

## **SUMMARY OF TOWN PLAN PUBLIC FORUM – 4/29/03**

### **“BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER”**

The public forum was held at the Community Alliance Church on Pond Road from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on April 29, 2003. The forum began with desserts and drinks. Approximately 50 Hinesburg residents and other interested parties were in attendance.

Alex Weinhagen, Town Planner, opened the public forum at 7:20 p.m. and turned the meeting over to the meeting facilitator, David Spitz. David explained that the purpose of this meeting was to review comments made at previous forums, to compare them to statements in the existing Town Plan, and to prioritize the comments in a “sticker exercise” later in the evening. A series of prepared comments, grouped under 5 separate headings, were presented to the audience. The 5 headings were:

- Village – Growth
- Village – Transportation
- Scenic/Natural Resources
- Rural Development, and
- Land Uses

Audience members were asked to discuss the prepared comments, to suggest any changes in wording, or to add new comments on topics that had not been adequately addressed.

After an hour of general discussion, each audience member was given stickers to rate the importance of the various comments. According to the facilitator’s instructions, each person received 5 small red stickers and 1 large orange sticker. The orange sticker represented the person’s single highest priority from all the written comments. The 5 red stickers represented each person’s next 5 highest priorities. If a person felt very strongly about an individual comment, he/she was permitted to place more than one sticker next to that comment.

The sticker results were presented briefly at the end of the meeting. In response to a question about formal results, the facilitator/planner agreed to prepare this meeting summary and to make it available to Hinesburg residents via the Town website and at Town Hall. All comments are presented, in priority order, on the following pages along with additional comparisons of selected comments.

The public forum ended at 9:00 p.m. Alex Weinhagen thanked all participants and invited them to attend Planning Commission public meetings on the Town Plan update throughout the rest of the year.

***This forum was made possible by funding from a Municipal Planning Grant awarded by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs.***

WEIGHTED POINT TOTALS IN PRIORITY ORDER

	DiscussionPoint	Orange Stickers	Red Stickers	Weighted @ Orange = 4
Group 1 "High"	Change character of Rte 116 to "Main St." with sidewalks, curbs, street trees, intersection upgrades & improved lighting	6	13	37
	Consider planning for biodiversity and ecological integrity - not just planning for individual people	6	12	36
	Concentrate mixed-use development in the core area of the village within a 15-minute (or less) walk of the Town Hall	5	14	34
	Encourage resource "connectivity" for forestry, agriculture & wildlife	6	8	32
	Traffic signals are needed on Rte 116, especially at Lantman's IGA - as part of a comprehensive plan	5	12	32
	Work with VT & Hinesburg Land Trusts, etc. to encourage voluntary protection of ag/ forest land inc. conservation easements	3	14	26
	Maintain open space areas to preserve existing natural features and village "edge"	2	12	20
	Growth location – expand south and move the gateway away from the school	3	6	18
	Maintain water quality along waterways; use setbacks, vegetated buffer strips, etc.	2	8	16
Group 2 "Medium"	Allow village uses that are compatible with existing uses and that meet the goal of encouraging a mix of commercial, institutional and residential uses	0	14	14
	With clustering, provide connections to and use of open space – gardens, paths, etc.	0	14	14
	Build "insiders bypass" – a road on west side of the village linking the Charlotte Road to Rte 116 opposite Commerce Street	2	5	13
	Maintain dirt roads	1	9	13
	Minimize nighttime light pollution	0	9	9
	Growth makes no sense unless it reduces the tax burden	1	4	8
	Encourage clustering; create privacy by careful siting not by size of lot	1	4	8
	Establish Town fund to preserve priority land via Purchase of Devel. Rights	0	7	7
	Growth location –expand east including greater density along Mechanicsville Rd	0	7	7
	Growth in the village is OK, but plan the aesthetics of growth	0	7	7
	Create a system of paths and sidewalks to link destinations in & outside village	1	2	6
	Encourage PRDs; include guidelines for location/amount/protection of open space	0	6	6
	Identify & protect areas integral to scenic landscape – views from roads, greenways, etc.	1	1	5
	Use clustering to fit the land character, but be fair to the landowner	1	1	5
	Develop protection standards for ridge lines and hillsides	0	5	5
	Use area-based density regulations with low minimum lot sizes + overall open space	1	0	4
	Need visible & safe street crossings at the school and at Lantman's IGA -- and reduce speeds	0	4	4
Preserve minimum "patch" sizes; will vary for different species	0	4	4	
Growth location – the West Side of Rte 116 may offer a variety of good options	0	4	4	

