

TOWN OF  
EAST MONTPELIER, VERMONT  
PLANNING COMMISSION

Jean Vissering, Chair  
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January 25, 2016

Vermont Public Service Board  
Judith Whitney, Acting Clerk of the Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701

Re: CPG #16-0001-NMP  
BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, LLC PSB CPG Proceedings

Dear Ms. Whitney:

The Town of East Montpelier Planning Commission hereby enters its Notice of Appearance and files a Motion to Intervene in the proceedings of the BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar project. The Planning Commission exercises its right to intervene pursuant to 30 V.S.A. section 248(a)(4)(F) and PSB Rule 2.209(A). The Planning Commission has particular and substantial interest in the criteria of 30 V.S.A. Section 248 described below. In identifying these concerns, the Planning Commission does not waive its right to comment on any other criteria under review by the PSB or to file additional comments on the issues outlined below.

The East Montpelier Planning Commission believes that the proposed project will result in adverse and potentially undue impacts with respect to Orderly Development and Aesthetics, as discussed below. Additional mitigation measures are required to avoid undue adverse impacts resulting from construction of the Project.

248(b)(1) Orderly Development

- The Project is located within East Montpelier Village which is identified as a growth area in the Town Plan. [Town Plan, Villages and Growth Areas, pp. 102-110; attached; these were not included in the petitioner's application]
- The Project area is along the boundary of the Designated Village Center of East Montpelier Village. This is the historic core of our Village. The Designation was created to recognize and encourage local effort to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers.
- Since 2008, the Town has invested considerable money and time in planning efforts for East Montpelier Village, an area which is larger than the "Designated Village Center" described above, and which includes the project site. Planning efforts focused on the Village include but are not limited to the following:

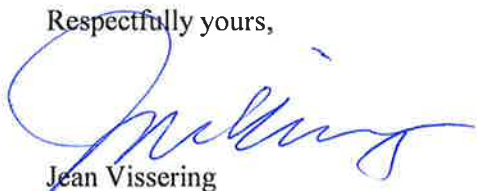
- Two Wastewater Studies (2007 Town of East Montpelier Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study – Wastewater Treatment for the Villages; 2008 Town of East Montpelier Wastewater Sewer Connection Study) examining alternative approaches and locations for wastewater disposal within the Village area.
- Municipal Planning Grant (2011) for Conceptual Planning and Public Engagement for the Village. This Village Study included the proposed project site and illustrates neighborhood streets through the site. [See attached Village Study Report]
- AOT Transportation Enhancement Grant (2011) for a Village Safety Enhancement Scoping Study of Sidewalks and Bike Lanes through the Village along the Routes 2/14 corridor.
- AOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Program Grant (2012) for Design and Construction of Sidewalks and Bike Lanes in the Village.
- Municipal Planning Grant (2016) for Detailed Village Planning and Design including developing Village Zoning.
- The East Montpelier Town Plan notes that “wastewater treatment continues to be a significant handicap to development within East Montpelier Village.” The project site is permitted for a wastewater disposal system for 6 residential building lots. The removal of this site from potential residential/commercial development will interfere with identified goals to create a vibrant mixed-use village.

#### 248(b)(5) Aesthetics

- The project area is located in historic East Montpelier Village.
- The East Montpelier Town Plan identifies East Montpelier Village as an important aesthetic focal point, with a goal to ensure that the village is an “attractive place to live, work, and do business.” The Plan notes that “residents and business owners want to see an attractive and vibrant village that provides community oriented services.” [East Montpelier Town Plan, Scenic Resources, pp. 84-87; attached]
- The property is now known locally as “the lupine meadow” and is visible from much of the southern end of the village.
- The Project would be immediately adjacent to and in close proximity to 5 residences. The project is only 50 feet from residential property lines and only 175 feet from residential structures.
- Two new power poles are proposed and will have significant visual impacts to nearby property owners. Switch gear, shown on the plans as well as other associated equipment are likely to result in additional visual clutter and potentially undue adverse visual impacts. Undergrounding of all electrical connections and screening of any above-ground equipment should be required.
- All associated equipment should be a dark gray color (transformer and inverter equipment, metering equipment, etc.) and screened from neighbors’ and public views.

- Sizes and numbers of plant materials should be increased. All shrub plantings should be a minimum of 3-4' in height. All existing plantings along the project's east boundary should be protected from damage during construction. We recommend a post-construction evaluation to determine if plantings adequately screen the project from neighboring properties and from Route 2.
- A Long-term plant maintenance agreement is needed. A landscape architect should certify that plants have been installed according to the agreed upon plan and comply with the numbers, sizes, species and varieties approved. Plants must be maintained and any dead or dying plants replaced within 3 months during the life of the project. After 3 years, a landscape professional must certify that all plants are in good health and condition.
- The area noted for removal of trees over 30' in height is not specifically identified. An arrow points only to a general area southwest of the project fence. The petitioner should provide a detailed vegetation management plan for the remainder of the property outside the project fence. All tree removal should be limited to a defined area and tree size. This area should be marked in the field during construction. It is particularly important that trees in a buffer zone along the small stream be protected, in order to maintain water quality in this tributary to the Winooski River.
- We were unable to find a decommissioning plan in the application documents. A decommissioning plan should be provided addressing the removal of all materials and the restoration of the site after the project is no longer producing power. A source of funding for this purpose needs to be provided.

Respectfully yours,



Jean Vissering

Chair, East Montpelier Planning Commission

Enclosures

cc: Certificate of Service

STATE OF VERMONT  
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

CPG #16-0001-NMP

Application of BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, )  
LLC for a certificate of public good for a 500 kW )  
interconnected group net-metered photovoltaic )  
electric power system in East Montpelier, Vermont )

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

**On behalf of the Town of East Montpelier's Planning Commission, I hereby certify that I have this day served one copy of the foregoing Notice of Appearance and Motion to Intervene, by first class U.S. mail, on the following persons or entities:**

Judith Whitney, Acting Clerk  
Vermont Public Service Board  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2701

Bonnie Waninger, Executive Director  
Central VT Regional Planning Commission  
29 Main Street, Suite 4  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Billy Coster  
Planning Center, Agency of Natural Resources  
Center Building- Third Floor  
103 South Main Street  
Waterbury, VT 05671-0301

Zachary A. Sances  
P.O. Box 141  
East Montpelier, VT 05651

Geoffrey Commons, Esq.  
Department of Public Service  
Director of Public Advocacy  
112 State Street - Third Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

BDE East Montpelier Lazar Solar, LLC  
Joslyn L. Wilschek, Esq.  
Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer PC  
100 East State St., PO Box 1309  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Green Mountain Power Corporation  
163 Acorn Lane  
Colchester, Vermont 05446-6611

**And by hand delivery to:**

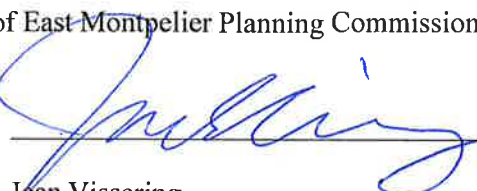
East Montpelier Selectboard  
Bruce Johnson, Town Administrator  
40 Kelton Road, PO Box 157  
East Montpelier, VT 05651

Commissioner Christopher Recchia  
Department of Public Service  
112 State Street- Third Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

**DATED** at East Montpelier, Vermont, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2016

Town of East Montpelier Planning Commission

By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Jean Vissering  
Chair, East Montpelier Planning Commission  
40 Kelton Road, PO Box 157  
East Montpelier, VT 05651

# East Montpelier Town Plan



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Adopted June 3, 2013

# SCENIC RESOURCES

## HISTORY

For much of its history, East Montpelier has been a town of enviable scenic beauty. The town is situated in the broad Winooski River valley, almost completely surrounded by low hills and mountains distant enough to provide long views. A look at an artist's view of the town and surrounding areas a century ago, when more land was in agricultural use, would show panoramas that are even more impressive than today.

The town has undergone considerable change to its scenic character in the past century, including changes in land use, advances in farm management techniques, development, loss of trees such as elms and chestnuts (while gaining overall in forested area), and loss of significant older structures—houses, barns, bridges, even stone walls.

## CURRENT STATUS

East Montpelier's gently rolling topography and rich soils have sustained a broad tapestry of meadowlands which give East Montpelier a distinctly open landscape with frequent views toward the surrounding hills and mountains. The town's scenic beauty is the result of a small-scaled and intimate landscape of villages, farmsteads, and homes in the midst of a varied pattern of field and forest. In addition to roadside views, many of the wilder back lots are familiar to residents because of their accessibility by an extensive network of walking and snowmobile trails.

The average tourist driving through East Montpelier on US Route 2, however, may have a quite different impression of the town. While this perspective offers beautiful views of the Winooski River, and the opportunity to visit a classic country store, Route 2 is becoming increasingly characterized by numerous small commercial businesses organized into strip development patterns. East Montpelier Village contains many historic properties and an increasing number of local businesses, but lacks a sense of pedestrian

scale or focus. Older patterns of development can contribute to the scenic quality of the landscape.

Subdivisions in town have most often consisted of a few lots. Nevertheless, this incremental development can result in eroding rural character especially when they are poorly planned with houses sprawling across former open meadows and numerous roads and drives that inefficiently cut up the landscape. Some larger agricultural properties have been subdivided at a much larger scale development. The Sparrow Farm is an excellent example of accommodating numerous homes while protecting the most scenic and valuable open space.

Historically, development in the rural areas of town has been located close to roads, usually oriented either parallel or perpendicular to the road. Houses and outbuildings oriented in numerous directions rather than in historic patterns or relating to the natural topography can create suburban patterns of development that are contrary to rural character. Many newer homes have been set back into or at the edge of woodlands, often helping to minimize their visibility and leaving more open areas intact.

A few significant steps have been taken over the past few decades to protect the scenic and rural character of the town.

