewer system. Development in this area should be of higher density, but should primarily be focused on the resort's seasonal uses. Future development of condominiums and other seasonal housing should avoid areas adjacent to skiing trails and elevations above the existing area. Development in this area shall also seek to limit impacts to the village relative to aesthetics, light, noise and water quality. Screening of new resort development from the village with trees and other native vegetation may be required to limit visual impacts on the village. The resort base area should provide a safe circulation system for bicycles and pedestrians.

Secondary Growth Area / Residential

The secondary growth area is where growth should take place after the primary growth area becomes built out. This area shall allow medium density residential uses in the areas surrounding the village and following the existing public roads.

The area surrounding the village of Brownsville and generally north of VT Route 44 currently has residential uses. In order to allow for new development in close, walkable proximity to the commercial, institutional and recreational uses, this area is designated for moderate density residential growth. The location, slope and length of driveways, as well as, facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists should be considered when planning new development in this area. These areas are currently served by private wells and on-site septic systems.

Rural Residential

Rural residential areas can support a variety of uses: residential, forestry, agricultural (including livestock, tree farms and other horticultural uses). The designation of this area is based upon

their current uses and proximity to town facilities and services. The primary concern in rural residential areas shall be to preserve open space, wildlife habitat, forest cover, large undeveloped areas and scenic resources, and to maintain low-density settlement patterns. Open space and recreational resources should be preserved wherever possible. Particular consideration should be given to the long-term protection of and public access to the existing network of trails for hiking, biking, equestrian activities, snowmobiling and other recreational activities. New residential development may occur in rural residential areas only where accessible from existing town highways, and shall avoid typical suburban design characteristics.

Conservation Area

Conservation areas are lands that possess outstanding wildlife habitat, recreational or educational resources, fragile natural areas, economic assets (generating revenue from recreation or tourism) or scenic resource values. These areas include: Mount Ascutney, headwater areas, floodplains, vegetated areas next to surface waters, wetlands, vernal pools, Natural Heritage Inventory sites, critical deer wintering habitat and bear habitat as defined by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, regionally significant historic sites, and other locally defined sensitive natural areas. This category also includes public lands owned by the town and state. Conservation lands represent relatively pristine areas or special resource areas of the town that residents wish to preserve in their natural state for future generations, and should receive the highest level of protection from development. Special care should be taken in any resource management or extraction plans to maintain the character and value of these areas. Conservation areas are especially beneficial when surrounded by compatible uses such as forest and agriculture.

Commercial / Light Industrial

The commercial / light industrial area has been singled out for uses that may be incompatible with other uses because of traffic, noise, inherent conflict with village character, etc. They also represent land previously used for commercial and light industrial uses. Currently, the Vermont Soapstone Company and Lucy Mackenzie Humane Society are located in this area. This area should be reserved for commercial and light industrial development or redevelopment, and managed to minimize traffic, noise, light, environmental and aesthetic impacts on surrounding areas. New development shall preserve natural resources, provide screening from VT Route 44 and adjacent parcels, limit light pollution, and implement access management techniques. New development shall also not adversely affect the aesthetics or scenic resources in this area, as it serves as a gateway to West Windsor. Parking lots should be located away from the road and properly screened.

Special Considerations

In addition, special considerations shall be observed with the following resources:

> *Agricultural Areas* – Agriculture has historically been important to the town's economy, food supply and cultural heritage. Lands in current agricultural use and prime agricultural soils are valued by residents and should be preserved for their contributions to community character and economic and scenic values.

Floodplains – New development should be discouraged in the 100-year floodplain areas to protect their natural functions, and to minimize property damage and loss of life during flooding events.

Forests **–** Forests represent land that is currently dominated by forest cover. Forest land is an asset to the town on many levels. It is an essential component of the rural lifestyle that West Windsor residents enjoy and cherish. It protects air, water and wildlife resources that are vital to the town's environmental, physical and economic health. Forests directly support the local economy – both by providing areas for recreation and by providing the basis for a sustainable forest products industry. All future development shall strive to preserve the existing forest cover and minimize more fragmentation of large forested areas.

Headwater Areas —Development in headwater areas shall be prohibited to protect and avoid contamination of the headwaters of local streams, brooks and rivers, and the wildlife found in these areas.

Ridgelines — Any development along ridgelines or at higher elevations should demonstrate that appropriate measures have been taken so the development is not visually obtrusive to surrounding neighbors or from public roadways.

Scenic Resources – Scenic resources are highly valued by residents of West Windsor and should be inventoried and protected from future development. Scenic resources contribute to the land use patterns and aesthetic qualities that make the town a desirable place to live, work and visit.

Steep Slopes and Shallow Soils — Land with soils poorly suited for development as well as lands with steep slopes should be protected from any development which could reasonably be expected to cause soil erosion and questionable access for emergency vehicles.

TIMING OF DEVELOPMENT

In order to ensure that public infrastructure is built in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, efforts should be made to encourage growth to take place in and around the village, ski resort base area and the commercial / light industrial area instead of in the more rural areas of town. In addition, the town wishes to prevent sudden large increases in population which would place undue stress on town facilities and community character. The town should therefore limit the number of new residential units on an annual basis.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to achieve and maintain the desired land uses, land use distributions and timing of development described in this chapter, the town should follow the goals, policies and recommendations listed below.

LAND USE POLICIES

1. Promote orderly growth in a way that encourages compatibility among adjacent land uses, without the degradation of natural resources, scenic views, open space and public recreational facilities.

2. Encourage development to locate along existing roads, utility lines and services.

3. Support the use of compact development techniques to encourage less expensive municipal services, energy efficiency and the preservation of open space.

4. Ensure that the provision of municipal services and infrastructure don't place a financial burden on the taxpayers and don't undermine the rural character of West Windsor.

5. Promote higher density residential, commercial and light industrial uses in the primary and commercial and light industrial designated areas.

6. Ensure that the important characteristics and context of historic sites and structures are maintained.

7. Continue to provide public access for recreation, education and other purposes to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

8. Development adjacent to significant natural resources (waterways, large forested areas, wildlife habitat, scenic resources, etc.) should be compatible with the value of those resources and should be mitigated with appropriate techniques.

9. Support programs that help farm and forestland owners lessen the financial responsibility of resource protection.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Revise the land use regulations so they are consistent with the purpose and intent of the Town Plan.

2. Develop a plan and techniques to mitigate the impacts of growth on the provision of municipal services, housing, natural and cultural resources, recreation, and other amenities.

3. Explore the feasibility of providing a public sewer system into the primary growth area.

4. Inventory and prioritize open space, agricultural and forest lands, wildlife habitat, scenic views and other important resources in town to determine methods to preserve or protect these resources.

5. Seek assistance from the Regional Development Corporation in the development of a feasibility study for the redevelopment of the commercial/light industrial area.

6. Establish subdivision regulations.

CHAPTER 3. UTILITIES AND FACILITIES

Note: See Attachment - Base Features Map

Current utilities, facilities, and services in West Windsor are those that are characteristic of a small, rural Vermont town. Services found within the resort area are the exception. In some ways, the resort area is like another community within the town.

Public investment in new facilities and services, such as public sewage disposal and water systems, or the enlargement of any public buildings, should only occur when a justifiable need for such investments arises. It should be remembered that rural living implies fewer public services and less investment in capital facilities than are expected in more urban areas.

ELECTRIC UTILITIES AND PHONE SERVICE

Electrical service throughout most of West Windsor, including the resort and the industrial zone, is supplied by Central Vermont Public Service (CVPS) from the Brownsville substation at the corner of VT Route 44 and Churchill Road. Power to that substation is supplied by a transmission line that runs north from Weathersfield. A small portion of the northeastern part of town is served from a Windsor substation.

Phone service for most residents of West Windsor is provided by Verizon's Reading exchange: 484; others are served by Verizon's Windsor exchange: 674. A handful of families in the northwestern section of town are served by Vtel's 436 exchange. All calls within the town, regardless of the exchange, are considered local calls, and towns in adjoining exchanges are also part of the local calling area. In addition to AT&T, numerous other companies provide long distance service throughout the town. Although aboveground telephone lines handle most of the telecommunications activity at this time, an underground fiber optic line now runs through West Windsor. The line handles the Vtel load out of Hartland and has a significant amount of additional capacity. Internet access has become an integral part of the phone system and there are several providers that offer internet access. When considering the installation of any new lines, the town should require that, when possible, these lines be buried to enable the preservation of the canopy of trees along the roadways for aesthetic reasons.

WATER AND SEWER

At this time, only the resort area contains properties that are served by a private sewer system. Construction of the pipeline, which runs from the Ascutney Mountain Resort to the Windsor sewage treatment plant was completed in 1987. Although the resort owns the pipeline, the Windsor/Ascutney Sewage Treatment Enterprise (WASTE), was established to oversee the operation of the pipeline following its completion. In April 1998, an amendment to the Act 250 permit for the pipeline shifted management of the pipeline from WASTE to the resort. Reference should be made to the Findings of Fact of application #2S0397-6B for a complete discussion of the issues related to this change. Although the majority of the buildings in the resort area are hooked up to the resort's private, sewer line, there are still some residences that have on-site systems.

Water is supplied to most buildings in and around the resort through one of three commonly owned water systems. The largest of these three systems was constructed during Phases I and II of the Ascutney Mountain Resort development and serves the hotel complex (including the 100 condo/hotel units), the health club, the Mountains Edge condo complex and the privately owned homes in the area known as the "Upper Loop". The two smaller systems are shared by homeowners on Sky Hawk Lane. The remainder of the residences in the resort has private, on-site water supplies. Parts of the main water system constructed during the 1980s expansion of the resort are supply lines, hydrants, and a storage area for fire protection and snowmaking. Water for the fire protection system that serves the resort buildings comes from the same wells that provide domestic water to the buildings. Water for the snowmaking system comes from Mill Brook, and is pumped from a pumping station located behind the town's firehouse. An underground storage tank, located near the pumping station, holds water that is used for snowmaking and an additional water supply that may be used by the fire department for fire fighting in the village.

The other common water supply worth noting is one that serves the school, town hall, and the church. A new bedrock well was drilled in 2003 on school grounds for expansion of the school and supplies the three buildings with water. Throughout the remainder of the town, all buildings are served by on-site septic disposal and water supply systems. The town is faced with decisions regarding maintaining and improving the water quality of the brooks and streams in town, and assuring that quality groundwater supplies continue to exist. This is particularly true in Brownsville village which has the densest concentration of on-site systems. All buildings are located within close proximity to the Mill and Beaver Brooks. A number of water quality assessments have been completed in recent years in order to measure and address contamination from human and animal waste and erosion. This is discussed further in the Natural Resources Chapter.

Groundwater resources are an often overlooked and under-valued asset, but one which a rural community like West Windsor should not take for granted. Reliance throughout most of the town on individual wells and springs for domestic water supply makes this an important planning consideration when contemplating development of any kind.

Recent developments increase the urgency in the village to review the provision of a public sewer system and common water supply. At least one establishment of importance to the village, the Brownsville General Store, has experienced critical septic issues. Additionally, contaminants have recently been detected in the water supply to the school, town hall, and church. These developments elevate the need to review the costs, feasibility and other ramifications of extending the public sewer line to the village. Any plans for this development must be mindful of not adversely impacting the historic and scenic attributes of the village valued by the residents of West Windsor. Review of a centralized water supply to the village area should also be undertaken should the correction to the recent problem of water contamination prove temporary. The Land Use Chapter of this plan will address these issues further.

WATER AND SEWER POLICIES

1. Encourage the adoption of innovative septic system designs and alternative methods of waste disposal**.**

2. Provide residents in the village downtown area with safe, efficient water and sewage treatment systems.

3. Encourage owners of parcels with on-site systems within the village area to consider obtaining municipal sewer service before system failure.

4. Support efforts to educate owners about proper maintenance of on-site systems.

5. Protect or improve the water quality of Mill Brook and its tributaries.

6. Ensure that any new sewer line is of adequate volume to achieve these goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Arrange for an engineering study to determine costs and other benefits of extending the public sewer line to the primary growth area.

2. Expand the existing sewer system into the designated village area to provide service to those whose on-site systems may be failing.

3. Ensure that along with any new sewer line, utility lines will be buried.

4. Form a design review board to maintain the historic integrity of the village with the power to preserve historic structures and guide future development in keeping with the village aesthetics, preventing undesirable development that any new sewer line might encourage.

5. Ensure that any new sewer line will follow VT Route 44 and cover the area between the bridges and the primary growth area up the Hartland – Brownsville Road to the cemetery.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

With the increase in wireless communications, the siting of wireless telecommunications facilities has become a challenging land use issue. The use of pagers and cellular phones has enhanced the communications capabilities of businesses and private citizens, and improved communications for emergency providers, which is an asset to all. At the same time, the attendant towers have posed a challenge in terms of preserving the rural landscape. While the Vermont legislature has enacted provisions that give municipalities control over certain aspects of wireless telecommunication facilities permitting, federal law prevents communities from prohibiting such facilities altogether. West Windsor may have an advantage over some localities because of the existing towers on Mount Ascutney and Blood Hill. These provide a potential opportunity for telecommunications companies to share existing tower space ("collocation"). There may still be instances, however, when a company seeks to locate a tower on an undeveloped hilltop in an effort to gain full telecommunications coverage. In these cases, measures should be taken to minimize any adverse visual and/ or health impacts that might result.