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Group 3 "Other"	Scenic protections should be consistent Town-wide (not just ridgelines, ag fields, too, etc.)	0	3	3
	Growth is a given; the question is where do we want it to go	0	3	3
	Encourage economic development that provides a variety of local services and a diversity of employment opportunities	0	3	3
	Signals do not meet State warrants and would increase Rte 116 delays	0	2	2
	Be selective about commercial/industrial growth – especially re traffic issues	0	2	2
	Build West Side Rd as a real bypass of Rte 116, inc. connection to Falls Rd	0	2	2
	Rates of growth need to be investigated based on this we should consider limits on growth based on our capacity to accommodate it	0	2	2
	Or businesses that we do not want? WalMart, Fast Food, not along all of Rt 116	0	2	2
	Reduce conflicts of residential vs. agric/ forestry uses; adopt "Right to Farm" policies	0	2	2
	Preserve agricultural soils; keep land open for agric. possibilities beyond dairy	0	1	1
	Need to think about regional implications of growth - e.g., growth in Charlotte creating additional traffic, etc. burden in Hinesburg	0	1	1
	Distinguish between population growth and land consumption --> need to asses this.	0	1	1
	Retain sewer/water allocation for the village to continue a compact settlement pattern	0	1	1
	In PRDs, grant density bonuses for plans that preserve viable agricultural land	0	1	1
	Create an interconnected grid street network to ease Rte 116 congestion and offer new development opportunities	0	1	1
	Commercial uses need a place to grow; existing options are exhausted	0	1	1
	Where should such growth occur – short and long-term? So. Hinesburg Center; along Rt 116 N&South	0	1	1
	Use site-specific review, not standards that blanket a whole district	0	1	1
	Allow business in transition between home occupations and full-scale commercial throughout Town, with safeguards	0	1	1
	Wildlife resources – involve hunters, anglers, trackers; educate landowners	0	1	1
	What types of businesses do we want in these districts? Pharmacy	0	0	0
	Preserve Village character with compatible patterns/design/scale of development	0	0	0
	Need a park & ride --> solves multiple issues	0	0	0
	Wildlife resources - what kind of wildlife are we interested in protecting? Large mammals? Common species?	0	0	0
	Buffer widths vary due to topography etc; get better data to avoid arbitrary fixed buffers	0	0	0
	Assess infill and greater density in the current village	0	0	0
	Pursue Transfer of Development Rights	0	0	0
	Open space shouldn't just follow aesthetic values; consider productive use of land	0	0	0
	Install a roundabout at Silver Street	0	0	0
	Provide balance of options – very small to very large lot sizes	0	0	0
	Use West Side Road to serve village-style growth, not as a bypass	0	0	0
Village traffic problems need highest priority because they pose a public health & safety issue	0	0	0	

HIGHEST POINT TOTALS PER CATEGORY – 3 COMMENTS EACH

VILLAGE – GROWTH	Total Points
Concentrate mixed-use development in the core area of the village within a 15-minute (or less) walk of the Town Hall	34
Maintain open space areas to preserve existing natural features and village “edge”	20
Growth location – expand south and move the gateway away from the school	18

VILLAGE – TRANSPORTATION	Total Points
Change character of Rte 116 to “Main St.” with sidewalks, curbs, street trees, intersection upgrades & improved lighting	37
Traffic signals are needed on Rte 116, especially at Lantman’s IGA - as part of a comprehensive plan	32
Build “insiders bypass” – a road on west side of the village linking the Charlotte Road to Rte 116 opposite Commerce Street	13

SCENIC/NATURAL RESOURCES	Total Points
Encourage resource “connectivity” for forestry, agriculture & wildlife	32
Maintain water quality along waterways; use setbacks, vegetated buffer strips, etc.	16
Develop protection standards for ridge lines and hillsides; & Identify/protect areas integral to scenic landscape – views from roads, greenways, etc.	5+

RURAL DEVELOPMENT	Total Points
Work with VT & Hinesburg Land Trusts, etc. to encourage voluntary protection of ag/ forest land inc. conservation easements	26
With clustering, provide connections to and use of open space – gardens, paths, etc.	14
Encourage clustering; create privacy by careful siting not by size of lot	11

LAND USES	Total Points
Allow village uses that are compatible with existing uses and that meet the goal of encouraging a mix of commercial, institutional and residential uses	14
All other comments	<4

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	Total Points
Consider planning for biodiversity and ecological integrity - not just planning for individual people	36
Maintain dirt roads	13
Minimize nighttime light pollution	9

POINT TOTALS FOR “COMPETING” QUESTIONS

Total Points	
Growth makes no sense unless it reduces the tax burden	8
Growth is a given; the question is <u>where</u> do we want it to go	3

Total Points	
Growth location – expand south and move the gateway away from the school	18
Growth location –expand east including greater density along Mechanicsville Rd	7
Growth location – the West Side of Rte 116 may offer a variety of good options	4

Total Points	
Build “insiders bypass” – a road on west side of the village linking the Charlotte Road to Rte 116 opposite Commerce Street	13
Build West Side Road as a real bypass of Rte 116, inc. connection to Falls Rd.	2
Use West Side Road to serve village-style growth, not as a bypass	0

Total Points	
Traffic signals are needed on Rte 116, especially at Lantman’s IGA	32
Signals do not meet State warrants and would increase Rte 116 delays	2

Total Points	
Maintain water quality along waterways; use setbacks, vegetated buffer strips, etc.	16
Buffer widths vary due to topography etc; get better data to avoid arbitrary fixed buffers	0