Perhaps most important is the trend to purchase development rights and preserve agricultural and other significant land which helps to maintain the scenic beauty of East Montpelier. The town evaluated the relative value of farm and forest lands using a methodology called the LESA system (Land Evaluation and Site Assessment). Scenic values were part of the evaluation system, although secondary to the agricultural and timber production values of these lands. This systematic approach to evaluating the scenic recreational, forestry and agricultural values helped the town procure funding from the Vermont

Housing and Conservation Board to protect a number of valuable farms, forest lands and trail corridors in town. The town's Conservation Fund was also valuable, providing a small contribution to these acquisitions.

The Town Forest Committee practices roadside thinning to remove brush and open up space for young border trees. Many landowners are planting roadside trees for the future.

Respondents to the 2011 Town Survey placed high value on the town's scenic and rural character. The following six characteristic of rural landscapes were identified in the survey and are known to contribute to scenic quality generally:

### **Village Centers and Hamlets**

East Montpelier's village settlements add diversity to the landscape and create cultural focal points. The clear distinction between these concentrated settlements and the surrounding landscape dominated by open space is critical to the scenic character of East Montpelier. All three villages retain historic settlement patterns which include buildings in close proximity usually oriented at right angles to each other and to the road. Development tends to be one lot deep but often a lot includes a cluster of several buildings such as a house, barn, and outbuildings. Historic and/or natural focal points in East Montpelier Village include the Old Brick Church, C.P. Dudley Store, and the Winooski River; in North Montpelier Village the Riverbend Country Store, the falls, and the pond; and in East Montpelier Center the Old Meetinghouse Church and the historic Parley Davis House.

Each village has a distinct character. East Montpelier Village and North Montpelier include a mix of commercial uses along with residential and home occupations. Both are located along state highways. East Montpelier Center is quieter and more residential in character and the village is strongly integrated with its agricultural surroundings. The Center Farm is located right in the village.

Interest in the scenic character of East Montpelier Village was strongly expressed in two recent forums held in the spring of 2011. Residents and business

owners want to see an attractive and vibrant village that provides community oriented services. Residents in North Montpelier Village have also become active in promoting similar values for enhancing the village community.

### **Rural Agricultural and Open Lands**

Outside of the village centers, most of East Montpelier is characterized by farmsteads and residential uses separated by large areas of fields and forest land. The abundance of open meadow land distinguishes East Montpelier from other central Vermont towns. It creates diverse patterns of crop fields, hay fields, pasture, sugarbush, wetland, and wildland. Active farms are essential to maintaining these diverse patterns in the landscape. The 2011 survey



overwhelmingly identified agricultural uses as vitally important to the town with scenic character being one of agriculture's important contributions. Protecting open agricultural meadows to the greatest extent possible will be critical to retaining East Montpelier's scenic and rural character.

### Distant Views

The abundance of open meadowland and high elevation provide numerous opportunities for views around town. Many spectacular views include distant mountains, but closer views across a small valley to a cluster of farm buildings, or of nearby woodlands with wildflowers are also valued. Many views are enhanced by foreground meadows. Open meadows not only serve as the windows to distant views, but they are critical to the quality of the view itself. Views often include patterns of field and forest and sometimes a local natural or cultural focal point like the view from Lyle Young Road toward the historic Sibley Farmstead. More distant or background views range from nearby hills like the familiar views from eastern parts of town toward the Marshfield Cliffs and Spruce Mountain, to dramatic distant mountain views of the Worcester range and Camels Hump from many roads in town. From a few locations it is possible to see the White Mountains, such as from Fairmont Farm's high pastures or Fitch's hill on the side of Long Meadow Hill.

### Ponds and River Corridors

Water features usually contribute to scenic quality. One of the most important in East Montpelier is the Winooski River, which more or less parallels Route 2 until it veers off part way to Plainfield and winds its way under the old covered bridge on Coburn Road. Views of the river are often enhanced by floodplain meadows, but in a few places, development has impaired the view. There has been recent interest in improving both visual and physical access to the Winooski River. In particular residents of East Montpelier Village have discussed the possibility of a River Walk along the banks of the Winooski within the village. The Kingsbury Branch through North Montpelier Village offers similar opportunities.

East Montpelier also has several ponds including North Montpelier Pond, Sodom Pond, Horn of the

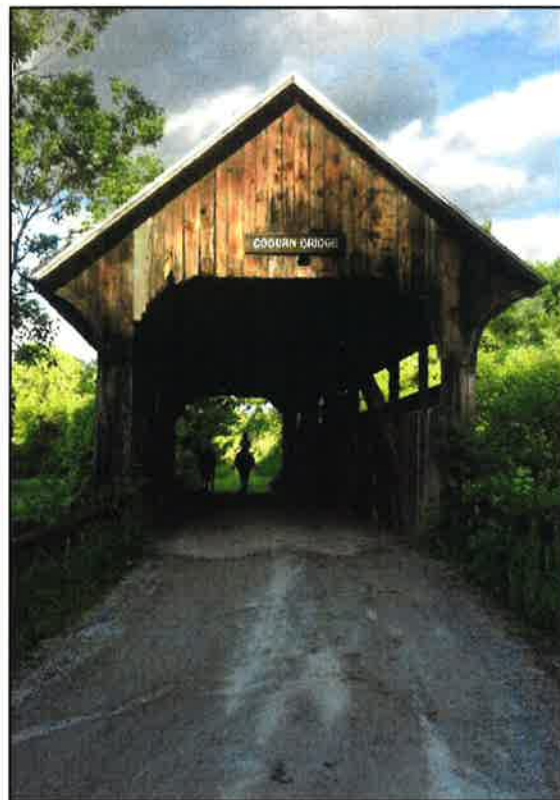
Moon Pond and the 6-acre swimming hole known as Coburn Pond accessed from Coburn Road. North Montpelier and Sodom Ponds also have frontage in the town of Calais.

### Roadsides

Narrow gravel roadways are an important part of East Montpelier's scenic and rural character. Some of these roadways are further enhanced with distinct roadside features such as stone walls or old maple trees.

### Hilltops and Ridgelines

Ridgelines are particularly important because they are often viewed from many locations and provide a backdrop for other scenic features. East Montpelier has some distinct ridgelines and a number of prominent hilltops. Long Meadow Hill is one of the highest and forms a natural backdrop for much of the western part of town. Other hilltops provide opportunities for distant views, such as the high meadows behind Fairmont Farm.



## THE FUTURE

To a large extent, the town has benefitted from a relatively slow rate of growth, leaving considerable open space still visible and accessible around town. Land protection has also contributed to ensuring permanently protected open space and often the protection of distant views. As numerous people noted in the Town Survey, despite living right next door to our state's capital, East Montpelier enjoys a rural landscape with relatively quiet back roads. Our highly convenient location is not likely to guarantee that these conditions will continue into the future. Owners of larger properties including existing farmland may wish to sell or subdivide these properties. Even small incremental subdivisions and construction can erode the scenic rural character of East Montpelier over time if not carefully planned. In order to ensure that these valuable characteristics remain while accommodating growth, the following goals and actions will be necessary:

## GOALS

- Preserve and enhance the aesthetic beauty of the town's landscape through a combination of public and private efforts, while maintaining sensitivity to the concerns and rights of property owners.
- Ensure that East Montpelier's villages remain important focal points through well-planned development and enhancements that ensure the villages are attractive and desirable places to live, work and do business.
- Encourage development which reinforces the traditional settlement patterns of clearly defined villages and rural countryside.

## ACTIONS

- The Planning Commission should ensure that zoning regulations promote the protection of scenic and open space resources through such techniques as planned unit development, clustering and minimizing roads and drives that divide contiguous open areas.

- The Selectboard and Development Review Board should consider scenic resources an important element in any plans and decisions regarding the development of public roads, utilities, and public buildings.
- The Selectboard should assign an existing town committees or create an ad hoc task force to:
- Develop a five-year plan for protecting resources of high scenic value. Protection measures must include working with landowners, and may include options such as easements, purchases, gifts, and other voluntary means.
- Work proactively with larger landowners to encourage future planning from development that retains valuable scenic and open space resources.
- Recommend approaches to planning and design that would enhance East Montpelier's three villages as important town focal points and encourage new efficiently-organized and pedestrian-scaled development providing desirable places to live and work, and with a pace of traffic flow appropriate to areas of commercial and pedestrian use.
- Explore a local scenic roads program to provide roads which are both safe and beautiful. Consider standards and programs that encourage narrow roadway widths, preserve and plant roadside trees, minimize disturbance to roadsides as a result of ongoing road maintenance and repair, and build and maintain power lines that retain the visual quality and important trees within public rights-of-way. These efforts need to be balanced with transportation needs for the town in consultation with the Road Foreman.
- The Town Forest Committee should continue to assist landowners in making improvements such as roadside beautification by offering saplings for transplanting.

- Create a village zone for North Montpelier Village.
  - Clarify the Conservation and Aquifer Protection Overlay Zones by defining the resources to be protected and providing clear guidance for resource protection.
  - Revise the Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone if needed to reflect current geological and groundwater mapping.
  - Review the Industrial Zone to ensure that conflicts with residential uses will not interfere with future commercial and industrial development within the zone.
  - Explore the potential for other growth areas such as Gallison Hill. The Planning Commission should initiate a detailed planning process for the growth areas in town to ensure that development is efficiently planned and that each growth center provides a desirable place to live, work and do business. Each growth center should retain a distinct character and function.
  - Strongly encourage developers to do Planned Unit Developments that efficiently use the land, reflect historic settlement patterns, and protect open space. Provide encouragement and incentives for this approach.
  - Protect riparian areas and encourage the use of Low Impact Development strategies within the zoning regulations
- The Selectboard should review its policies and actions to be sure it is consistent with the goals and recommendations of this Plan.
  - All Development Review Board members should review the Town Plan to ensure that its decisions are consistent with this document. The DRB should also inform the Planning Commission if inconsistencies are observed between the Zoning Regulations and the Town Plan.
  - The Forestry Committee should identify unfragmented forest land and provide recommendations to the Planning Commission as to how these areas should be protected.