Communication towers are one of the most visible indicators of the technological age. These metal towers can stand 300 feet tall and the footprint can encompass up to two acres depending on road access. The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 (TCA) established a comprehensive framework for the exercise of jurisdiction by State and local zoning authorities over the construction, modification, and placement of facilities such as towers for cellular, personal communications service and specialized mobile radio transmitters. This law allows the preemption of local zoning authority by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Vermont Act 94 of 1998 provides the town with help to develop appropriate zoning for telecommunications facilities. This Act requires the service provider to pay for dismantling of any tower no longer in use and requires the applicant for a tower permit to pay for reasonable costs of an independent technical review of the application. The State relies on Act 250 to review the development of communication towers. Because towers often exceed 20 feet and are often located above 2,500 feet in elevation, applicants are required to get an Act 250 permit.

Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4414 et seq.: the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Adjustment are authorized to review, approve, conditionally approve, and deny applications for wireless telecommunications facilities, including sketch, preliminary and final plans, and installation. Pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4440, a Planning Commission/Zoning Board is authorized to hire qualified persons to conduct an independent technical review of applications and to require the applicant to pay for reasonable costs thereof.

The town should be prepared to take advantage of growth in this industry to access emerging technologies for economic development potential. The town should be ready to emphasize its needs from a general public as well as an industrial viewpoint. This means paying attention to and having a voice in the location of existing and future infrastructure, and the needs of the community. Because communication towers have an immediate and negative visual impact on the aesthetics of the town, the development of these towers must be done with sensitivity and foresight.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

1. Require that all applicants comply with all federal, state and town ordinances, bylaws and or regulations.

2. Preserve the character and appearance of the town while allowing adequate wireless telecommunications services to be developed.

3. Protect the scenic, historic, environmental, and natural resources of the town.

4. Provide standards and requirements for the operation, siting, design, appearance, construction, monitoring, modification, co-location and removal of wireless telecommunications facilities and towers.

5. Minimize tower and antenna proliferation by requiring the sharing of existing communications facilities, towers and sites where possible and feasible.

6. Facilitate the provision of telecommunications services to the residences and businesses of the town.

7. Minimize the adverse visual effects of towers and other facilities through careful design and siting standards.

8. Encourage, through performance standards and incentives, the location of towers and antennas in non-residential areas and away from other sensitive areas including, but not limited to, schools.

9. Require permits be granted to these facilities for a limited time period.

10. Require periodic review and new permit conditions that will reflect advances in knowledge, experience, and technology.

11. Require downsizing as communication technology advances.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Study the potential for development of communication towers in the town.

2. Study potential locations for communication towers in the town.

3. Adopt town regulations and bylaws to include telecommunication towers.

CHAPTER 4. MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND GOVERNMENT

FIRE, AMBULANCE AND POLICE SERVICES

The West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department (WWVFD)

West Windsor is served by a volunteer fire department. The department, in turn, is part of mutual aid, a system organized to enable neighboring towns to assist each other when needed. Initial dispatching for fires and all other emergencies is done in Windsor.

Local dispatching for the WWVFD is done by volunteers at West Windsor's firehouse at any time the department is called out. The fire department reviews and comments on land development proposals over which the town has jurisdiction. It is the belief of the department that the size and type of development should be carefully monitored to assure that the WWVFD is always able to provide adequate service within the town.

The original fire department building, constructed in 1962, is located in Brownsville village. (The building and the lot on which it sits are actually owned by the department, not the town.) Additions to the building were constructed in 1979 and 1984. The 1984 addition was built specifically to accommodate a ladder truck. Although the WWVFD's building and equipment meet the town's needs at this time, the type and size of future development will impact the adequacy of the current facility.

Emergency Medical Service

First response emergency medical care is currently provided by members of the West Windsor Volunteer First Aid Stabilization Team (FAST) Squad. The FAST Squad is a separate organization from the fire department. Currently licensed by the state at the *Advanced* Life Support level, the squad is able to provide emergency defibrillation. All services are provided by a small core group of dedicated volunteers. Squad members use their own vehicles, and store equipment, etc. in their homes. Members have expressed an interest in acquiring both a rescue vehicle and a building of their own for meetings, training, and storage of equipment. Should activity in the town increase, these needs would become more pressing.

The town is fortunate that it is able to depend on volunteers who, in order to respond to the emergency needs of townspeople, are continually receiving training and education in order to offer the best emergency services possible.

Ambulance Service/DHART

Ambulance service is currently provided by the town of Windsor through the Windsor Fire Department. A contract with Windsor is renewed annually. Because the contract is done on a fee for service basis, annual fees for service are unpredictable and vary from year to year. The most important consideration regarding the town's current method of providing ambulance service is the fact that the town of Windsor is under no obligation to continue serving West Windsor's needs in the future. Other small towns have been faced with the loss of ambulance service that was formerly provided by a larger town.

Officially designated landing areas for the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Air Response Team (DHART) are located at the Ascutney Mountain Resort (at the parking lots) and at the former talc plant. The landing pad along the west end of VT Route 44 was constructed specifically for use by DHART.

Enhanced 911 Service

Enhanced 911 services became operational in November 1998. Preparation included providing street addresses for all structures. Structure numbering is based on 1/1000th of a mile increment and will assist emergency services personnel in locating structures. When a caller dials 911, the geographic location of the caller appears on the call taker's computer screen, the "enhanced" aspect of Enhanced 911. This feature is especially helpful in communities such as West Windsor with its high percentage of seasonal housing.

Law Enforcement

The town is presently served by an elected constable who is on call 24 hours a day. Law enforcement assistance is provided by the Vermont State Police Department and the Windsor Police Department. The long-term outlook for West Windsor's law enforcement department is difficult to determine, since use of a constable predicated on the willingness and availability of qualified townspeople to serve. It is possible that there will not always be someone in town willing or able to take on the round-the-clock responsibilities of providing law enforcement coverage for the community.

From experience, it is known that during times of peak activity at the resort, the local law enforcement system becomes stressed. In addition, it should be the responsibility of resort operators to arrange for private security within the resort area to complement the efforts of the town constable.

Emergency Planning

Most preparation for disasters is left to local and regional organizations such as the fire department, search and rescue, Vermont Agency of Transportation, the County Sheriff and the State Police. The Town of West Windsor now has an Emergency Management Officer to help coordinate town efforts with regional and state officials. These organizations respond to emergencies. There is also a need to plan for, prepare for and recover from emergencies.

The town encourages emergency planning and disaster preparedness because it may help reduce the risk to life and health, the damage to public and private property and the environmental damage that often occurs during a disaster. Emergency planning encourages the town to prepare calmly and realistically for likely emergencies, to know the location of resources and equipment that will be needed, to inform residents of the potential dangers and the ways to avoid these potential dangers, and to quickly arrange for help when it is needed. Adopting an emergency operations plan, local road and bridge standards and participating in the National Flood Insurance Program will be a significant step toward emergency and disaster preparedness planning.

EMERGENCY PLANNING POLICIES

1. Require that all new public and private roads and driveways be properly constructed so that they do not contribute to the damage of town or state roads from run-off.

2. Encourage the improvement of existing roads, and design culverts and bridges to carry a 25-year flood event without damage.

3. Encourage the development and improvement of emergency evacuation plans, including the protection of pets and livestock.

4. Require that the town adopt the state's Rapid Response Plan and update this plan annually.

5. Examine the town's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Work to identify at-risk residents.

2. Work with state and local emergency preparedness organizations.

3. Plan for protection of the town's historic assets from disasters.

4. Seek funding for mitigating historic flooding problems in the town.

5. Evaluate flood hazard areas at least every two years.

6. Adopt a Pre-disaster Mitigation Plan.

7. Ensure that the Town Plan and zoning regulations reflect local road and bridge standards.

TOWN GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Town Owned Facilities

Story Memorial Hall

The "town hall", as it is commonly known, serves the public in many ways. In addition to housing the town offices of West Windsor, the upper story is the central gathering place for town-wide meetings and other functions. Various groups, both public and private, also use the hall for meetings and social gatherings. As the town continues to grow and government functions become more complex, the town office is again experiencing growing pains. A new vault was constructed in 2002 to preserve the resources located in the town offices.

The Town Highway Garage

The highway garage has been replaced with a pre-fabricated steel building capable of housing the highway department's entire equipment inventory, with room to spare for future growth of the department. As a result of this new construction, environmental considerations have been,

and will now continue to be addressed; including testing of the drinking water supply and the various lines and tanks associated with the wastewater systems. The town should develop plans to relocate the sand pile and provide a storage facility covering and containing the sand.

Sheddsville Cemetery and Daniel Cady Mausoleum

Both the Sheddsville Cemetery and the Cady Mausoleum are under town ownership and jurisdiction, with the Selectboard serving as trustees. The mausoleum is located on a knoll northeast of the village. It is the final resting-place of West Windsor native Daniel Cady, and represents a fascinating piece of history, both of the town and the man. Daniel Cady, who served as an associate of the Supreme Courts of New York and New Jersey, was most famous for his poems about rural Vermont.

West Windsor Town Forest

Approximately 1,400 acres on Mount Ascutney are owned by the townspeople of West Windsor. The 1,100 +/- acre Cross Woodlot was deeded to the town by the Cross family in 1979, and an advisory committee was formed in 1980 to oversee the property. The town forest, which includes the Cross Woodlot and a 300 +/- acre Glebe Lot, is managed by the committee under a multiple use concept which includes preservation of wildlife habitats and scenic vistas, timber management, and the use of the land for low intensity recreation (hunting, hiking, fishing, bird watching, archery, picnicking, snowmobiling, hang gliding, and cross-country skiing). Through the efforts of the committee, a long-range timber management plan is in effect for the removal of firewood and sawlogs. A booklet on the management plan is available for inspection at the town clerk's office. In addition to the responsibilities previously noted, the advisory committee reviews and approves an annual agreement with the Vermont Hang Glider's Association.

In the fall of 1991, following more than a year of planning and preparation, the Vermont Bicentennial Trail was opened to the public. The new trail makes the town forest easily accessible to those wishing to use the area for the recreational uses listed above. The town's Conservation Commission currently oversees the maintenance of the Bicentennial Trail.

In order to assure that the town forest serves the broadest variety of users, the advisory committee, in consultation with the Selectboard, other appropriate town boards/officials, and interested citizens, should regularly evaluate the public use of the forest.

Supporting Facilities

Mary Blood Memorial Library

Brownsville's public library, originally built in 1900, was refurbished during 1988-89. The hours during which the library is open are limited. There is sufficient room for expansion of the book collection within the existing building, although plans for any type of expansion must take into consideration the current lack of any plumbing facilities. There has been recent expanded use of the library and they are currently looking to expand its book collection. The building is now ADA compliant.

The Brownsville Cemetery

The Brownsville Cemetery, located north of the village on the Brownsville-Hartland Road, is under the jurisdiction of the Brownsville Cemetery Association, a private entity. There are burial sites available in the cemetery for the foreseeable future, although site work will be required in the “lower section” before that area can be used.

The West Windsor Historical Society

In 1981, the Gleaner Grange Hall was deeded to the Historical Society with the provision that if the Historical Society ever ceased to exist, the property would be turned over to the town. In addition to serving as the headquarters of the Historical Society, the building is the home of the "Brownsville Baked Bean Suppers," summer suppers for the benefit of the School and Community in Partnership (SCIP) and the Historical Society, that draw people from near and far. Many historic records pertaining to the town are housed here as well as a small museum with artifacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Establish and maintain permanent access to the Daniel Cady Mausoleum.

2. Consider maintaining the old Grange Hall in its present condition, including the upkeep of the museum located on the second floor.

3. Investigate the feasibility of acquiring additional land in the village for municipal purposes.

4. Make an assessment of other town buildings to determine which of them are in need of modifications. More information can be found regarding this issue in the town’s Capital Budget and Program.

Town Governance

West Windsor is governed by a three-member Selectboard. The Town Clerk/Treasurer remains the initial contact for those conducting town business and is responsible for the land records, town accounts, and general town business. With the exception of a few items that come under the purview of the Selectboard, the Zoning Administrator, Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission handle the local permitting issues. An administrative support person provides assistance to several town boards and the Zoning Administrator.

Where once the interaction between the townspeople and local officials was more casual, changing times and circumstances have caused the Selectboard and other town boards and officials to conduct their business in a more formal manner. Increased development, new state and federal mandates and the desire for additional services have contributed to this change. The town's policy is to support the efforts of town officials to preserve West Windsor's small-town character in whatever ways possible when dealing with the public.

SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Waste Management, has implemented the Revised State of Vermont Solid Waste Management Plan. Under this Plan, Vermont municipalities are expected to work towards meeting the state's solid waste goals summarized in Title 10 V.S.A. Section 6604(a)(1). The priorities outlined in the plan include the following:

1. The greatest feasible reduction in the amount of waste generated;

2. Reuse and recycling of waste to reduce, to the greatest extent feasible, the volume remaining for processing and disposal;

3. Waste processing to reduce the volume or toxicity of the waste stream necessary for disposal;

4. And, land disposal of residuals.

As part of the Southern Windsor/Windham Counties Solid Waste Management District (SWCSWMD), the town of West Windsor must be prepared to meet state and district requirements. In order to comply with State regulations, the SWCSWMD has prepared a Solid Waste Implementation Plan. This Plan has been submitted to the state in 2004 and is currently in the review process. The SWCSWMD has hired a Solid Waste Program Coordinator to assist district towns with solid waste issues and recycling efforts. The Coordinator's position is contracted to and housed at the Regional Planning Commission.

All SWCSMD member towns are also members of the bi-state agreement under the NH/VT Solid Waste Project. Under the Project, member towns are entered into a contract, requiring all municipal waste to be tipped at the Wheelabrator incineration facility located in Claremont, NH. Tipping fees charged to district towns are dependent upon a number of factors, including the amount of waste disposed of and the operational costs associated with disposal. Tipping fees are collected from residents in the form of transfer station and private hauler fees. The Project's contract with Wheelabrator is scheduled to expire in 2007, at which time the town of West Windsor must seek alternative options for waste disposal. Therefore, it is important for town officials, district representatives, and local residents to contribute to the planning process in anticipation of these changes.

Currently, residents of West Windsor must arrange for disposal of their household waste. Much of the town's population relies on private haulers for waste pickup, while others utilize existing transfer facilities. Residents are allowed to purchase tickets and deposit their recycling and trash at the Weathersfield transfer station, or can drop these items at the Windsor recycling drop-off center. Both facilities accept a broad range of items for recycling, helping to reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal. In this way, recycling can economically benefit the town by reducing fees for municipal waste disposal. In addition to direct cost savings, recycling is beneficial to the environment by conserving valuable energy and natural resources. For these reasons, local businesses, individual households, and institutions are encouraged to recycle and reuse materials. Both the financial and the environmental costs associated with waste disposal are reminders that source reduction and proper waste management make sense.

SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING POLICIES

1. Support efforts to reduce solid waste generation and incineration.

2. Support efforts to reduce the unnecessary use of toxic and hazardous materials.

3. Support recycling, composting, waste reduction, and reuse programs that are dynamic and productive.

4. Promote environmentally friendly and cost-effective disposal methods for all solid waste that cannot be recycled, composted, or otherwise reused.

5. Support the implementation of reasonable waste disposal fees that are accurately determined and charged to waste generators.

6. Support recycling programs of household, commercial and special wastes.

7. Promote cooperation among participating municipalities in the implementation of source reduction, recycling, and composting programs on a District-wide basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Work to achieve the goals and action steps outlined in the District's Solid Waste Implementation Plan.

2. Distribute recycling information to local households.

3. Distribute recycling information to local businesses and institutions.

4. Distribute recycling information to area realtors.

5. Work with the Fire Warden and local officials on efforts to enforce the Civil Ordinance regulating the illegal dumping and burning of solid waste.

6. Educate residents of the benefits of home composting.

7. Prevent the disposal or incineration of marketable recyclables.

8. Support on-going educational campaigns for schools, youth, consumers, and businesses.

CHAPTER 5. EDUCATION

EDUCATION

The West Windsor School Board oversees the education of the town's kindergarten through grade students. The town is part of the Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union along with Hartland, Weathersfield and Windsor. West Windsor provides in-town education to its kindergarten through sixth grade students at Albert Bridge School (ABS). In June 2004, ABS brought all its programs into one space with a building project enlarging the school from 9,000 square feet to 18,000 square feet. The entire facility was renovated and enlarged along with improvements to the playing fields.

Students in grades seven through twelve receive their education on a tuition basis at various middle/high schools, both public and private. Because West Windsor does not have its own high school, the town is governed by state laws that apply in such cases. These laws provide that the town pay the cost of tuition to any approved public high school in Vermont or adjoining state. If a family opts to send their children to an approved private secondary school, the town is obligated to pay Vermont state average tuition; the remainder of the payment is the family's responsibility.

The town has no control over rising secondary tuition costs. In 2004-2005, public school tuition was nearly $10,000. In 2004-2005, the state provided an average of $8,400 for families sending students to private secondary schools. The town has consistently supported secondary school choice over committing students to a single high school.

West Windsor has traditionally been fiscally conservative, but it provides the town's elementary school students with an excellent education. In 2001, 2002 and 2003, the school has been recognized by the Vermont Business Roundtable for excellence in education. Operating a small school of less than one hundred students is a financial challenge. Most of the school's enrichment programs are made possible through fundraising and volunteer support. The general sentiment of the town is that the benefits of operating a small school, with an emphasis on community involvement, outweigh the drawbacks. According to the Vermont Department of Education School Report, total school enrollment in the 2003-2004 school year at the Albert Bridge School has dropped by 13 students (15.5 percent) since the 2000-2001 school year. Student to teacher ratio is 14.2 students per teacher (11.7 is the state student/teacher ratio).

Albert Bridge School - General School Information

School Participation Information	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	State of Vermont 2003-2004
Total School Enrollment	84	81	72	71	99,104
Attendance Rate	95.80%	94.20%	95.50%	N/AV	N/AV
Student/Teacher Ratio	11.5	9	9.6	14.2	11.7
Eligible Special Education	10.70%	7.40%	12.50%	8.50%	13.90%
Home Study (Number)	1	0	0	2	2,140

Source: Vermont Department of Education School Report, 2005

Currently, Act 68 outlines a two tier education tax formula separating taxpayers into homestead and non-homestead categories. While Act 68 gives West Windsor some relief from "gold town" status of Act 60, declining enrollment and ever increasing property values continue to provide education tax rate challenges.

EDUCATION POLICY

1. Continue to provide high quality educational programs for students in grades kindergarten through Grade 12 to all resident children.

2. Continue to provide secondary school choice for its residents.

CHILD CARE

While the town is not required to provide early child care for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, ensuring the availability of safe and affordable child care is essential to all communities. With the rural nature of West Windsor, it is most likely parents find child care outside of the town boundaries, however there are probably many informal child care arrangements that take place within the town as well. According to the State of Vermont Department for Children and Families (Child Care Services) in November of 2004, there is one registered home for early child care and one licensed child care center – the Flying Ducks at Ascutney with a capacity of 59 children ages ranging from six weeks to 10 years old.

CHILD CARE RECOMMENDATION

1. Encourage and promote the availability of safe and affordable child care for all families.

CHAPTER 6. RECREATION

RECREATION

In the 1930's, the first ski trail was cleared on Mount Ascutney. Since that time, several factors have contributed to the emergence of West Windsor as a town known for its recreational opportunities. Some recreational activities, such as downhill skiing, swimming, and tennis, are available at the Ascutney Mountain Resort. Organized clubs or associations are available for snowmobilers, horseback riders, hikers, archers, and hang gliders. For the most part, though, recreational activities occur outside of either a commercial setting or a formally organized group. Hunting, fishing, biking, cross country skiing, walking/hiking, and sight seeing are just some of the forms of recreation that are enjoyed throughout the town on publicly owned and privately owned land.

The recreational opportunities available in West Windsor, both of an organized and non-organized nature, have had a significant impact on shaping the town economically, visually, and in terms of the type of development that has taken place. The resort is the most obvious sign that recreation has come to play a major role in town. West Windsor has also become the town of choice for many vacation homeowners, equestrians, and people who value a life-style that includes the opportunity to enjoy various forms of recreation in a rural setting. This trend has noticeably affected the town's economy. Tourists visiting the town support the local economy, but have less impact on town services. Owners of vacation homes pay taxes, but do not send their children to school here. As important as it is to preserve the things that make West Windsor and the surrounding area attractive to part-time residents and visitors from out of town, it is equally important to guarantee that the townspeople have continued access to trails that serve different recreational interest groups, large tracts of contiguous land for hunting, clean streams and ponds for fishing, and are assured the opportunity to enjoy the natural and scenic qualities that make West Windsor a uniquely beautiful Vermont town.

Mount Ascutney

As the mountain is a dominant physical feature in town, so is it a dominant area for recreation. West Windsor’s own town forest on Mount Ascutney contains the Vermont Bicentennial Hiking Trail and parking. The town forest borders Ascutney State Park in Windsor, and at the highest elevations, contains sections of hiking trails that access the summit and connect with other trails in the state park and in the towns of Weathersfield and Windsor. The Ascutney Trails Association, a volunteer organization, maintains all trails on the mountain other than the Bicentennial Trail in West Windsor. The town's Conservation Commission and the Town Forest Committee presently oversees maintenance of the Bicentennial Trail.

A takeoff platform for hang gliders, accessible from the trail network, is located in West Windsor near the mountain's summit. The town has become popular for this sport because of the many open fields that can be used for landing. Mount Ascutney is also the site of commercial recreational opportunities at the privately owned resort, the most notable of which is downhill skiing and snowboarding.

The towns of West Windsor and Weathersfield have worked cooperatively for nearly a decade to preserve land adjacent to the publicly owned properties on Mount Ascutney and Little Ascutney Mountain. The project has resulted in the public acquisition of a key parcel that was surrounded on three sides by state-owned wildlife management acreage, and protected additional adjacent tracts through the acquisition of conservation easements. The result has been the creation of a sizable protected corridor between Mount Ascutney and Little Mount Ascutney that provides thousands of acres of land for recreational purposes and an excellent habitat for wildlife.

Trails

In West Windsor, the general term "trails" covers a variety of locations, uses, and ownerships. From the privately owned trails used for downhill skiing and snowboarding at the resort, to the remote hiking trail that follows an old town road, trails in town offer users very diverse recreational opportunities. There are two mapped and maintained snowmobile trails that run through West Windsor. Another network of trails has been established by and for the many horseback riders in town. In addition there are hiking and cross-country ski trails on Mount Ascutney, and old roads and logging roads throughout the town that are used for hiking, biking, and skiing. The town's Conservation Commission has made the identification and maintenance of recreational trails a priority.

Critical to all trail systems, other than those located entirely on public lands, is the relationship between trail users and private property owners. The importance of this relationship should be recognized and steps should be taken to encourage respect for private property by trail users. In this way, landowners might be more willing to keep their property open for public recreational uses.

Public Recreation Areas

Although the town forest comprises the town's largest land area for public recreation, the school grounds and Tribute Park are also commonly used areas by townspeople. Tribute Park, which is owned by the Brownsville Community Church, is located along the Beaver Brook in the village. Picnic tables, stone fireplaces, and tall pine trees make the park an ideal setting for family and group get-togethers. The playground and ball field at the school also provide an area for public recreation when school is not in session. There is no question that serving the outdoor recreational needs of the students is the primary function of the school grounds. At the same time, a public recreation area for playing ball and other group sports, and one suited for the activities of young children, is found only at the school.

Commercial Recreation Areas

Many of the recreational opportunities found at the resort are those that would not ordinarily be available in a town the size of West Windsor. During the early years of commercial recreation on the mountain, only downhill skiing was available. The clientele was generally made up of area residents and the operation provided families a relatively affordable winter activity. The resort now caters primarily to vacationers from outside the area to assure its economic viability, although many area residents do still utilize the resort's facilities. In addition to downhill, snowboarding, telemarking and cross-country skiing, recreational opportunities at the resort now include a health and fitness facility offering indoor and outdoor swimming, racquetball, tennis,

weightlifting, and more. Construction of a golf course, part of the master plan of former resort owners, may yet be pursued by current or future owners.

RECREATION POLICIES

1. Maintain ownership of Town right-of-ways so that the present trail system in town can be maintained.

2. Develop and maintain the school grounds for both the students and the town as a whole.

3. Encourage low-impact and non-motorized recreation.

4. Keep existing trails open as much as possible.

RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Focus development of commercial recreational activities within the existing Resort/Residential District and minimize adverse secondary growth impacts in other parts of West Windsor caused by development of the resort.

2. Continue to assure that the remainder of the town can continue to provide people the opportunity to enjoy the noncommercial forms of recreation that are so important to those who live or visit here.

3. Consider developing a town Recreation Plan, including a recreation plan on the Bicentennial Trail.

4. Consider the development of a trail map of the town for low-impact recreation for residents and non-residents alike.

CHAPTER 7. NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

West Windsor has abundant natural, cultural, historic, scenic, recreational and educational resources. These areas should not be overlooked and are important to consider and keep in the forefront during the planning process. (Note: Some of the cultural and/or educational resources in West Windsor are inventoried in *Chapter IV. Municipal Services and Government – Town Government and Administration* section of the Plan.).