## VILLAGES and GROWTH AREAS

### BACKGROUND

East Montpelier has three villages. East Montpelier Village is the largest village and is located at the intersection of two state highways, Route 2 and Route 14. It is also located on the Winooski River which historically powered several mills in town. North Montpelier Village on Route 14 is smaller and on the boundary with Calais. A small general store on the south shore of North Montpelier Pond is within the village and the Kingsbury Branch flows through the village. East Montpelier Center is a small hamlet consisting primarily of residential uses and farms. East Montpelier Village and North Montpelier Village are identified as growth areas. In addition, the area around U-32 is a designated growth area for the town. U-32 serves as a regional educational focal point and is on the border of Montpelier. No plans have been developed for the future growth of the three growth areas.

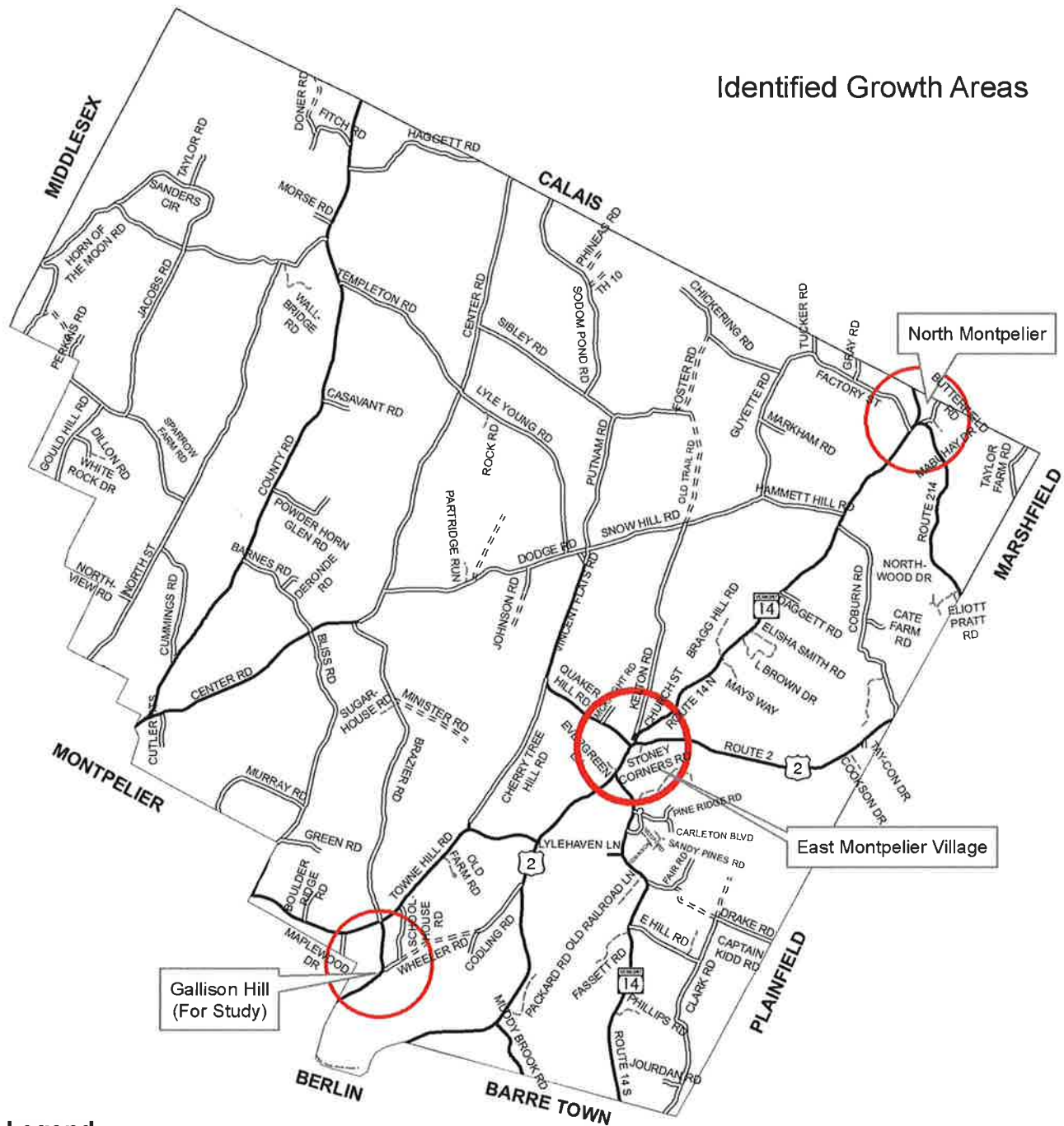
### CURRENT STATUS

Each of these villages and growth areas is individually described below:

#### East Montpelier Village

East Montpelier Village (also known as East Village) is the largest town center and is the focus of business in town. It is located at the junction of Routes 2 and 14 and along the Winooski River. The Town Offices are located there, the Fire Department's primary facility serving East Montpelier and Calais, the Old Brick Church and the Post Office. Numerous businesses are located in the village including Dudley's Store, a focal point of activity in the village. Recently the Agency of Transportation completed a major reconstruction of the Route 2 and 14 intersection in this section of town. The intersection is now a signalized

# Identified Growth Areas



## Legend

### Growth Areas



### Town Roads

- Pavement
- Gravel
- Class 4/ Legal Trail
- Private



Map Created 01/03/13 by CVRPC  
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Potential Growth Centers.mxd

Sources:  
Growth Areas: East Montpelier, 2013.  
Town Roads: VTrans and CVRPC, 2012.

Data is only as accurate as its original source.  
This map is for planning purposes only.  
This map may contain errors and omissions.

intersection with two crosswalks as well as sidewalks. The intersection redesign also created a new green space in front of the Old Brick Church.

In 2009 East Montpelier received Village Center Designation from the Vermont Downtown Program. Enabling legislation (24 V.S.A. Chapter 76A) was created to recognize and encourage local efforts to revitalize Vermont's traditional village centers (see map at the end of this chapter). The designation allows owners of historic buildings to apply for a 10% tax credit for substantial building rehabilitation, a 25% tax credit for façade improvements, and a 50% tax credit for code improvements (such as bringing a building into compliance with state codes). A village that has been designated a "village center" also receives priority for a planning grant through Vermont's Municipal Planning Grant program and also for Community Development Block Grant funding. Grant money is not "paid back;" it is one-time financial assistance.

The Village Center designation includes only the historic center of the village extending along Route 2/14 from the Mekelsen's homestead on the south to the antique store on Route 2, and along Route 14 north to the Town Office. The village east of the Winooski River was not included due to the predominance of newer homes and businesses in this area. Notable in this part of town is the old airport hangar which now houses rb Technologies, a computer services business, and Shaline Bridal. North Country Credit Union recently constructed a new bank building while the former building is being used by North Star Fireworks. Also located in what some refer to as the "upper village" are a car dealership, propane company, flower nursery and many homes including the dense residential neighborhood of Sandy Pines mobile home park with 56 lots.

The bridge over the Winooski River connecting the two parts of the village is deteriorating badly. A new bridge is scheduled to be built in the next several years. The new bridge will contain sidewalks which will connect to a future crosswalk over Route 2/14. There has been ongoing discussion about the potential for a sleeve to be included along the side or underside of this bridge for carrying water pipes and possibly other cables. The Village Committee

and the Selectboard have been working with the Agency of Transportation as plans for the bridge move forward.

Around 2004, a Village Committee formed with the goal of creating a more vibrant and attractive village where people would want to live, work and do business. The Committee's first project was to work with the Agency of Transportation to ensure the Route 2/14 intersection project included sidewalks, crosswalks, maximum green space and plantings. A number of local residents and business owners as well as people from outside the village were actively involved. While the committee was unable to get all of the requested sidewalks built as part of the project, AOT provided most of the committee's requests. Since then the committee has worked on a number of projects including obtaining Village Designation for East Montpelier Village (described above).

In 2011 the committee received a Municipal Planning Grant to engage village residents and businesses owner in discussions of the future development and enhancement of the village. Two forums were well attended and specific goals and actions were documented in a report prepared with the assistance of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission entitled *Town of East Montpelier, Village Study Report*. High priorities identified were to provide sidewalks to improve safety, reduce traffic speeds, develop a river walk, construct gateway signs, create businesses that can serve as community gathering places such as a restaurant or café, provide housing and facilities for seniors, and develop a wastewater system that can accommodate future growth. Development concepts such as creating small secondary streets with compact development reflecting historic patterns were of great interest as well as providing greater connections between the east and west sides of the village.

As part of the forum, several subcommittees were formed to follow through on the recommendations. A wastewater committee was formed to move forward on a previous wastewater study commissioned by the Selectboard and a committee looked into options and locations for gateway signs. In August 2012 four new gateway signs were installed. In response to suggestions, the Rally Day Committee held

its morning events in the village in both 2011 and 2012. Events included a river walk, a history walk, a farmer's market on the new green, and a barbeque and numerous events for children at the Fire Station.

The Village Committee successfully won a grant from the Agency of Transportation to study the feasibility of sidewalks along Route 2 and 14 connecting the proposed Route 14 bridge and the existing sidewalks at the northeast end of the village. The engineering firm of Dubois and King prepared alternative options for sidewalk and bicycle accommodations. At a public meeting a preferred option was selected. The Town then applied for and received a construction grant through the Agency of Transportation's 2012 Bike and Pedestrian Grant Program.

The East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative (EMSLI) has searched for several years for a site to build affordable housing for seniors within East Montpelier Village. The group was close to realizing its dreams in 2010 but the project fell through after plans were close to completion. There continues to be a strong desire to develop a senior housing project in the village, including the possibility of the facility also serving as a senior center.

Bus service is now provided by the Green Mountain Transit Agency between Montpelier and St. Johnsbury, and Barre and St. Johnsbury with a stop in East Montpelier. The site of the former fire station serves as the bus stop. The Selectboard has negotiated with Washington Electric Coop to purchase that site to use as a Park and Ride and a permanent bus stop location. The town has received grant money to work with the engineering firm of Stantec to design the facility.

Much of East Montpelier Village depends on a private company, Crystal Springs Water Company, for its potable water supply. The system is in poor repair and the current owner is considering retiring. There are 115 connections in East Montpelier and a moratorium has been imposed by the state on any new connections. A fire district formed with approval by the Selectboard is negotiating to take over the water system. In January 2011, the fire district received a planning loan from the State of Vermont to be used for an evaluation of the water system. Information

about the fire district is available at [www.emfiredistrict.org/](http://www.emfiredistrict.org/).

A fire district is a legal entity that is a self-governing municipal corporation located within a town and charged with providing specified public services. Fire districts are often established to address public needs in a part of town that the town itself has declined to assume. They are most often formed to address needs of public drinking water or wastewater treatment. In fact, fire districts have often played a leading role in Vermont's modern environmental conservation movement by providing quality drinking water and effective wastewater treatment, often via the same water source. A fire district has its own bylaws and is charged with collecting fees and maintaining and possibly extending the system. These services may be handled by a specified contractor. See: [www.cfd1.org/about\\_fire\\_districts.html](http://www.cfd1.org/about_fire_districts.html).

Wastewater treatment continues to be a significant handicap to development within East Montpelier Village. Along with potable water, the limitations on individual wastewater systems have been a deterrent to businesses that would like to expand, especially businesses that require public rest rooms such as such as a restaurant or café. Wastewater options proposed in a study commissioned by the Selectboard in 2008 were very costly. The study addressed two problems: an unidentified number of potentially failing existing systems which may be contributing to pollution of the Winooski River or nearby groundwater; and the issue of developing new systems to address existing and future needs. Four options were studied: developing a village-wide wastewater system, developing a series of smaller dispersed systems on better soils in or near the village, connecting to the Montpelier sewage treatment facility (which has excess capacity) and connecting to the Plainfield wastewater facility. Plainfield declined to participate in such an endeavor. At least two larger landowners within the village have expressed possible interest in providing wastewater treatment if excess capacity is available beyond the needs of possible development within those parcels. Additional study is needed to examine this potential and to develop realistic options. Moving forward may require the Selectboard to designate a study committee charged with this task.

### North Montpelier Village

North Montpelier Village is located along Route 14 at the southern end of North Montpelier Pond. Once there were mills along the Kingsbury Branch which flows through the village but today there is a small hydroelectric project that profits from the dam on the east side of the Route 14.

The much-loved “Singing Bridge” that crossed the Kingsbury Branch was replaced in 2011 by a less musical structure. Local residents organized to try to retain the historic bridge, but later focused efforts on ensuring that a sidewalk was included on the bridge. The local Riverbend Store and Post Office property was recently sold and neither is in operation at this time. North Montpelier Pond sits just to the north of the store and is a popular place to fish and canoe. Public access is off of Route 14. The Calais town line is just north of the Route 14/214 intersection. Some Calais citizens nearby feel as connected to the village as those on the East Montpelier side. The local efforts to provide sidewalks on the bridge galvanized residents to work to ensure that the village retains some of its valued resources.

The wastewater study that addressed East Montpelier Village also addressed options for North Montpelier Village. These options were also prohibitively expensive and no further action has been taken.

### East Montpelier Center

East Montpelier Center is not located on any state highways and has no commercial uses. A small section of paved roadway (Center Road) changes to gravel at the entrance to the west end of the village. The village is at the intersections of Center Road, Bliss Road, Barnes Road, Brazier Road and Dodge Road. Several large farms are located within or surrounding the village. The Old Meeting House Church is the historic focal point of East Montpelier Center and once served as the meeting house for the Town of Montpelier before the City of Montpelier was separately incorporated. Today the village is primarily residential. There are no commercial uses other than the Center Farm which sells organic chicken and lamb, a small plant nursery, and a few other home businesses.

Center and Dodge Roads serve as a common route to travel across town for many local residents and some Center residents have become concerned about traffic, especially farm vehicles. In 2012 Vermont Compost Company received an Act 250 permit to operate its facilities in Montpelier and in East Montpelier on Vincent Flats Road. The operation was considered to be a commercial use in the proceedings. Some local residents expressed concern about the traffic generated by the Vermont Compost trucks transporting material between the company’s production area off Vincent Flat’s Road and their sales facility on County Road on the Montpelier town line. The Selectboard and Planning Commission submitted testimony in the Act 250 hearings concerning this issue. The issue of a “commercial” use off near Vincent Flats Road in Zone E has not been resolved.

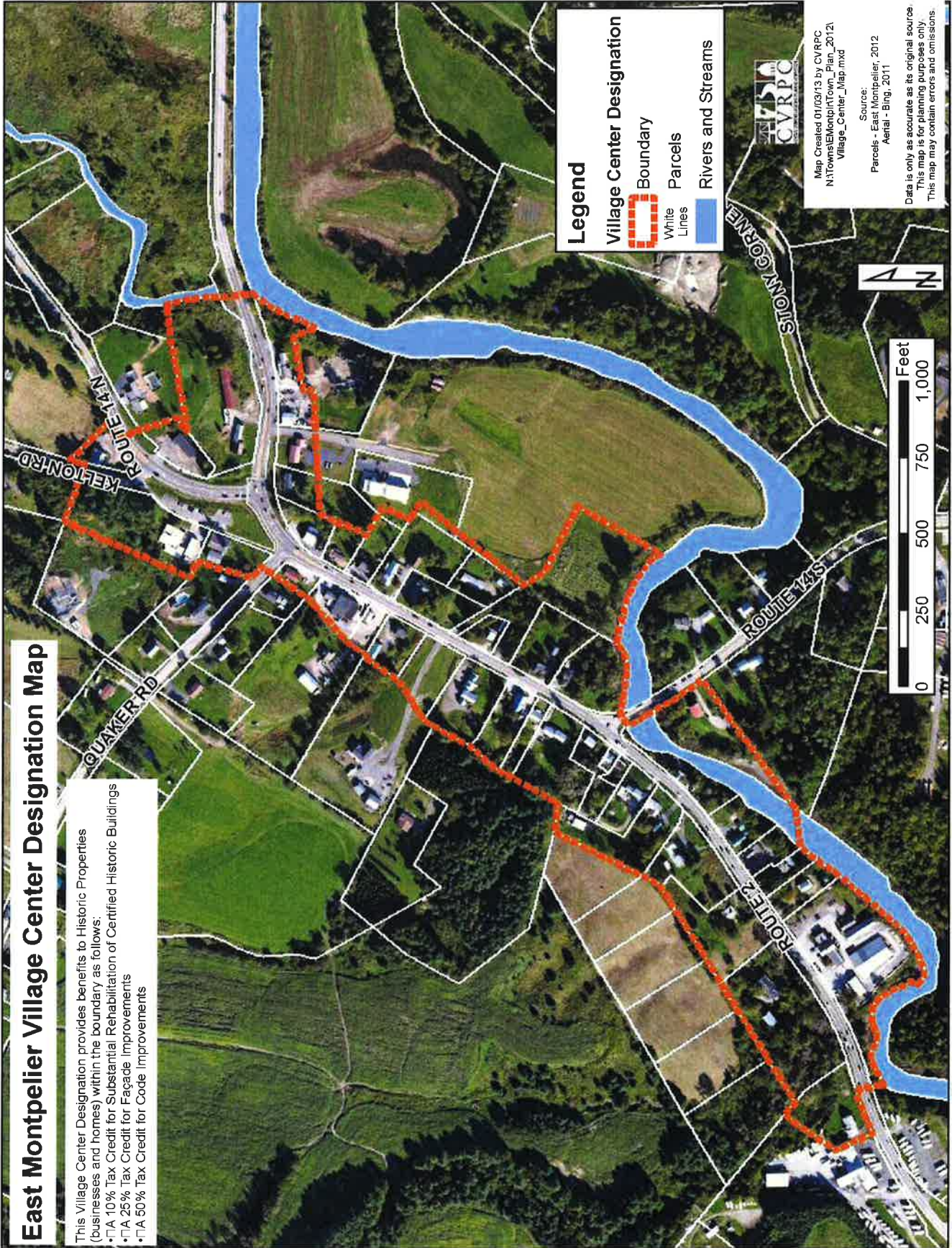
### VILLAGES AND GROWTH AREAS: GOALS AND ACTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

All three villages were identified as important to community residents in the 2011 Citizen Survey. Each one has a distinct character and provides different opportunities. All three villages have historic patterns in common. Like nearly all historic Vermont villages buildings tend to be located close to the street and close to each other. This pattern is an efficient use of land and has a number of benefits. The proximity of homes and/or businesses makes it easy to walk to visit neighbors or go to the store. Concentrations of people make public transportation feasible. With homes located close to the road, the house itself provides separation from the road for a private back yard use area. Often back yards are contiguous with open space or agricultural fields. Historic buildings also tend to be at least two stories in height - an efficient use of land. Architectural styles vary but they are usually oriented parallel or perpendicular to the road, often with a barn or outbuilding at right angles creating an entry court. This pattern gives Vermont villages a harmony despite the numerous types of architectural styles and colors. Retaining historic patterns was noted as desirable in the Town Survey and in the forums held in East Montpelier Village. These forums provided a clearer idea of how residents would like to see East Montpelier Village grow and develop. Similar processes could be helpful for determining the future of East Montpelier’s other vil-

# East Montpelier Village Center Designation Map

This Village Center Designation provides benefits to Historic Properties (businesses and homes) within the boundary as follows:

- 10% Tax Credit for Substantial Rehabilitation of Certified Historic Buildings
- 25% Tax Credit for Façade Improvements
- 50% Tax Credit for Code Improvements



**Legend**

Village Center Designation

Boundary

Parcels

Rivers and Streams

White Lines

Map Created 01/03/13 by CVRPC  
N:\Towns\Montpelier\_Town\_Plan\_2013  
Village\_Center\_Map.mxd

Source:  
Parcels - East Montpelier, 2012  
Aerial - Bing, 2011

Data is only as accurate as its original source.  
This map is for planning purposes only.  
This map may contain errors and omissions.

lages. In order to encourage future development and residential use within the villages, it will be critical that these locations provide a desirable setting for both living and doing business.