NATURAL RESOURCES

The following natural areas warrant consideration for protection: certain agricultural soils, bodies of water or water-ways, natural areas of many kinds including wetlands, riparian zones, floodplains, wildlife habitat, and certain large contiguous tracts of undeveloped land, including natural areas such as Mount Ascutney, Little Ascutney Mountain, Ascutney Basin, and Pierson's Peak. In addition, the VT Route 44 valley area, west of the village of Brownsville, is considered important for its prime agricultural land, flood hazard potential and scenic view of Mount Ascutney.

Much has already been done to preserve the natural condition of the area. Several large tracts have been in public ownership for some time, and additional lands creating a corridor between Mount Ascutney and Little Ascutney Mountain have recently been protected through additional public acquisition, arrangements for conservation easements, and purchase of development rights. Efforts should continue to prevent development that will diminish the values identified as important for these areas. To the extent that regulatory measures can contribute to this objective, the town should maintain standards that will encourage development of a type that is low in density and of minimum impact.

Surface Waters

Surface waters include rivers, permanent and intermittent brooks and streams, ponds, vernal pools, and wetlands, often determining both the location and form of development. These waters are an abundant and valuable resource providing habitat, recreation, drinking water and irrigation, aquifer recharge, and scenic enjoyment

West Windsor's brooks and streams provide fishing, swimming, and visual beauty. Measures to protect one of these benefits often overlap with those that protect the others. For example, steps taken to assure that surface waters do not exceed acceptable levels for various pollutants and turbidity will protect these waterways for swimming and fishing.

Farm runoff, failing or nonexistent septic disposal systems, and stream bank erosion contribute to poor water quality in local ground and surface waters. Other factors affecting water quality, fish habitat, and scenic beauty include choice of stream crossing structures (bridges, culverts, road run-off, etc.) and the maintenance of vegetated buffer strips along rivers and streams.

To address these water quality concerns, a number of studies have been conducted over the years. Water sampling data collected and analyzed for the Southern Windsor County Water Quality Project in 1989 indicated that contamination from human and animal waste and erosion

is already noticeable in the Mill Brook, especially after heavy rains. In 1999 and 2000, the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission conducted an erosion study on the Mill Brook and its tributaries through 604(b) (Clean Water Act) funding. These erosion studies identified areas where tree revetments or revegetating buffer areas would reduce erosion. A Mill Brook monitoring project was completed in 2003, which focused on education, developing partnerships and water quality sampling. The results indicate the presence of e. Coli at all sampling locations; however, the sampling techniques used did not indicate the level of e. Coli in the brook. In 2003, SWCRPC completed a geomorphic assessment on two sections of the Mill Brook in cooperation with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. This study found three primary issues impacting the West Windsor Flats section of the Mill Brook, located just west of Brownsville. The primary issues are: road and road fill encroachment in the floodplain, inadequately sized bridges that impair stream flow during high-water periods, and inadequate vegetated buffers. The Mill Brook Watershed Association plans to continue to support projects that will improve water quality on the Mill Brook.

Wetlands

Wetlands are those areas that are inundated by surface or ground water sufficient to support vegetation and/or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated areas for growth and reproduction. Such areas include marshes, swamps, potholes, sloughs, vernal pools, mud flats, bogs and ponds. Wetlands benefits include fish and wildlife habitat, flood and erosion protection, pollution filtration, ground water recharge, and sites for education, recreation and scenic enjoyment.

Riparian Buffers

Riparian buffer zones are defined as the strip of land bordering a body of surface water, whether still or flowing. A vegetated buffer zone is meant, at a minimum, to provide a protective strip between a body of water and any adjacent land that has undergone human transformation to farmland, roadway, or other type of development and, at an optimum, to contribute to the well-being of the biota both in and adjacent to the body of water.

Agricultural and Forest Lands

Steady population growth and second-home growth have increased development pressure in open, agricultural, and forested areas. Forestry plays an active role in the ecological, economic, and social health of the area. This type of land provides habitat for wildlife, contributes to water and air quality, provides for a forestry industry and enhances recreation and the tourism industry. For these reasons, it is vital to maintain sound forestry practices and limit the spread of development.

Agriculture plays an important role in defining the area’s lifestyle and landscape and contributes to the stability and diversity of the economy and local communities. Although the amount of farmland in the State is decreasing, the number of small farms is actually on the rise. There is a growing demand for local retail products, including maple syrup, cheeses, fruits and vegetables, meat and wool. There are also several horse farms and active horse pastures located in the town.

NATURAL RESOURCE POLICIES

1. Encourage the protection of ground and surface waters, steep slopes, shallow soils, areas supplying significant recharge waters to aquifers and watersheds for future water supplies.

2. Require that the storage and transportation of hazardous chemicals does not pollute water resources.

3. Support town, state and federal regulations for water quality.

4. Require that water resources are maintained in a natural state.

5. Maintain appropriate undisturbed buffers of vegetation along watercourses, ponds, wetlands, and vernal pools in order to protect shorelines, provide shading to prevent undue increase in stream temperatures, minimize effects of erosion, sedimentation and other sources of pollution, and maintain scenic, recreational, and habitat values.

6. Encourage strategies to protect water resources such as conservation easements, purchase of development rights and land trusts.

7. Prohibit development in floodway areas, except for agricultural use and open space.

8. Require that any floodplain development conform to Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (24 V.S.A.) and the National Flood Insurance Program (44 C.F.R.) regulations.

9. Protect agricultural and forested lands.

10. Encourage sound forest and agricultural practices, which increases safety levels and improves forestry practices.

11. Help to preserve and maintain farms, agricultural lands and services to ensure a continuing viable agriculture for the community.

12. Encourage the wise use of forestlands for forestry, wood products, maple syrup, recreation, wildlife and scenic beauty.

13. Require that development in agricultural areas be limited and designed to minimize adverse impact to agricultural soils.

14. Support the development and enhancement of local industries which produce “value added” agricultural and forest products.

NATURAL RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Work with appropriate agencies to inventory and map current aquifer recharge areas and wetlands.

2. Help identify, assess and assist in correcting any pollution problems caused by septic systems and other sources.

3. Study ways to implement town, state and federal regulations for water quality.

4. Update all locally applicable regulations, bylaws and ordinances to reflect current State rules for wastewater systems.

5. Update all regulations, bylaws and ordinances to reflect the current State rules for stormwater runoff.

6. Coordinate with neighboring towns to maintain large tracts of undeveloped land.

WILDLIFE HABITAT

Housing, resort and commercial development can severely diminish the ability of wildlife habitat to support wildlife populations. West Windsor has a variety of fish and wildlife resources including upland forested areas that provide cover and habitat for deer, bear, game birds, small mammals and other species and deeryards which provide a particularly important winter shelter area for deer. Water habitats support trout and other fish life and are attractive to a variety of migratory waterfowl. Undeveloped shoreland habitats support amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and rare vegetation. Wetland habitats support songbirds, game birds, beaver, and otter are important for a great variety of species as well as for breeding.

WILDLIFE HABITAT POLICIES

1. Plan development to minimize impact on wildlife habitat and encourage retention and improvement of wildlife habitats.

2. Encourage responsible use of wildlife resources as an economic benefit to the town.

3. Protect riparian corridors for wildlife habitat, as well as water quality.

WILDLIFE HABITAT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Work with local citizens and state officials to identify and map information related to fish and wildlife habitats, Natural Heritage Areas, and Natural and Fragile Areas.

2. Work to develop non–regulatory means to protect habitat through education, easements, land trusts and purchase of development rights.

3. Work with the Conservation Commission to support the protection of wildlife habitat within the town.

4. Encourage the incorporation of wildlife habitat consideration in the permit process.

SCENIC AREAS

The rural character of West Windsor is composed of a scenic natural landscape with traditional New England settlement patterns and architectural designs that are of great importance to the community. The natural landscape includes open space, working and non–working agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, and forest land. The town recognizes the irreplaceable value of all these resources and the need to protect them as they serve to preserve local heritage, while enhancing the rural environment, economy, and way of life for residents and visitors.

Few things exemplify the universal enjoyment of and appreciation for the Vermont landscape as much as the walk or drive down a country road, or the expansive view of that landscape from a hill or mountain top. These are aesthetic experiences that are difficult to quantify, yet so important to those who live in or visit Vermont. For example, the unobstructed, unlit view of the night sky as well as the presence of healthy and thick tree canopies while driving the rural roads of the town. West Windsor has managed to retain virtually every scenic quality that people consider valuable: open mowed fields outlined by stone walls and fencerows; actively cultivated farmland; large tracts of undeveloped forest land; streams and ponds; and, from countless vantage points throughout the town, the dominant presence of a singular large mountain. Enjoying the visual qualities of the land is a form of recreation in itself; one that has value and is worthy of attention when considering ways to direct the changes that will, without question, occur in West Windsor.

Although "scenic beauty" and "views" are intangible qualities, held principally in the eyes of the beholder, townspeople should remember that the local economy is dependent, in large part, on tourism, and that these qualities are what commonly draw visitors to the area. The visual characteristics of the town also contribute to the "quality of life" that is appreciated and cherished by those who live in West Windsor.

SCENIC AREA POLICIES

1. Maintain natural and man–made features that are of local scenic and historic significance and protect them from activities, which impair their integrity, character and/or quality.

2. Encourage landowners to consider the town’s heritage and natural resources when developing their property through careful design and siting of all structures, access and parking lots, utility installation, landscaping, and screening.

3. Encourage development patterns that prevent the fragmentation of larger parcels of land in order to retain open space.

4. Encourage compatible and responsible use of lands adjacent to or including areas of scenic, historical, educational, architectural, or archaeological value.

SCENIC AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify locally significant scenic resources, evaluate and rank identified scenic resources based on their need for immediate protection.

2. Develop methods for protection of these resources.

3. Retain local ordinances that protect scenic resources.

4. Protect ridgelines from development that adversely affects scenic values.

5. Consider adopting a local scenic road policy that would serve as a non-regulatory set of guidelines for the highway department and utility companies.

6. Paving of roads should be avoided, not only to contain road maintenance costs, but also to retain the existing rural and scenic quality of the town's gravel roads.

7. Encourage the preservation of the unobstructed view of the night sky.

8. Encourage the preservation of the existing tree canopies along town roads.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

West Windsor's historic resources include settlement patterns which feature a distinct village and lower density housing with more open space in the surrounding areas. The village of Brownsville is listed on the State Register of Historic Places by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. There are 15 sites listed on the Register of Historic Places. In addition, there are two covered bridges in town which are on the National Register, Best's covered bridge and Bowers covered bridge. Opportunities to protect important landmarks of the town's history, including individual buildings, settlements, cemeteries, or other important features and their environs, should be considered by the community when they arise. These are important resources in the town and deserve recognition and protection.

HISTORIC SITES IN WEST WINDSOR

Raymond Spackman House
Brownsville Historic District
Lee Harlow House
Marcus Hurlburt House
Lewis McMillen House
Leigh Banister House
Edward Langenback House
Helen Culin House
Hugh Tatlock House
William Bryant House
Catherine Riley House
Howard Furnas House
Charles McCullough House
Richard and Stanley Saxl House
Daniel Cady Museum

HISTORIC RESOURCE POLICIES

1. Protect places of outstanding cultural, aesthetic, archeological and/or historical value from development that impairs their character and quality.

2. Encourage rehabilitation of significant historic sites and structures.

3. Require an appropriate buffer area around historic and cemetery resources.

4. Encourage development that preserves the historic, cultural and architectural character of town and village centers and the rural landscape.

5. Explore and employ adaptive reuse of architecturally or historically significant structures that will allow continued value to the community with minimum impact to the resource.

HISTORIC RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support use or ownership to preserve significant historic sites or structures.

2. Participate in the state Historic Sites and Structures Survey to further identify locally significant historic resources.

CHAPTER 8. TRANSPORTATION

West Windsor is a rural community located at the base of the northwestern slope of Mount Ascutney. A road network of one paved, secondary state highway and 47 miles of local public roads is the primary transportation system for the town. This local network is made up of a few paved highways that serve as the primary travel corridors, with mostly unpaved local roads providing access to residential properties.

TRANSPORTATION INVENTORY

Regional Highways

Regional highways, including state highways and Class 2 town highways, connect to large population areas and other state highways outside West Windsor. These paved roads include VT Route 44, Brownsville-Hartland Road and Ski Tow Road. VT Route 44 connects West Windsor to Windsor, Reading and Woodstock, via VT Route 106. Brownsville-Hartland Road is a Class 2 town highway that connects Brownsville to Hartland. Both provide access for businesses in West Windsor and to broader job opportunities in other towns for residents. VT Route 44 is notable as the primary access into town as well as for providing access to the Ascutney Mountain Resort. There is only one road into the Ascutney Mountain Resort, Ski Tow Road off VT Route 44.

Town Highways

Town highway classifications, as defined in V.S.A. t.19 Sec. 302, indicate the hierarchy of the local road system, as determined by the prevailing use of each road. West Windsor maintains nearly six miles of paved Class 2 town highways, including Brownsville-Hartland Road and Ski Tow Road, which serve as “regional highways” that connect to other towns or destination areas. Class 2 town highways are considered the most important local roads in town.

There are over 41 miles of Class 3 town highways in West Windsor. Class 3 town highways consist of all other year-round traveled roads in town. With the exception of a few paved roads near Brownsville, the remainder of these roads consists of a network of gravel roads, the quality of which is unrivaled in the surrounding area. Portions of Seems Road and Pierce Hill Road are paved due mainly to the steepness of grade.

West Windsor Highway Miles by Classification

Highway Classification	*Miles*	*Total Miles*
Interstate Highways	0	
State Highways (Non-Interstate)	5.044	
Total State Highways		5.044
Class 1 Town Highway	0	
Class 2 Town Highway	5.931	
Class 3 Town Highway	41.300	
Total Town Highways		47.231
Class 4 Town Highway*	2.258	
Private Roads	10.334	
Municipal Trails	0.429	
Total Right-of-Way		65.296

Source: VTrans, VCGI
* Class 4 mileage may be underestimated because accurate inventories are not maintained

There are approximately two miles of Class 4 town highways in West Windsor. Class 4 town highways are all other town highways; maintenance is provided only where deemed necessary by the town. Class 4 town highways are important resources for recreation, access for forestry and agricultural activities.

Legal town trails are public rights-of-way, but are not considered highways. The town is not responsible for the maintenance of trails. A Class 4 road can be reclassified as a legal town trail, which maintains the public right-of-way but lessens the burden on the town to provide occasional maintenance.

The town should discourage development on “old roads” and sections of Class 4 town highways. The town recognizes the recreational value of these roads. These roads and road segments may benefit from reclassification to legal town trails, following negotiations with adjacent land owners.

There are over 10 miles of privately-maintained roads in West Windsor. It is important that private roads and driveways provide adequate and safe access for both residents and emergency vehicles. Private roads, which serve three or more residences, shall be held to the same standard as class 3 town highways for safety reasons and to protect the town’s interest if a private road is reclassified as a Class 2 or 3 town highway. Driveways, which serve one or two residences, shall be held to standards for residential drives to allow vehicular access from the adjacent street and emergency vehicle access to properties.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

There are no formal bicycling facilities in West Windsor except for the existing road network. VT Route 44 has very little in the way of shoulders to accommodate bicycle or pedestrian travel. The highway is very scenic with many sharp curves, and fairly low, but increasing, traffic

volumes. Town roads provide additional bicycle access. Many town roads are unpaved and some are quite steep, limiting bicycle access.

The village of Brownsville has five-foot wide sidewalks primarily on the north side of Main Street. Existing sidewalks on Main Street are intermittent but provide access from:

- Brook Road to the town offices;
- Along Brownsville-Hartland Road and Main Street to Seems Road;

There is also a four-foot wide pedestrian bridge owned by Ascutney Mountain Resort crossing Mill Brook behind the West Windsor Fire Station, providing access to Ascutney Mountain Resort via an unimproved path connecting to Hotel Road.

At this time, there are no crosswalks or signalized intersections in West Windsor. However, the town should develop a plan addressing pedestrian circulation and crosswalks within Brownsville.

Future improvement to the pedestrian facilities should include walking path connectivity throughout Brownsville, seeking to facilitate walking between the Mountain Resort, services within the village and the elementary school, as noted in the Pedestrian Master Plan for West Windsor completed in April 1999. The services in Brownsville include the library, post office, Town Hall and general store.

Public Transportation, Rail and Air

Currently there is no public transportation, rail or air services in West Windsor. Connecticut River Transit (CRT), which is the primary transit provider in the region with its offices in Springfield, VT, currently has no routes within West Windsor. However, some on-demand transportation services are available through Volunteers in Action, who primarily provide service for elderly residents. CRT is expanding its service offerings to include on-demand services throughout their service area, including West Windsor.

Dartmouth Coach and Vermont Transit provide long-distance bus service connecting White River Junction to many northeast metropolitan areas. Both transit companies also provide service from White River Junction to the Manchester, NH and Logan airports.

Amtrak stops at the train station in Windsor, providing West Windsor residents good access to passenger rail service.

Numerous airports – including Rutland; Burlington; Lebanon, NH; Manchester, NH; Hartford, CT; and Logan Airport in Boston – provide West Windsor residents with options for commercial air service. Hartness State Airport in Springfield offers general aviation services.

EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Existing traffic volumes are relatively light on VT Route 44 in West Windsor. The table below shows annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes at select locations. AADT represent the combined two-way traffic volume at each location. The data have been adjusted to correct for seasonal variation. Road segments in adjacent towns have been included due to a lack of local data.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in West Windsor and Surrounding Towns

Town	Route/Road	Location	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)			
			2003	2002	2001	2000
Hartland	Brownsville-Hartland Rd	0.4 miles east of Hampton Rd	1,600			
Reading	VT 44	0.2 miles east of VT 106				1,000
Reading	VT 106	Between Tyson/Benjamin Dr		1,800		
West Windsor	Brownsville-Hartland Rd (TH 1)	0.1 mile north of VT 44			1,000	
Windsor	VT 44 (Ascutney St)	0.1 mile west of Ascutney/Union		3,400		
Windsor	VT 44	0.1 mile west of Estey Ln		2,100		
Windsor	VT 44A	0.1 mile south of I-91 Bridge	1,100			

Source: Vermont Agency of Transportation

Vehicular traffic speed and increasing truck traffic on VT Route 44 are problems, especially in the village and resort area. The town should seek to identify appropriate traffic calming measures along VT Route 44 through Brownsville in order to slow traffic speeds in the village.

Seasonal Traffic

Traffic volumes can vary significantly from season to season, with heavier traffic volumes on VT Route 44 and the Brownsville-Hartland Road during the winter, due to ski traffic generated by Ascutney Mountain Resort. Data are not available to quantify the seasonal variation in traffic volumes at this time.

COMMUTER PATTERNS

Commuter travel patterns are an important consideration for the transportation network. A survey developed to assist in the update of this Town Plan was conducted in 2004. Nearly 46 percent of survey respondents do not commute either because they work from home or are retired. Of those residents that commute, travel times to work destinations are significantly long. The table below displays travel time to work results from this survey.

Travel Time to Work

How many minutes do you travel to work?	***Number of Workers***	***% of Total Respondents***
Commute Less than 15 Minutes	37	15.35
15-30 Minutes	40	16.60
31-45 Minutes	30	12.45
More than 45 Minutes	11	4.56
Do not commute - Work at Home	45	18.67
Do not commute - Retired	65	26.97
Other	13	5.39

Source: West Windsor Survey 2004

Transportation connections to other surrounding towns and major travel corridors are important for the local economy. According to the 2000 US Census, approximately 29 percent of residents work in West Windsor. More than 71 percent of commuting residents work in other towns. The table below shows the top five work destinations for West Windsor residents.

Where West Windsor Residents Work

Municipality	***Number of Workers***	***% of Total***
West Windsor	168	28.87
Windsor	64	11.00
Lebanon, NH	54	9.28
Woodstock	48	8.25
Springfield	40	6.87

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Workers employed in West Windsor live in a dispersed pattern, and commute in from fairly long distances. The table below shows the top five towns where West Windsor workers live. Commuting data presented in this chapter are based on 2000 U.S. Census information.

Where West Windsor Workers Live

Municipality	*Number of Workers*	*% of Total*
West Windsor	168	32.12
Springfield	91	17.40
Windsor	75	14.34
Claremont	29	5.54
Weathersfield	20	3.82

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The predominant mode of transportation for commuters is by automobile. Only a very small proportion of resident workers commuted by bicycle, walking or motorcycle; no one used public transportation. The number of residents who worked from home decreased by nearly 16 percent between 1990 and 2000; however, home-based employment remains important in West Windsor. Home-based employment opportunities will increase with the addition of broadband technology in town.

West Windsor Means of Transportation to Work

	1990		2000		
Means of Transportation	*Number of Workers*	*% of Workers*	*Number of Workers*	*% of Workers*	*% Change 1990-2000*
Drove Alone	394	81.07	459	78.87	16.50
Carpooled	32	6.58	63	10.82	96.88
Bicycled or Walked	11	2.26	17	2.92	54.55
Motorcycled or Other Means	4	0.82	5	0.86	25.00
Worked at Home	45	9.26	38	6.53	-15.56
Total Workers 16 Years and Older	486		582		19.75

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

ROAD POLICY AND MAINTENANCE

Maintaining a safe and efficient highway system is important and can be very costly. The town should continue to maintain the existing highway network in good condition, which can greatly limit the long-term roadway maintenance costs. Results of the 2004 survey indicate that the development of additional town roads, the widening of existing roads and removal of scenic features, such as tree canopies and stone walls, should be discouraged.

Respondents to the West Windsor survey also indicated a preference for all existing gravel roads to remain unpaved. The town should consider using or continue to use geotextiles, reconstructing the road sub-base or other engineering techniques to help prolong the life of unpaved roads.

The highway department should also continue to inspect and evaluate the condition of bridges and culverts, and replace deficient or undersized drainage structures annually as funding allows. Culverts and drainage ditches should allow for an adequate flow of stormwater so as to protect infrastructure from damage during typical large snowmelt and rain events.

The town should continue to use best management practices for road resurfacing and ditching techniques to facilitate road drainage, to avoid incremental road widening, and to protect trees and other scenic resources. Best management practices should also be employed in highway construction and maintenance activities in order to minimize erosion and water quality degradation.

Two covered bridges are located in West Windsor, including Best's and Bowers covered bridges. These structures are important scenic and historical resources and should be protected and maintained.

Through their zoning regulations, the town currently requires that roads accessing four or more lots meet specific standards for road construction. These standards focus primarily on the intersection of the access with a town road. The town roadway design standards should be modified to address access for emergency vehicles to developments smaller than four lots. All new development, including development on Class 4 town highways, private roads and driveways, shall be required to meet appropriate road and driveway standards. Coordination among town officials, including the Selectboard, and Highway and Fire Departments, is important in reviewing development proposals for potential transportation impacts.

Access Management

Access management refers to the systematic control of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways, median openings and street connections to a roadway. The purpose of access management is to provide vehicular access to land development in a manner that preserves safety and efficiency. Access in terms of highway capacity is not a big concern today in West Windsor, however, the safety of access points and their impacts on the public highway infrastructure are concerns. Driveway permits are required in West Windsor. All driveways shall meet local standards regarding right-of-way, drainage and geometry, including steepness of grade. Driveways shall also limit negative impacts in terms of safety and drainage impacts on town highway infrastructure. Driveways should not generally exceed approximately 400 feet in length in order to minimize negative impacts to the environment and to discourage incremental growth off driveways on parcels without frontage.

Scenic Roads

On the recommendation of the Scenery Preservation Council, the transportation board may designate or discontinue any state highway, or portion of a state highway, as a state scenic road per 19 VSA Section 2501. The corridor that includes VT Route 44A to VT Route 44 to Ascutney Mountain Resort is designated as a scenic byway and is part of the Connecticut River Scenic Byway.

Towns in Vermont are enabled to designate municipally-maintained roads as "town scenic roads," as established by 19 VSA Section 2502. Local scenic roads are also subject to the standards established by the State Transportation Board. Those standards for scenic roads address appropriate minimum roadway widths, alignment, landscaping and traffic control methods, pursuant to 10 VSA Section 425. There are no town scenic roads in West Windsor at this time. However, scenic qualities of the local roads, including tree canopies and stone walls, are highly prized by residents, and those scenic features should be preserved.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

1. Ensure that future development of transportation related facilities in the town of West Windsor are designed to maintain the beauty, integrity and rural characteristics of the town.

2. Ensure a safe, efficient and cost effective local transportation network to support the movement of people, goods and services.

3. Encourage bicycle and pedestrian transportation through maintenance and expansion of existing facilities, while also maintaining rural character.

4. Keep the existing transportation network in good repair to avoid costly replacement in the future.

5. Ensure adequate road construction and maintenance standards are met on all roads. Standards should be balanced between the protection of the safety and welfare of residents and town personnel with the protection of scenic resources and rural character.

6. Maintain all town highways in consistently good, passable condition.

7. Investigate and implement pedestrian links throughout the village area to encourage safe pedestrian travel in Brownsville.

8. Improve shoulder conditions or widen shoulders along paved town roads to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists and horseback riders, while also maintaining rural character.

9. Put in place provisions that will assure safe access by emergency vehicles to homes and other buildings, and that specify reasonable standards for road construction in the event that a request is made to have the town take over a road, without unduly adding to the regulatory burden of those seeking development opportunities.

10. Protect covered bridges by using appropriate maintenance techniques.

11. Maintain undeveloped Class 4 town highways and legal town trails as recreational resources for West Windsor residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Encourage coordination among town officials, including the Selectboard, Planning Commission, Highway Department and Fire Department, in reviewing development proposals for potential transportation and safety impacts.

2. Review the local highway and driveway signage standards and policies that apply to existing and proposed roads with respect to safety and the potential impact on the town.