#### **General Goals for East Montpelier's Villages and Growth Areas**

- East Montpelier's three villages should continue to be the focus for growth in town so that the town's rural countryside retains its open and scenic character.
- Future growth within each village should be reflective of the distinct character of each and consistent with the desires of those who live and work within each area.
- Each village should be an attractive and desirable place to live.

#### **EAST MONTPELIER VILLAGE**

The *Village Study Report* (July 2011) prepared by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the Village Committee provides recommendations for future growth and development of the village. Both the citizen survey and the forums demonstrated a strong interest in the enhancement of the village. Participants felt that the village currently lacks character, that it is unsafe to walk and that community gathering places are lacking. On the other hand, there is great enthusiasm for the future potential of the village. Several landowners within the village have worked with the Village Committee and seem interested in developing in a manner that would benefit the village and town as a whole. Development will be challenging and is likely to be limited by a number of factors, including septic capacity, floodplains and steep slopes. The current economic situation adds additional challenges. Advance planning can help ensure that that growth occurs in such a way as to provide a vibrant and attractive town center.

#### **Goals for East Montpelier Village**

- Foster a vibrant and attractive town center that is a desirable place to live, work and do business.
- Encourage commercial growth within East Montpelier Village.
- Provide housing and amenities that encourage people of all ages to live in East Montpelier Village.
- Direct growth in a manner that is compact, efficient and reflects the historic settlement patterns of the village core.
- Ensure adequate water supply for the future growth.
- Ensure that the Post Office, town offices, and general store remain in the village as critical community services. Encouraging similar services within the village such as banks, car repair services, restaurants, hardware stores, and drug stores (some of these already exist).

#### **Actions for East Montpelier Village**

- The Planning Commission, Village Committee and Selectboard should provide for the participation of local citizens and business owners in discussions of the future of the East Montpelier Village.
- The Village Committee and Selectboard should ensure pedestrian safety through the construction of sidewalks and managing traffic speeds.
- The Selectboard should appoint an ad hoc committee, including members of the Planning Commission and Village Committee, to develop solutions to wastewater disposal either through a larger village-wide system or a series of smaller possibly private systems.
- The Planning Commission should review and revise, as necessary, the zoning regulations to encourage compact settlement and efficient and historic settlement patterns. Consider allowing higher densities.

- The Planning Commission, with assistance from the Village Committee, should work with landowners, especially larger landowners to provide assistance in planning for future development.
- The Village Committee should work in conjunction with the Selectboard to provide amenities to make the village attractive such as a river walk, trail connections to East Montpelier's larger trail system, safe bicycle routes, and facilities for children such as playgrounds.
- The Village Committee and Selectboard should provide facilities for the elderly including housing, a senior center, safe pedestrian connections to stores, the Post Office and town offices,
- The Selectboard, in coordination with the Village and Energy Committees should work to expand bus service from the village to other destinations.
- The Selectboard, in coordination with the Village Committee and Planning Commission should provide a convenient and attractive Park and Ride facility within the village.
- The Selectboard, in coordination with the Village and Energy Committees, should encourage owners of historic properties to undertake repairs and energy efficiency improvements while retaining the historic architectural character. Many of these properties are currently eligible for low-interest loans as a result of the Village Designation.
- The East Montpelier Historical Society in coordination with the Village Committee should highlight the history of East Montpelier Village with historic plaques, a walking tour brochure and on-going walks and talks featuring the history of the village.
- The Village Committee and Selectboard should develop a river walk to take advantage of the lovely views over the Winooski River and to provide a place for local residents to walk away from the busy roads.

## NORTH MONTPELIER VILLAGE

There is increasing interest in the potential for North Montpelier to be a more vibrant and attractive village center. The village has several resources that could be enhanced as focal points: North Montpelier Pond, the waterfall and riverway of the Kingsbury Branch, and the former Riverbend Store. Planning should be coordinated with Calais which occupies the northern portions of North Montpelier.

### Goals for North Montpelier Village

- Foster a strong sense of community within the village
- Encourage commercial growth that supports and enhances the local community.
- Explore alternatives to the now closed Riverbend Store and Post Office to provide a community focal point.
- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle transportation within the village.

### Actions for North Montpelier

- The Selectboard should appoint a North Montpelier Village Committee to promote enhancement and economic vitality of the village. This committee should be charged with the following actions:
  - Work with owners of the former Riverbend Store to develop a more vibrant community-oriented facility.
  - Work to enhance connections to, use of, and views of North Montpelier Pond.
  - Coordinate with the Planning Commission and Selectboard to apply for Village Designation as provided for in 24 V.S.A. Chapter 76A which provides tax credits and grants for revitalization efforts.
  - Develop entry signs for the village.
  - Enhance connections with, use of and views of the Kingsbury Branch and the waterfall,
  - Assist building owners in repairing and improving the energy efficiency of historic buildings.

- Improve pedestrian connections throughout the village.
- Engage residents and business owners in planning for the future of North Montpelier.
- Study the feasibility of water and wastewater systems for North Montpelier Village.

### **EAST MONTPELIER CENTER**

East Montpelier Center is distinct from the other villages in that it is not on a major state highway. This gives it a quieter and more rural feel. It is also entirely residential and agricultural, with no commercial uses. In general this character should be retained.

#### **Goals for East Montpelier Center**

- Retain the rural residential and agricultural character of East Montpelier Center.

#### **Actions for East Montpelier Center**

- The Planning Commission should consider whether any zoning or other land use changes would help to retain or enhance the character of East Montpelier Center.

### **GALLISON HILL GROWTH AREA**

This area was designated as a growth area in the 2008 Town Plan but no planning has been done to determine what form this growth area should take or if it makes sense at all. The school is a significant regional activity center and provides potential for future development of similar or related and supporting uses in the future including residential uses and institutional used related to education. The area is connected to the Montpelier wastewater system and is near commercial uses on Route 2. In addition trails at U-32 connect with the Cross Vermont Trail as well as other trail systems in East Montpelier. For these reasons the area makes sense as a potential growth area. Future goals would be as follows:

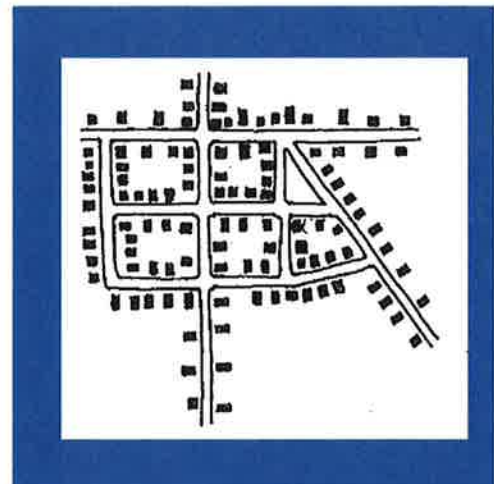
#### **Goals for the Gallison Hill Growth Area**

- Take advantage of a major community and regional focal point by planning for a potential growth area in a manner that is consistent with existing uses and compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

#### **Actions for the Gallison Hill Growth Area**

- The Planning Commission should discuss whether or not there is potential for future growth within this part of town.
- If the potential exists for this area to evolve, the Planning Commission should hold public meetings to consider planning options. Planning should be coordinated with U-32 and the City of Montpelier.
- The Planning Commission should consider increasing housing density in the surrounding area.

Town of East Montpelier  
**Village Study Report**  
July 2011



Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission  
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### Prepared by:

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## Project Overview

In December 2010 the Town of East Montpelier successfully applied for a Municipal Planning Grant from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs “to foster public engagement in planning for future growth and enhancement” within the Town’s East Village. The Town’s Village Committee had been working for many years to enhance and encourage appropriately scaled growth in the village. They had successfully won a Village Designation for the historic core, worked with the Agency of Transportation to provide sidewalks, plantings and other amenities for two roadway improvements in the village, and begun discussions regarding implementing a wastewater study conducted in 2007. The East Montpelier Planning Commission is beginning the process of updating the Town Plan and the Committee felt that a more comprehensive process was needed to determine appropriate directions for growth in the village. The grant enabled the Committee to engage a much broader range of residents, business owners and local officials in discussions of the future of the Town’s principle village. The findings outlined in this report will be incorporated into the broader Town Planning process.

The Town contracted with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) to assist in the process by:

- Facilitating break out groups at public forums and developing **Goals** based upon public input;
- Compiling and presenting information about traditional **Village Characteristics** to provide context for future development and land use regulations within the Village;
- Utilizing 3-D computer modeling software to illustrate current conditions and illustrate one potential **Future Development Scenario** based upon information from the public participation process;
- Undertaking a survey, or **Sampling** of existing parcels and structures within the Village to determine prevailing dimensional standards and compare them to current regulatory requirements; and by
- Updating the GIS-based **Build Out Analysis**, conducted in 2007, to determine maximum potential growth within the Village based upon current land use regulations.

CVRPC planners worked closely with the members of the Village Committee to prepare information to share at two public forms planned and hosted by the Village Committee. The public forums were designed to engage local citizens in determining the future of the East Village. The study area was identified as the land within a one mile radius of the Route 2 and Route 14 North intersection. See map titled “East Montpelier Village Study Area.”

The information contained within this report includes information CVRPC presented at the public forums, technical data and analysis about future development potential, and a summary of recommendations.

This report is not intended to be an in-depth critique of East Montpelier’s land use regulations or planning policies, nor an endorsement of any particular regulatory strategy, but rather a broad-brush look at current conditions, existing controls, and future planning opportunities.



















**East Montpelier Village Study Area—land within 1 mile radius of Route 2 and RT14 North intersection**

## Public Input, Goals & Timeline

The Village Committee organized and hosted two public forums to solicit community input about the future of the East Village. CVRPC presented information and provided facilitation assistance. The chart below organizes the public input into over-arching goals.

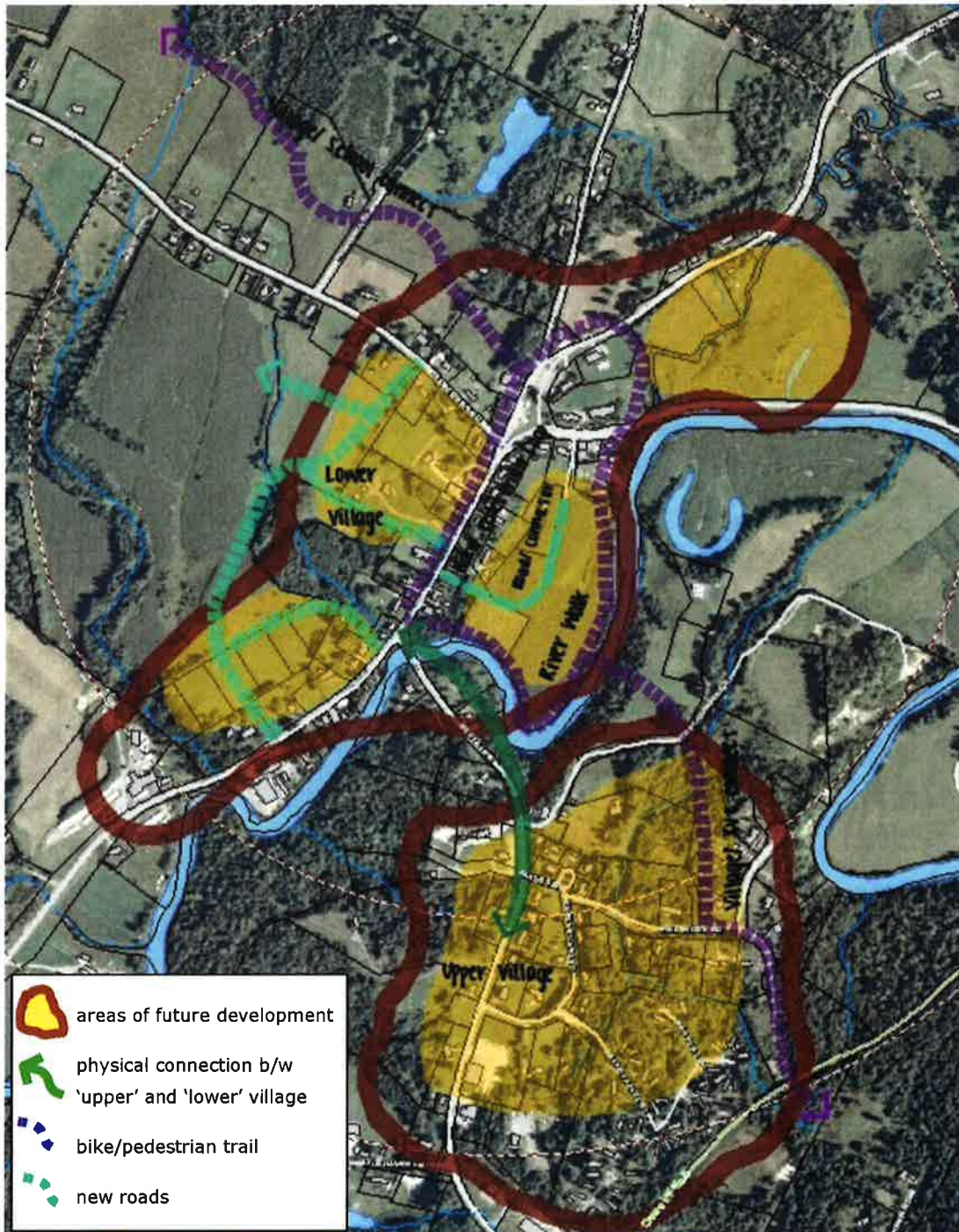
<b>GOALS</b>		<b>Creating Safe Streets</b>	<b>Developing a Sense of Place</b>	<b>Cultivating a Vibrant Local Economy</b>	<b>Fostering a Healthy Community</b>
<b>Current Conditions</b>	Likes +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible to Montpelier and Barre</li> <li>• Public Transit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History/historic buildings (Capitol Grounds, Brick Church)</li> <li>• Compact Village</li> <li>• At crossroads (RT2 &amp; RT14)</li> <li>• Rural/access to nature</li> <li>• EM Trails</li> <li>• Winooski River</li> <li>• Buildings are not too tall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store and services (store, PO, fire station, Town Offices, bank)</li> <li>• Mix of houses and commercial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trails (EM Trails, Cross VT, VAST)</li> <li>• Bus service</li> <li>• Potential for Senior Housing</li> </ul>
	Dislikes -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangerous to walk</li> <li>• Traffic too fast and heavy</li> <li>• No bike lanes</li> <li>• Poor access / difficult to turn in and out of store, PO and Quaker Hill</li> <li>• Lack of public parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inaccessible river</li> <li>• Sprawl at end of Village</li> <li>• Lack of Identity</li> <li>• Unattractive entrance to store, PO</li> <li>• Linear village/no depth</li> <li>• No village core</li> <li>• No character</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No other stores</li> <li>• Taxes</li> <li>• No wastewater</li> <li>• Services are scattered</li> <li>• No fire hydrants</li> <li>• Poor soils for on site septic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No street trees</li> <li>• Services are scattered</li> <li>• No place to meet friends/ social gathering place</li> <li>• Inaccessible river</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	Built Environment / Infrastructure Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike lanes</li> <li>• Sidewalks</li> <li>• Park &amp; Ride</li> <li>• Crosswalks</li> <li>• Multimodal transport (bike, park, ride)</li> <li>• Speed bumps</li> <li>• RT 14 Bridge replacement</li> <li>• Benches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River walk &amp; river access</li> <li>• Attractive streetscape (trees, lighting)</li> <li>• Compact village scale new development</li> <li>• Underground facilities</li> <li>• Connect Upper and Lower Village</li> <li>• Add another bridge to connect Upper and Lower Village</li> <li>• New town hall/offices</li> <li>• Gateway signs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compact, village-scale, new development</li> <li>• Community meeting place and green space (town green)</li> <li>• Mixed use (live/work)</li> <li>• Plan trail access and parking within the Village</li> <li>• Ensure adequate potable water</li> <li>• Future fire hydrants and water connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community green space (town green)</li> <li>• Mixed uses (live/work)</li> <li>• River walk &amp; river access</li> <li>• Renewable energy</li> <li>• Connect EM Trails with Cross VT Trail in the Village</li> <li>• Multi modal trail behind Store</li> <li>• Multi family and elderly housing</li> </ul>
	Programming/ Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease speed limit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop history walk/ historic markers</li> <li>• Plan parade / Rally Day in the Village</li> <li>• Co-locate historical society with Town Offices</li> <li>• Host concerts &amp; picnics</li> <li>• Create Village specific Zoning Regulations</li> <li>• Research developable land (where and intensity)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bakery, Pizza, Tapas, Ice Cream, Restaurant, Garage/car repair</li> <li>• Farmers Market</li> <li>• Partnerships with Colleges (NECI, VCFA, Goddard)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships with Colleges (NECI, VCFA, Goddard)</li> <li>• Kids playground</li> <li>• Farmers Market</li> <li>• Dances</li> </ul>

At the second forum the Village Committee asked participants to prioritize projects and identify timeframes for implementation. CVRPC reviewed the feedback and organized the timeline.

	1 year	5 Years	20 years (Long Term)
Farmers Market			
Gateways Signs			
Lower Speed Limits			
Park & Ride			
Village Rally Day			
River walk			
Village District Zoning			
Village to School Trail			
Businesses located in Village			
Housing for Seniors			
New streets & compact development			
Streetscape Improvements (e.g. sidewalks, bike accommodations, connections between upper and lower village)			
Waste Water Planning & Implementation			

## Concept Map

Working with the Village Committee CVRPC developed a concept map of the Village area to illustrate feedback from the first forum and to communicate the relationship of areas of interest.

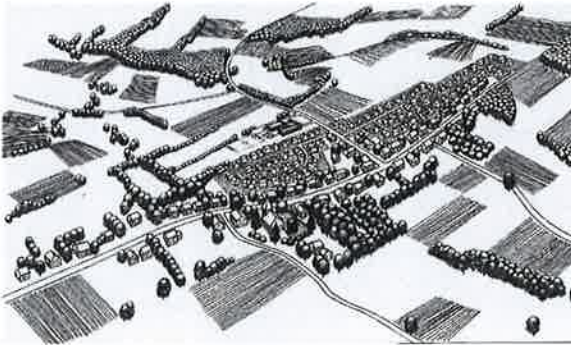


**Village Concept Map**

## Village Characteristics

To assist in the public process, CVRPC presented information about traditional village characteristics to provide context for a discussion about future development and land use regulations. A copy of the presentation is attached.