3. Road maintenance should seek to balance efforts to contain costs, and retain the existing rural and scenic qualities in West Windsor.

4. Request that the Highway Department continue using best management practices during highway maintenance activities in order to protect the scenic qualities of the roads and water quality, and to minimize erosion and other stormwater problems.

5. Discourage roadway widening on gravel roads, maintenance techniques that may harm tree roots, and tree cutting along gravel roads. Encourage narrow roads and intersections to facilitate slower traffic speeds and safe navigation of local road intersections. The Selectboard, affected landowners and the town tree warden should be consulted when there are plans to widen a road. In addition, it is recommended that the town consider adopting a local scenic road policy that would serve as a non-regulatory set of guidelines for the highway department and utility companies.

6. Amend the Town's driveway policy to consider placing restrictions on length, wide, slope and impact into sensitive areas.

CHAPTER 9. ENERGY

State and federal governments have more control over energy supplies, sources, and pricing than do municipalities, but local efforts can play a role in energy development, energy conservation and land use decisions. Reducing local dependence on outside energy sources and reducing overall energy demand are in the best interest of the town's residents.

Local planning efforts that are sensitive to energy issues should promote development and settlement patterns that minimize vehicular transportation requirements and encourage land use that conserves energy. Zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations, and the Act 250 process are vehicles by which municipalities can promote energy efficient development on the local level. Through planning to concentrate housing and minimize dispersed settlement and by discouraging energy-dependent development that is distant from power generating centers, energy can be distributed more efficiently.

ANALYSIS

Vermonters and local residents use a variety of fuel sources to meet energy needs, but by far the predominant fuel used is petroleum. Fuel oil accounts for 60.5 percent of home heating fuel used by West Windsor residents. According to the U.S. Census 2000, wood use accounts for 13.2 percent of home heating fuel and propane use accounts for 21.1 percent of home heating fuel. The greatest energy uses in general are of petroleum products and electricity. In addition, some energy needs are met by hydropower, nuclear power, fuel wood, and wind power. Currently, Vermont's transportation sector consumes nearly half of the state's current energy demand. Through simple changes such as ride sharing, combining trips, walking, biking, and using alternative transportation individuals can help reduce the total energy demand. Increased and more effective public education regarding not only the environmental benefits of conservation but also the potential financial savings might be needed in the future.

Wind Energy

Wind energy is a clean and renewable resource. There are many benefits of wind as a source of energy and even to the hosting of a wind energy conversion system facility, including economic and long-term environmental benefits of a clean and local energy supply. Preparation through local planning for the location and design of potential large-scale commercial wind energy facilities in the community is important.

Some important factors related to the development of large scale wind energy are safety concerns (such as blade speed, breakage, and ice throw), operational noise, night lighting, impairment of scenic views, windmill height, environmental concerns (ridgeline development, detriment to existing flora and fauna), electromagnetic interference (radio and television), access road construction and maintenance, site abandonment, liability insurance, and siting and design standards. The town should consider and address each of these elements to determine what is best for the community.

In Vermont, commercial windmill development will most likely be along ridgelines or mountaintops with elevations of 2,000-3,500 feet. The challenge for communities will be to determine which ridgelines and hillsides are best suited for the development of a windmill

facility. These will most likely be ridgelines that are not scenic focal points or in the foreground of predominantly natural views and landscapes. It is also important that the wind turbines do not compete with an important scenic view or focal point, such as an important agricultural or village landscape. Views of or from designated natural areas, important wilderness areas, and historic areas will require thoughtful consideration of turbine placement.

It will be helpful to think of potential commercial windmill sites as either “least suitable or sensitive”, “potentially suitable” or “most suitable”. The least suitable sites are those that have one, all, or a combination of traits that make the site poorly suited for the development of a wind energy conversion system. These include: areas of important plant and wildlife habitats, those ridgelines with prominent and highly visible peaks, along scenic corridors, recreation areas, locally significant scenic ridgelines, or designated natural areas, wilderness areas or State Park land. Those areas most suitable are indistinct landscapes, already developed ridgelines, logging or earth extraction lands, and industrial areas. Potentially suitable areas include ridgelines adjacent to settled areas, undistinguished peaks, certain agricultural landscapes, or a heavily used recreation area.

Site design of large-scale wind operations should minimize disturbance. Access roads should be minimally visible, substations screened, overhead power lines and noise minimized, turbine design uniform, and lighting should be the minimum necessary for safety.

ENERGY POLICIES

1. Encourage energy conservation and the development of renewable energy resources.

2. Concentrate growth near village centers and encourage subdivision that takes advantage of solar energy gains to minimize the use of fossil fuels.

3. Facilitate use and awareness of renewable and alternative energy sources such as wood, solar, wind, methane and hydropower.

4. Support recycling efforts to increase the percentage of materials recycled.

5. Support programs for insulation and weatherization of existing dwellings, especially for low and moderate-income households.

6. Review town buildings for energy efficiency and weatherize as needed.

7. Require that new development, including new public buildings, be planned and designed so as to minimize demands on limited energy resources.

8. Encourage practical conservation measures, including the use of solar energy, biomass, wind power, and hydropower.

9. Require the exemption of alternative energy systems and equipment as defined in 32 V.S.A., §3845, from real and personal property taxation.

10. Encourage landowners with woodlot potential to participate in sustained forest management programs.

11. Reuse and recycle goods and materials to save energy and protect the environment.

12. Encourage homeowners and contractors to consider high standards of insulation (increased R-values) for new buildings and the improvement of the efficiency of existing structures.

13. Discourage potential commercial wind energy facilities in Town. However, if they are to be developed, they shall be sited within the areas deemed most suitable by the town.

14. Consider, where feasible, the collocation of windmills and telecommunication facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Study the potential for alternative energy uses in the town buildings.

2. Reuse and recycle goods and materials at all town facilities. Review town buildings for energy efficiency and weatherize as needed.

3. Coordinate with neighboring towns in reviewing any commercial windmill applications.

4. Participate in the hearing process for windmill facility applications under Title 30 section 248 of the Vermont Statutes.

CHAPTER 10. HOUSING

Note: Please see I. Introduction, Population and Demographics for more housing data

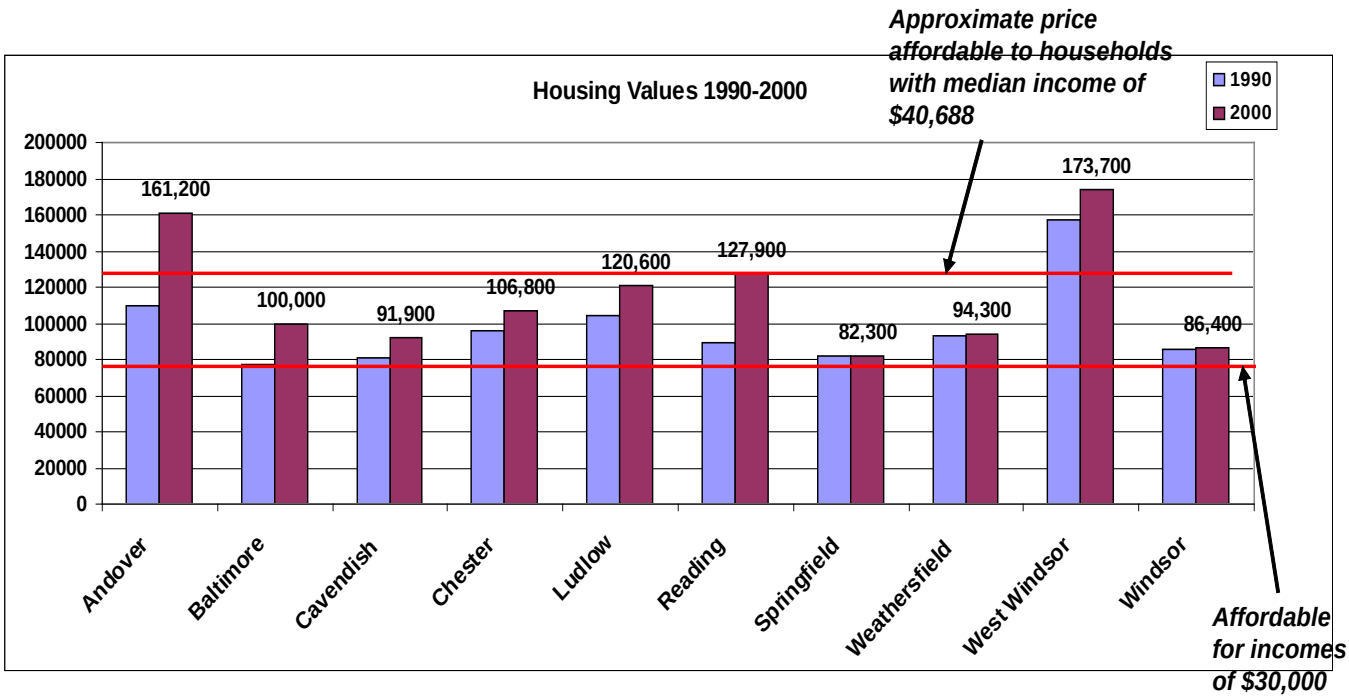
Housing is a key element of any sustainable community. The supply of housing should be adequate to house those who work in the community and should expand at a rate that can accommodate economic growth. In addition, a variety of housing options should be available for the region's expanding elderly population and to maintain a population of families that bring students to area schools. Housing issues in the Southern Windsor County Region vary dramatically from one town to another. While towns on the northern end of the region are beginning to feel the effects of an extreme housing shortage in the Hanover/Lebanon area, Springfield is experiencing economic challenges, a declining population and deteriorating housing stock. In resort areas and towns with a large percentage of seasonal housing, such as West Windsor, high housing costs have created a shortage of affordable housing.

The amount and type of housing available for sale and for rent can have a direct impact on the landscape and the costs of municipal services. With careful planning and use of available resources, housing that is both affordable and attractive can serve area residents and can enhance the character of a community.

In the last ten years, a housing crisis has emerged in the Upper Valley, centered in the core communities of Hanover and Lebanon, NH. The Upper Valley economy has been expanding but housing growth in the core area has remained fairly stagnant, sending housing prices up and vacancy rates down. Many businesses in the Upper Valley are having difficulty hiring new employees because of the housing shortage. Those who work in the Hanover/Lebanon area must go farther to look for housing, and make longer commutes. This has led to expanding residential growth in surrounding towns, including West Windsor.

The town of West Windsor recognizes that housing that is affordable to working residents is important for a successful community. Housing is considered affordable if rent or mortgage, taxes, and insurance costs are no more than 30 percent of a household's annual income. Affordable housing is necessary to attract and sustain permanent residents who will send their children to school, participate in community affairs, and make West Windsor a better place to live.

Property values in West Windsor have escalated because of the resort and the town's attractiveness to vacation homeowners. Despite the town's comparatively low tax rate, costs for housing in West Windsor generally exceed those deemed "affordable" based on the 1999 Median Family Income figure of $49,002 for Windsor County and $63,456 for the town of West Windsor. Many young people who grew up in West Windsor are only able to settle in town with their own families because property was made available to them by parents or other relatives.



Source: U.S. Census 2000

In West Windsor and other towns throughout the region, many seasonal homes have been converted to year-round homes as the demand for year-round homes continues to grow. U.S. Census data shows that the number of seasonal units in West Windsor dropped from 374 to 226 units between 1990 and 2000 because of this conversion to year-round use.

In addition, West Windsor must plan for the future because of changes to the state's Municipal and Regional Planning and Development law (Chapter 117) that encourage towns to allow for the development of housing types that would be affordable to low to moderate income Vermonters. These changes include allowing prefabricated housing, mobile homes and multifamily housing (with three or more units) in certain areas of town, and allowing accessory apartments to be built in all single-family homes or appurtenant accessory structures.

HOUSING POLICIES

1. Encourage housing development in West Windsor that meets the needs of residents of all income levels.

2. Ensure that the development of housing in West Windsor is consistent with the Town Plan.

3. Encourage improvement of older, larger homes. Give consideration to their possible uses or conversion to multi-family or senior housing.

4. Encourage the development of cluster housing with covenants for long-term affordability of some units.

5. Encourage and support regional affordable housing programs, such as the Rockingham

Area Community Land Trust.

6. Support incentive programs that encourage owners to rehabilitate existing units.

7. Promote the use of innovative construction and design techniques as developed by "Efficiency Vermont" that enhance the affordability, energy efficiency, and environmental suitability of housing for all residents.

8. Site new rural housing development so as to preserve the greatest amount of open space and blend harmoniously with the natural environment.

9. Encourage multi-family housing in the village.

10. Consider mechanisms such as cluster zoning, inclusionary zoning and conversion of single-family to multi-family homes where there is significant need for affordable housing.

11. Encourage innovative strategies for conversion of suitable units of the existing housing stock to meet the requirements of the elderly and special needs population.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. Allow for the development of a diversity of housing types that will serve all income levels.