### Traditional Village Characteristics



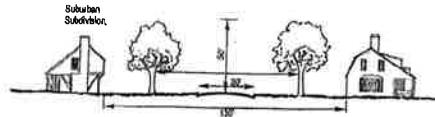
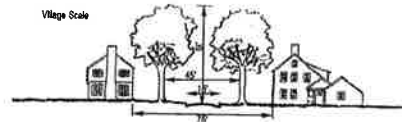
Defined village edges ‡



Interconnected road network (thoroughfare, connecting streets, narrow lanes, foot paths) ‡



Mixed uses (residential, commercial, services, institutional)



Pedestrian scale ‡

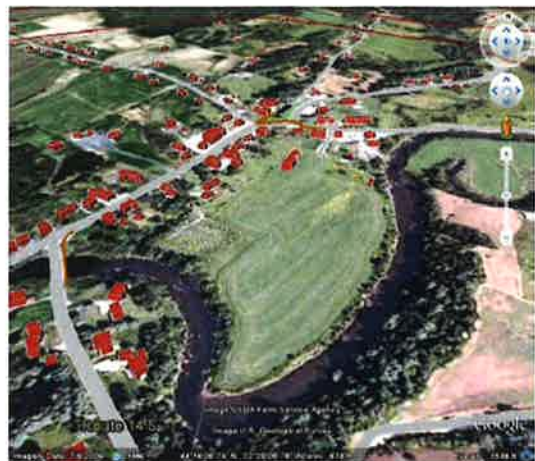


Parallel or perpendicular orientation of facades with varied setbacks close to the street.

‡ Illustrations from *Rural by Design*, Randall Arendt, 1994

## Future Development Scenario

Incorporating input from the first forum, input from the Village Committee, and elements of traditional village characteristics, CVRPC created a future development scenario for the property currently owned by Mr. Hull to illustrate an example of potential new development in the East Village. The 3-D computer-generated model was presented at the second forum. (Note: The model does not conform to existing land use regulations. )



Before



Pedestrian amenities



After



Village-scale development



River walk



Town Green

## Village Sampling Inventory

The East Montpelier Village Sampling Inventory compares existing settlement patterns to East Montpelier's current zoning regulations.

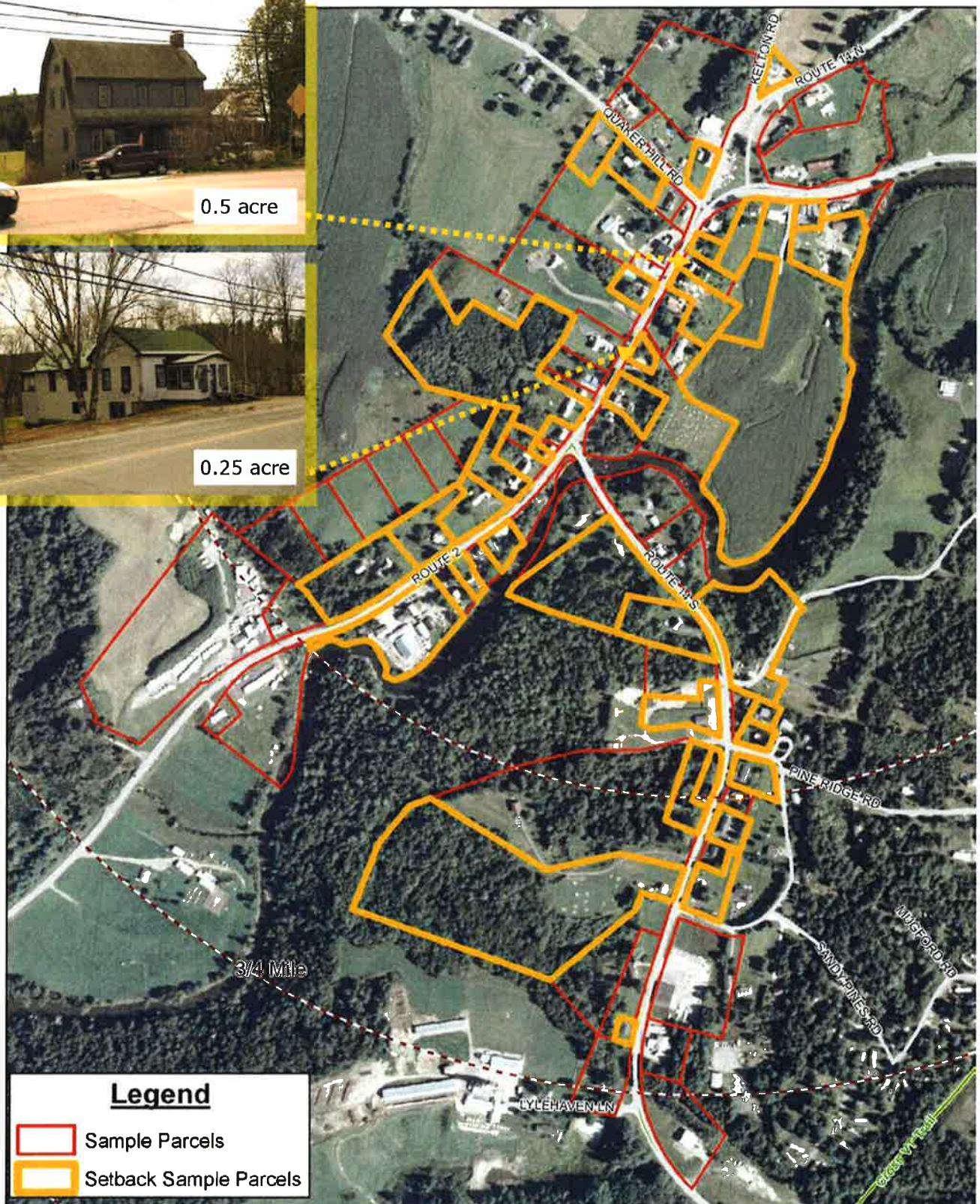
CVRPC undertook a "sampling" of existing conditions within the Village to determine prevailing lot sizes, setbacks and building footprints in order to compare them to current regulatory requirements as established in the Town Zoning Ordinance. CVRPC inventoried these parameters using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) computer software to conduct the survey (or "sampling") of existing parcels and structures within the Village.

The Village Sampling Inventory focused on the Village of East Montpelier along the US Route 2 and 14 South corridors. Eighty-nine parcels were selected for the purposes of sampling. See map titled "Village Sampling Inventory" on the following page.

All 89 parcels were sampled for lot size, road frontage, and lot coverage characteristics. Because setbacks are not automatically calculated by the GIS program used in this project, CVRPC took a smaller sample and used "hand measurements" to derive setback data. A random sample of 27 parcels were used. These parcels displayed a range of lot sizes similar to the larger core sample and are therefore believed to be fairly "typical" for the Zone.

	Lot Size	Road Frontage	Set Backs			Building Sq Ft
			Front	Side (left/right)	Rear	
Regulations w/in Zone C	1 acres (43,560 sq ft)	150 ft	50 ft	25 ft	25 ft	No Max Coverage
Mean	1.76 acres	200 ft	78 ft	47/79 ft	146 ft	3,142 sq ft
Median	0.95 acres	149 ft	73 ft	38/52 ft	90 ft	2,365 sq ft
Minimum	0.068 acres	0 ft	20 ft	0/6 ft	0	1,078 sq ft
Maximum	14.5 acres	761 ft	160 ft	180/347	854	22,727 sq ft
% Non-Compliant	52%	52%	28%	31/26%	11%	N/A

## Lot size examples



## Village Sampling Inventory

## Build Out Analysis

**Purpose** The Build Out is intended to provide a general picture of development issues in the area around East Montpelier's East Village in the context of its existing settlement patterns, as well as its potential to accommodate new growth under its current land use policies. CVRPC analyzed these parameters using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) computer software to conduct the Build Out Analysis.

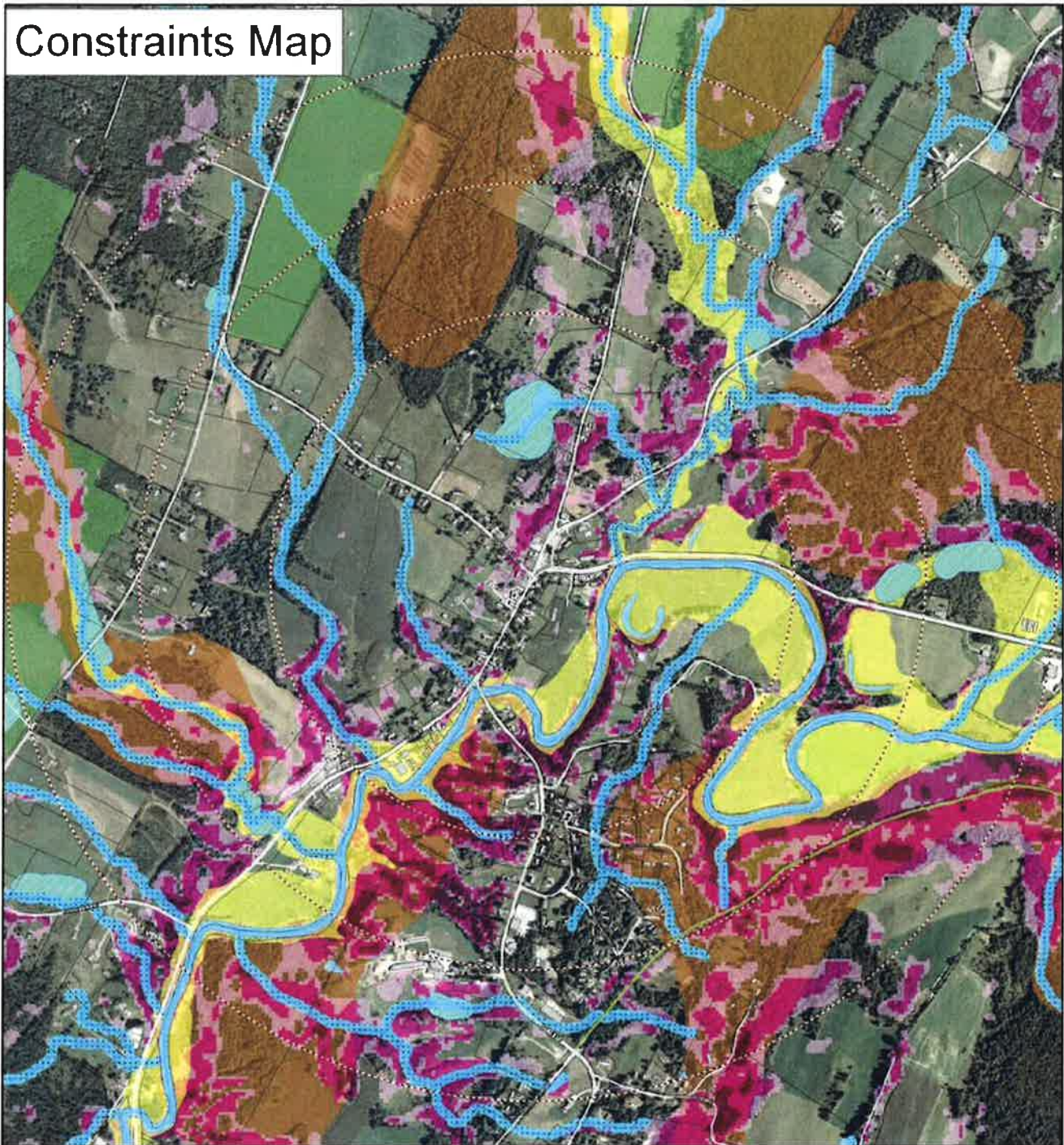
The Build Out Analysis attempts to identify the general location and intensity of future growth based upon physical restrictions, available infrastructure, and allowable zoning density. It is not intended to suggest or predict the exact sites of futures homes or businesses.