2. Review zoning regulations to determine whether they encourage the development of affordable housing.

3. Make changes to zoning bylaws in accordance with changes to Chapter 117, including allowing for multifamily housing and greater flexibility in allowing for accessory apartments.

CHAPTER 11. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Until the early 1900's, the economy of West Windsor was centered around agriculture. Most residents made their livelihood by farming or in businesses that were associated with the farm industry. Mills of various types could be found along the brooks throughout the town, and factories that made everything from woolen clothing to cheese prospered. Smaller, home-based businesses and industries completed the picture of a town that appears to have had a solid economic base and low unemployment.

In the mid-1900's, West Windsor's economy began to shift away from agriculture. Residents in town left the farm to work in the large machine shops and factories in Windsor and Springfield. These jobs were attractive because they provided an excellent salary, benefits and other amenities that weren't provided in an agricultural economy. The manufacturing sector remained strong until the 1970s. Beginning in the mid-1970's the manufacturing sector started to decline due to industry consolidation, overseas competition and a host of other financial factors. Cone Blanchard Machine Co., the last large machine tool plant located in the precision valley, closed its doors in 2000. Since the mid-1990s, the primary employment areas are in government, technology, light manufacturing and services. While the economy seems to transform itself every twenty fives years or so, there still remains a close relationship to agriculture in West Windsor. Although the farms are now smaller and there are more horses than cows, the residents in West Windsor still enjoy and feel strongly about the importance of a working landscape in town.

In 2004, a town-wide survey was performed that looked at quality of life, growth and development, housing, town services and regulations. The overwhelming response to the survey was that people want the town to retain its rural character with historic buildings, open land, scenic roads and beautiful views. Therefore, any future development should consider these natural, historic and visual resources if they want to be successful in their development endeavors.

As we look to the future, townspeople should consider the implications of the following issues:

ENCOURAGING HOME-BASED AND SMALL BUSINESSES

The town's policy is to support home-based and small businesses. Advances in computer and communications technology now make working out of one's home a realistic and attractive alternative to employment options that require a commute. Home-based businesses should expand as the town, in cooperation with a private firm, begins to implement its high-speed broadband service. The services should begin in the spring 2006. As home-based businesses expand in town, the town may want to address potential adverse impacts associated with home-based businesses such as increased traffic, noise, dust, parking, etc. Home-based businesses that create high volumes of traffic should be encouraged to locate in the village area or along the major routes in West Windsor.

AGRICULTURE AS A BUSINESS

It is unlikely that West Windsor will ever return to what would be considered a traditional farming town. In the 1930s, there were 94 dairy operations in town, today there are none. Yet agricultural enterprise is cyclical. Historically, sheep production boomed and then declined to be replaced by dairy farming. It is now possible that smaller, more diversified agriculture will develop to take the place of the dairy farms. This diversity can be seen in town today. There are beef, horses, llamas, alpacas, sheep, market gardens, tree farms and sugaring operations throughout the town. This type of diversity has the best chance of succeeding.

TOURISM/VACATION HOME DEVELOPMENT

Tourism has become an increasingly important part of the town's economy. Towns like West Windsor, with its mountain, open fields, farmland, scenic vistas and traditional village area has made West Windsor an increasingly sought after place for vacationers looking for a respite from ever expanding urban and suburban environments. Tourism can provide opportunities for residents who want to open Bed and Breakfasts, Inns and others forms of lodging. Services provided to second home owners can create additional jobs. These jobs may include maintenance, carpentry, snow plowing, electrical, plumbing and heating services, etc.

A potential down-side to vacation home development is the possibility of vacation units being converted to year-round family residences, particularly in the resort area. This point cannot be over-emphasized because of the large seasonal housing stock in town and the implication for town services in the event of its large scale conversion to primary housing. Nearly 50 percent of housing units within the town are considered seasonal. A shift in this percentage from seasonal or vacation use to year-round use by families with school age children would definitely create demands that would exceed the present capacity of school and town facilities.

ASCUTNEY MOUNTAIN RESORT

The first ski operation began in the 1940s with the installation of a rope tow, which offered local families an affordable recreational pastime. In the 1980s there was rapid expansion of the area, including a marked increase in lodging and other forms of on-site accommodations. These changes in part were driven by ski industry market forces which drove many ski areas, such as Ascutney Mountain Resort, to develop its real estate in order to remain profitable. This change caused the need to attract skiers from outside the region and to evolve the ski area from a “local ski area” with inexpensive lift tickets to a ski resort with less local flavor and higher prices. In the early 1990s, the ski resort went through bankruptcy and was purchased by the Plausteiner family in 1995. According to resort’s website, the new owners have invested over 10 million dollars in capital expenditures and improvements. Ascutney Mountain Resort initiated in 2005 a timeshare program referred to as Windsor House Quarter, which provides 13 weeks of ownership per year and the Windsor House Residences which is a full ownership option. The resort also submitted a draft proposal in 2002 for developing a snowmaking pond, but the proposal was shelved.

The Ascutney Mountain Resort is a significant employer in the area and is the largest taxpayer in town. It has provided the town with many amenities and has sponsored community based programs and events which the town appreciates.

As the ski industry changes and the resort responds to those changes, it is important that the resort and the town discuss potential projects that may impact the town, as early as possible, to avoid potential conflicts during the permitting process.

COMMERCIAL-INDUSTRIAL AREAS

In the mid-1960s, the talc mill was purchased and developed for the purpose of processing the ore that was mined in nearby towns. In 2003, the talc operation was shut down. The former Talc Company, Luzenac, agreed to reclaim the tailings dam area which will be made available to the public, for recreational purposes, after the reclamation has been completed. In 2004, the complex was sold to Vermont Soapstone, a manufacturer of countertops, sinks and flooring.

With the loss of the talc operation the planning commission will reconsider the existing zoning land use designation to one that will be more compatible with the future recreational plans for the site. Recently, Lucy Mackenzie Humane Society received its Act 250 permit to operate a humane society in this area. A privately-owned vet clinic will be opening near the humane society, as well.

At this time, it is the general consensus of the townspeople that there be little, if any, emphasis on industrial growth in town. Because of West Windsor's desire to remain rural and conserve its natural features and resources, any new industry considering the town for its location would be evaluated based on its compatibility with those goals and its potential effects on the environment.

The primary area for commercial development is in Brownsville in the area between the bridges within the village. Commercial activities that support the ski resort should be limited to the resort base area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. Support local businesses that provide well paying, sustainable jobs that support the local economy and are compatible with West Windsor’s rural character.

2. Encourage compatible economic growth that includes mixed use and residential development in the area between the bridges in the village and adjacent to the former talc mill.

3. Consideration of the potential impact on town services, traffic aesthetics, and natural and cultural resource issues should be given in the event of ski area expansion.

4. Encourage home-based businesses as long as they consider adjacent land uses, traffic, noises and other issues that may be offensive to neighbors in the area.

5. Discourage town highway expansion as a tool to attract economic development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support agricultural enterprises in the town that do not adversely impact water quality, harm natural resources or degrade the quality of life of adjacent property owners.

2. Recognize that tourism and vacation home development can benefit the town, but balance future development against the impacts that such efforts may have on the qualities that draw people to West Windsor in the first place.

3. Plan carefully for the infrastructure needs for the Brownsville village area and the light industrial area.

4. Begin, and continue on a regular basis, a dialogue with the owners of Ascutney Mountain Resort regarding their development plans for water withdrawal, housing, traffic, and infrastructure needs.

5. Continue to support the propagation of broadband services throughout the town.

CHAPTER 12. RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

In order for the town of West Windsor to carry out its land use planning goals, the town must evaluate the Town Plan in relation to plans of neighboring towns and the region. West Windsor is bordered by the towns of Windsor, Hartland, Woodstock, Reading and Weathersfield in Windsor County. West Windsor is located in the northern area of the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission's 10-town region. West Windsor is served by the District 2 Environmental Commission, and is located in Maintenance District 4 of the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

NEIGHBORING TOWNS

West Windsor is surrounded by towns which share many similar planning concerns and are faced with varying degrees of development pressure. All of the towns abutting West Windsor have Town Plans and zoning regulations, except Hartland, which has a Town Plan, but no zoning regulations. According to the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, none of these plans appears to be in conflict with the West Windsor Town Plan.

Some neighboring towns share West Windsor's concern for the protection of natural resources.

According to the Southern Windsor County Regional Transportation Plan, VT Route 44 and the Hartland-Brownsville Road are both identified as regional transportation corridors.

West Windsor shares the watershed of the Mill Brook and its branches with the towns of Reading and Windsor.

According to the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, the land use and conservation plans of the neighboring towns appear to be compatible with those of West Windsor.

SOUTHERN WINDSOR COUNTY REGION

The 2003 Southern Windsor County Regional Plan provides broad guidelines for planning, coordination and review of the natural, cultural, social and economic features of the Southern Windsor County region. The Southern Windsor County Regional Plan, 2005 Regional Transportation Plan and 1997 Regional Bicycling and Walking Plan are companion documents to the West Windsor Town Plan, providing a broader framework and context for local planning efforts. The Town Plan should support and complement the land use and development goals of these regional planning documents and it does.

The 2003 Regional Plan identifies the village area of Brownsville as a "Village," that is characterized by having a small area of concentrated development with one or more commercial establishments, and minimal to nonexistent industrial development. The Future Land Use section of the Regional Plan indicates that Brownsville cannot sustain a large amount of growth based on its rural setting and limitations of available services. Growth pressure in Woodstock and the Upper Valley is already affecting the growth pressure in West Windsor, Hartland, Weathersfield, Reading and Windsor. The Regional Plan states that this anticipated growth

should be directed within the higher density village area. This section is compatible with the West Windsor Town Plan, which has designated the village area as a mixed use area, containing commercial development and higher-density residential development.

While maintaining West Windsor's uniqueness and independence of thought and planning, the West Windsor Town Plan is compatible with 2003 Regional Plan of the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission in the concerns and goals expressed in Transportation, Land Use, Community Utilities and Facilities, Natural and Cultural Resources, Energy Resources, Housing and Economic Development.

CHAPTER 13. TOWN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the goals, policies and recommendations outlined in this Plan depends on the combined efforts of town residents and local officials, as well as the resources of the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, and other regional, state, federal and private entities involved in land use planning activities.

At the state and federal levels, the Plan can be used to justify and prioritize the use of federal funds for community development, transportation improvements, natural resource protection and management, and other investments. In addition, Act 250 requires that developers show that projects conform to local and regional plans.

At the regional level, the Regional Planning Commission can review the Town Plan for compliance with the requirements of Act 200. Act 200 approval makes the town eligible to apply for implementation funding from the State in the form of Municipal Planning Grants.

At the local level, the town may take some of the following actions to implement the goals of this Plan:

1. Review and amend, if necessary, zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations so that they are based on the goals, policies and recommendations outlined in the Town Plan.

2. Refer to the Town Plan when planning additions and improvements to local infrastructure such as local roads and public utilities. Such additions or improvements should be used to plan for appropriate growth and development.

3. Work with public and private entities to help them design development or resource management plans in ways that will further the goals of this Plan.

4. Continue to plan and work to conserve important resource lands.

5. Request that the Regional Planning Commission create and update maps indicating the locations of state recognized natural resource areas.

6. Review and amend the Capital Program and Budget Plan.

7. Work with the Regional Planning Commission on meeting local housing needs.

8. Identify areas of significant aesthetic value to the entire community.

9. Inventory cultural resources as identified by the residents of West Windsor.

APPENDIX A

WEST WINDSOR STORY

By Mary B. Fenn

Looking north from the Brownsville Rock, high on Mount Ascutney, one can view the hills, valleys, fields and forest of the West Windsor township. Deep in the valley below is the tiny village of Brownsville with its white steepled church, yellow brick town hall, and the large red brick, seven chimneyed home. It is a snug clutch of buildings which has changed little in the last 150 years. Tight to the base of the mountain is the Ascutney Resort, a complex of gray structures. Ski trails sprawl down the steep slopes, merging together by a main lodge. A recently enlarged school/community building makes its own statement on the north edge of the village. One can make out a blacktop highway which threads east and west, between Windsor and Reading. Another one runs north from the village toward the township of Hartland. A few of the houses by the dirt roads that wind through the folding hills date back over 200 years.

West Windsor was organized as an independent township October 26, 1848. Previous to that time it had been the West Parish of Windsor.

It was July 6, 1761 that Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire issued a charter to Colonel Josiah Willard of Winchester, New Hampshire, which "sued out" the grant for Windsor. Parcels of land were sold to settlers from New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut – to men and families who were anxious to move into this undeveloped country. Land was surveyed, roads laid out, trees were cut and homes were built, as a small community was cleared out of the wilderness.

The first recorded meeting of the proprietors was held November 3, 1767. It was noted that “New York lays claim to all lands west of the Connecticut River that were granted by the governor of New Hampshire." This was a confusing period in the history of what was later to become the state of Vermont. By 1769 early pioneers were making their "pitches" in the western part of the Windsor grant. Three years later the first map was drawn up. Lots and Ranges were laid out. A rough road/track was cut west from the settlement by the river, over several ridges through what was later to become the hamlet of Sheddsville, and on westward over more ridges.

At a July, 1778 town meeting the town of Windsor was officially divided into two equal parts. The East Parish, close to the river, was developing into a thriving commercial village. Self-sufficient farms were scattered through the hills of what was to become the West Parish. In 1783 the Vermont Legislature established the Parishes as two Ecclesiastical Societies.

Sheddsville, where several Shedd families settled, became the center of the West Parish. A meeting house was built and a cemetery laid out high on the hill above the tiny hamlet. A store, school and a blacksmith followed. A road led to the valley where water from Mill Brook produced power for a sawmill and gristmill. Annual Town Meetings were held alternately in the East and West Parishes.

Not only did the family lifestyles in the two parishes differ but there was friction. It was difficult to determine where problems lay. Traveling back and forth over the several steep hills was difficult. Much of the conflict had to do with the roads, and caring for the poor. Disagreements developed. November 4, 1814 a law was passed by the Legislature of the State of Vermont recording, "An act dividing the East and West Parishes of Windsor into separate and distinct towns." Almost a year and a half later, March 1, 1816, that act was formally repealed.

It was in 1810 that Consul-General William Jarvis of Weathersfield had introduced the Spanish merino sheep into Vermont. Both the people-population and the sheep-count in the parishes were growing steadily as old problems kept surfacing. Education didn't seem to be an issue. In 1823 there were 425 students registered in the 11 West Parish one-room schools. Large families were the rule. By 1847 the population in the West Parish had reached over 1,000 people. The festering separation difficulties finally came to a head. On October 26, 1848 the Governor of Vermont approved and signed the House Bill # 69 entitled, "An Act to Divide the Town of Windsor, It is hereby enacted by the general assembly of the state of Vermont, as follows: …" A line was drawn north and south between seventh and eighth ranges of lots. The portion east of said line was to be known as Windsor, and that portion lying westerly was to be known as West Windsor.

Water power and the mills attracted settlers to the valley. A second village, Brownsville, sprang up. A fulling and carding mill by the brook helped take care of the sheep farmers' wool processing needs.

Many farmers were motivated by the growing sheep industry. More trees were cut. Miles and miles of stone walls were built. The bare hills of West Windsor were dotted with over 7,020 heavily jowled merino sheep. 1860 was the height of the sheep era in West Windsor. It was about that time that the American west was opening up and families were being lured to land that was far better for agriculture than the hills of Vermont.

As the sheep bubble started to burst many local farmers who didn't head west were switching their farming efforts from sheep to cows. Cheese and butter were profitable products. The men did the farming. Women made the cheese. In 1850, 153 farmers had 506 milk cows which turned out 18,512 pounds of butter, while 72 of them turned out 20,800 pounds of cheese. Thirty years later records show that 114 farmers with 232 cows were producing 41,233 pounds of butter and only 5,652 pounds of cheese.

With the advent of railroads which reached up through Vermont it became possible to ship dairy products to Boston. Late in the 1800s a cooperative cheese factory was built at the west end of the village of Brownsville – close to Mill Brook. Large barrels of cottage cheese, as well as Neufchatel and other soft cheeses, were shipped to Boston. A few years later a cooling plant for milk was built where the West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department building stands today. After the milk was processed it was poured into 40-quart, heavily jacketed milk cans, packed in ice, and shipped to Windsor where it was loaded on a train for the big city.

For several decades the dairy business remained fairly static. Barns were built, pastures fenced in, hay fields cleared, plowed, fertilized and planted. Milk was cooled and processed before being shipped to the cities. The Gleaner Grange #282 was the organization which supported the farm community with agricultural education, cooperative buying opportunities, and fun social

activities. However, families kept leaving the area for "greener pastures." By the turn of the century the population had dwindled to half of what it once was. When automobiles came on the scene men looked for jobs in surrounding towns. Some of them worked in Windsor's machine tool shops –often keeping a subsistence farm at home. They still kept shipping milk.

1915 was a special year for West Windsor. Members of the Gleaner Grange #282 had raised enough money and given enough of their personal hard labor to build their own hall. Saturday, August 16 the Hall was dedicated with great celebration.

When Dr. Darwin Story from Proctorsville died, he left money to have a town hall built in the center of Brownsville, in memory of his father, Dr. Dyer Story. It was almost across the road from the Mary Blood Library, which had been given to the community in 1901 by Benjamin Blood. Dr. Dyer Story had cared for the people of West Windsor for over 50 years. At noon October 27, the day of the Town Hall dedication, a dinner was served at noon to 450 souls. It was an all day celebration with plenty of food and many speeches. It is said that 600 enjoyed dancing the night away.

West Windsor dairying reached its peak in 1930 with 94 herds and 1,706 cows.

For the next several decades, times were not easy. Farms began to lose their value. The "depression" somewhat affected the area, though many families had their gardens, chickens and other animals to sustain them. West Windsor felt the impact of World War II as 62 of their men and boys enlisted or were drafted. Only one was killed but many others, knowing that jobs were scarce at home, did not return to the hills and life on the farms. State requirements for dairy farms had become more stringent; pay was low for hired hands.

The complexion of the township was changing. When skiing became a growing sport, a woman who had moved into the area, installed a rope ski-tow at the base of Ascutney mountain. It was a beginning. Trails were cut, slicing the face of the mountain. Bob Ely, back from the war, invented snowmaking. The white stuff helped cover the rocks and steep pitches. Over the years improved lifts were installed. Housing for the skiers was made available as a succession of owners enlarged and upgraded the area.

In 1963, the local selectmen agreed it would be beneficial to the town to have Eastern Magnesia Talc Co. build their talc ore processing plan in the western part of town. Though the ownership changed several times over the next 50 years, the talc plant was a quiet, clean asset to West Windsor. It closed in 2004.

West Windsor had always been a likable, attractive, rural community. Interstate 91 made it reachable for people from "down-country" – not only to ski, but to stay a while. Some bought old houses, others bought land and put up new houses. Some young people from suburbia and the cities wanted to bring up their children in a small country town. There were those who had a "second home" in the hills. Some folks came and stayed. Others, after a few years, returned from whence they came or moved on. There was a core of families whose forebears dated generations back, to the early days. In the 1960s land values began to rise. Because of the proximity to Woodstock, home of the Green Mountain Horse Association, and some 58 miles of dirt roads,

old barns were shored up, new barns built, and a few large horse arenas broke the line of scenic beauty. Property values continued to rise as large parcels were divided into smaller housing lots.

Today, most of those who are employed locally have jobs with the school, the General Store or in their own homes, thanks to computers and the Internet. Others have employment in surrounding towns: Windsor, Claremont, Hanover, Lebanon, Woodstock and Springfield. At the end of the day they return to their homes in West Windsor, a wonderfully warm, friendly community – a community with a white steepled church, a bustling little library, a Town Hall where, on the first Tuesday in March, many residents gather for the annual Town Meeting to have their say in how their town is run.

There are always big doings on the Fourth of July: a flee-market, a fantastic parade, games for the kids, barbecue cookout and a chance to see and enjoy the day with friends in town. And there are always the Bean Suppers in the summer for the benefit of the Historical Society and the School. In the winter months there are the roast beef suppers at the Methodist Episcopal community church. The residents of the town feel safe and protected knowing the high quality of the West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department, the FAST squad and our dependable constable.

APPENDIX B – SURVEY RESULTS

West Windsor Survey
Final Results - March 1, 2004
285 Surveys Received

A. Respondent Characteristics	**YES**	**NO**
A. 1. Are you a full-time resident of West Windsor?	186	99
A. 2. Please indicate your age group:		
0-17	0	0
18-34	11	
35-54	120	
55-74	127	
75+	30	
A. 3. Do you have school –aged children?	49	235
A. 4. How many minutes do you travel to work:		
Self-employed/work at home	45	
Commute less than 15 minutes	37	
15-30 Minutes	40	
31-45 minutes	30	
more than 45 minutes	11	
retired	65	
other	13	

B. Quality of Life Issues

	1=Agree	**2=Neutral**	**3=Disagree**
1. West Windsor should maintain its small town rural atmosphere.	273	9	2
2. Maintaining open land is important to our quality of life.	267	13	5
3. Historic buildings should be preserved whenever possible.	251	31	3
4. Working farms and forestland contribute to the town's rural character.	272	11	1
5. Land use regulations are necessary in order to maintain the town's rural character.	228	39	17
6. We should protect the scenic qualities of our rural roads.	266	15	4
7. Residential development in rural areas should be done in a way that considers natural, historic and visual resources.	261	14	10
8. The Town should acquire land to be conserved.	162	84	36
9. Is more recreational land needed in West Windsor?	62	135	78
10. The Town should encourage landowners to provide access to private land for recreational activities.	120	85	73
11. The Town should purchase easements on these trails to keep them in use for future generations.	119	92	66

C. Growth and Development	1=Agree	2=Neutral	3=Disagree
1. Additional housing is needed in West Windsor	28	107	137
2. There should be no further or additional restrictions on how land is subdivided.	69	86	120
3. There are areas in West Windsor that should not be developed.	198	63	12
4. If you agree with the above statement, where are the areas that should not be developed?			
5. Would you support the spending of local tax dollars for conservation of undeveloped land?	143	73	59
6. Location and design of telecommunication towers, windmills and other structures should minimize impacts to natural, scenic, and historic resources.	239	30	11
7. The following should be considered for all new development:			
Effect on adjacent properties (noise, light, odor, property value) (1)	248	19	9
Increased traffic or parking impacts (2)	235	25	16
Overall density (3)	239	24	12
Visual impact (4)	237	24	13
Effect on natural resources such as wetlands and surface waters (5)	251	19	8
Effect on historical features such as cellar holes, stonewalls, etc. (6)	200	54	21
Effect on wildlife habitat such as deer wintering areas, etc.	227	38	12
Impact on local services such as roads, schools, emergency services (8)	242	22	11
8. Commercial development	184	55	37
9. Industrial development should occur only in areas where industry now exists.	208	44	24
10. Development should be prohibited along ridge lines.	178	71	24
11. The town should produce a list of its scenic vistas.	161	79	35

12. Which of the following would you be in favor of protecting through local regulations (check all that apply):	YES	NO
Scenic Views	191	94
Wetlands	191	94
Vernal Pools	141	144
Trails	182	103
Ridgelines	163	122
Wildlife habitat	204	81
Historic sites	203	82
Night Sky	154	131
None, current regulations are sufficient	32	253

Open fields	159	126	
Large tracts of undeveloped land	160	125	
Other:			

13. Would you encourage any of the following by the Town to protect the areas listed in Question 11?	**1. Agree**	**2. Neutral**	**3. Disagree**
Restricting development through zoning bylaws	179	49	30
Creating voluntary guidelines for developers/landowners	121	71	57
Creating a fund for the Town to purchase land	124	73	59

D. Housing

1. The development of housing for senior citizens should be encouraged.	99	123	51
2. The town should consider limiting the number of houses built annually.	119	93	61
3. Zoning regulations should encourage development in the village.	126	88	59
4. Zoning should encourage housing that is grouped together on small lots surrounded by open land or forests to maintain rural character.	115	80	76
5. The rate of residential growth in West Windsor has been:			
too slow	4		
just right	138		
too fast	97		

E. Town Services

1. All gravel roads in West Windsor should remain gravel.	210	49	16
2. The development of additional town roads should be discouraged.	147	94	28
3. What improvements would you like to see in West Windsor, if funding were available (check all that apply)	**YES**	**NO**	
Sidewalks in Brownsville	59	226	
Designated bike and walking path	141	144	
Access to public transportation	74	211	
Other improvement:			

4. Are there additional services that the Town should provide?

5. I am concerned about the following aspects of growth:			
Increased taxes/burden on local services	207	46	14
Loss of open land	205	45	19
Loss of recreational resources such as trails and recreation areas	175	57	32
The Town is becoming suburban in character	117	88	55
Other			

APPENDIX C – GLOSSARY

Clustering or Clustered Development - Development which takes place at densities greater than those allowed by the Town Zoning Ordinance. Exceptions with regard to density requirements are made to preserve open space and allow for development that is efficient and that conforms to existing settlement patterns.

Development - The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation, or enlargement of any structure; or any mining, excavation, landfill, or land disturbance.

Home-based commercial development - Creation of a business, by a resident, that is customary in residential areas, conducted as an incidental and accessory use in the resident's dwelling unit; or as defined by zoning ordinance.

Sustainable agriculture - An integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long-term: (1) satisfy human food and fiber needs; (2) enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends; (3) make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; (4) sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and (5) enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.

Transportation facilities - Refers to all programs and infrastructure related to publicly owned and/or controlled transportation, including roads, trails, culverts, bridges, bike and pedestrian paths, sidewalks, curb cuts, traffic signs, traffic lights, and maintenance equipment.

View-shed - The area visible in a given direction from a given point. A scenic viewshed may include both natural and built features, such as mountains, farmland, forestland, and villages.