**Approach** The Build Out Analysis utilized the current parcel configuration, zoning requirements, and existing development to identify the general location and intensity of future growth for the Village area. Areas with physical and/or regulatory constraints were identified and the GIS software removed potential development from slopes greater than 30%, National Flood Insurance Program 100-year flood zone, wetlands (including 50 ft. buffer), and conserved lands (State, Municipal, and Vermont Land Trust Land). Additionally the software reduced potential development through efficiency factors for stream, rivers, lakes, ponds with 50 ft. buffers, prime agricultural soils, deer yards and the East Montpelier Conservation Overlay Zoning District. The Build Out analysis does not factor in the physical capacity for on-site wastewater treatment or potable water.

The constraints utilized in the Build Out are the same constraints identified within a previous Build Out undertaken by CVRPC for the *Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study for Wastewater Treatment for the Villages* by Forcier, Aldrich & Associates, May 2007.

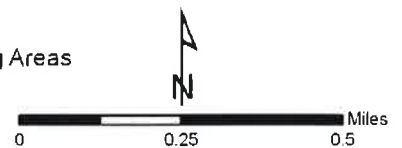
**Spatial Results** The Build Out contains "Spatial" results which convert the numeric building counts into points or polygons representing individual structures. It then refines the numeric building counts by taking into account the actual geometry (i.e. setbacks) of land-use areas and buildings. The "Spatial" Build Out therefore provides a more accurate indication of potential buildings based upon the current Zoning Ordinance.

# Constraints Map



## Legend

Parcels 2010	Rivers, Lakes, and Ponds	Deer Wintering Areas
Building Footprints	Streams	Slope 15-19%
Roads	100 Year Flood Plain	Slope 20-29%
Cross Vermont Trail	Stream 50ft buffer	Slope > 30%
Conserved Lands	Wetlands 50ft Buffer	



M:\Towns\Erin\tp\1\Village Growth Center Study  
2011\Build\_Out\_Projects\_Data\Constraints\_Map.mxd

East Montpelier's Density Rules for Future Development Density rules are applied to calculate the amount of potential future development. The number of potential residential units are calculated based upon East Montpelier's minimum lot size and are referred to as dwelling units. CVRPC converted East Montpelier's commercial development regulations into a floor area ratio (FAR) which is used to calculate the amount of potential commercial square footage (necessary conversion for software compatibility purposes.)

Allowances for roads, driveways, and natural constraints are incorporated and reduced the overall density on a parcel. The remaining developable land is referred to as the area's "efficiency factor." For example, in the A- Commercial District, development potential was reduced due to stream, rivers, lakes, ponds with 50 ft. buffers, prime agricultural soils, deer yards and the East Montpelier Conservation Overlay District, leaving a 51% "efficiency factor" for future development.

The table below outlines the density rules used in the build out.

#### Density Rules

Land-Use Designation	Dwelling Units	Floor Area Ratio	Efficiency Factor (%) Build Out
A – Commercial District		0.73 FAR	51
B – Industrial District		0.74 FAR	61
C – Residential and Commercial District	1 acre min. lot size	0.64 FAR	65
D –Rural Residential and Agricultural District	3 acre min. lot size	0 FAR	63
E – Agricultural and Forest Conservation District	7 acre min. lot size	0 FAR	65

## Build Out

The Build Out map represents potential development in East Montpelier Village. The green squares represent the potential residential development and the red squares represent the potential non-residential (commercial, civic, industrial, etc.) development. The squares provide a visual illustration of the concentration of residential and non-residential development based upon current constraints and land use regulations.

### Build Out - Potential Residential unit

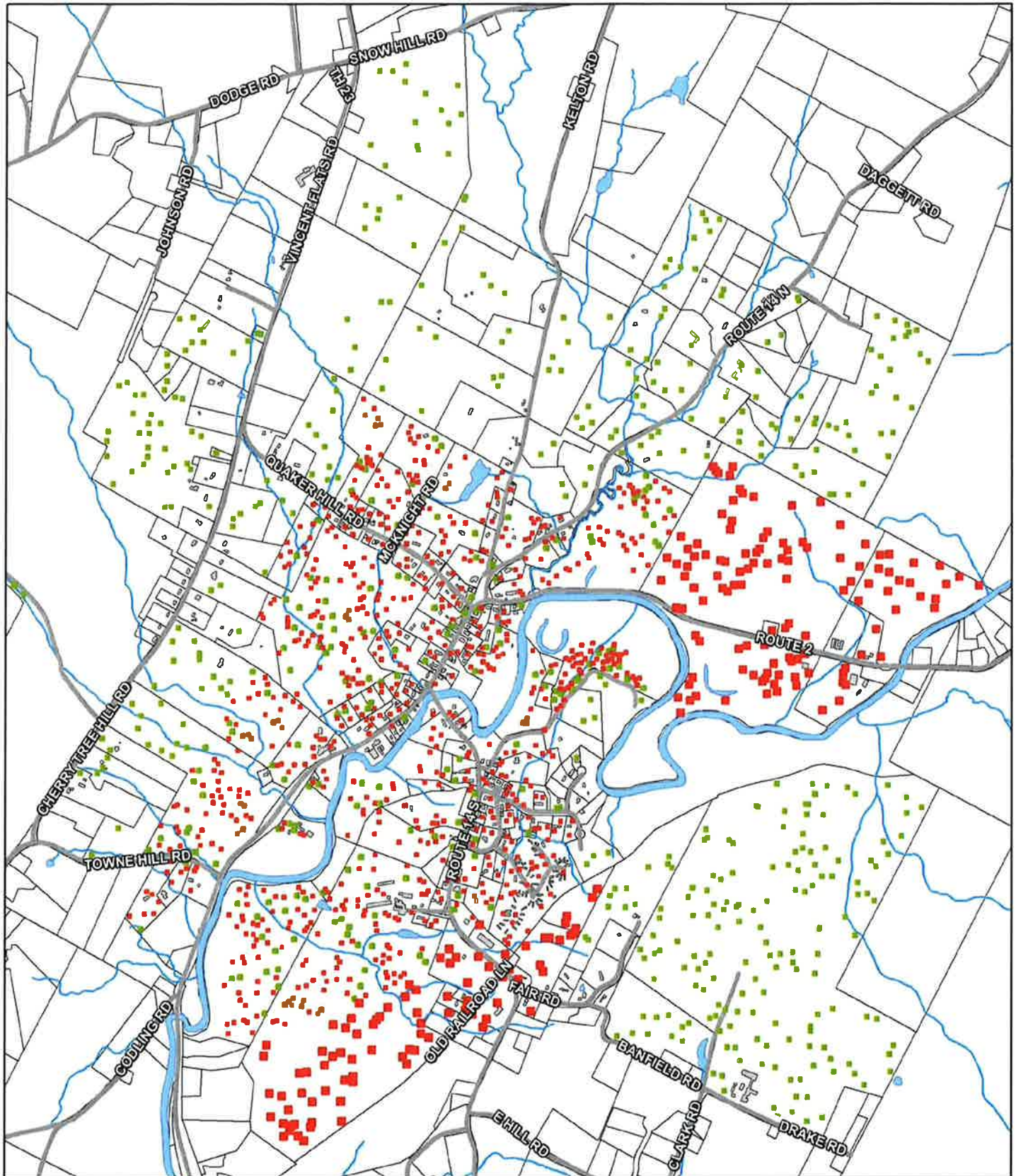
#### Dwelling Unit Quantities

Land-Use Designation	Existing Dwelling Units	Spatial Build-Out
A – Commercial District	4	0
B – Industrial District	7	0
C – Residential and Commercial District	179	177
D –Rural Residential and Agricultural District	60	137
E – Agricultural and Forest Conservation District	12	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>337</b>

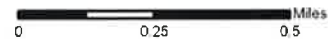
### Build Out - Potential Commercial floor area (sq ft)

#### Commercial Floor Space

Land-Use Designation	Existing Floor Area (sq. feet)	Spatial Build-Out Floor Area (sq. feet)
A – Commercial District	59,225	3,459,333
B – Industrial District	43,800	2,623,360
C – Residential and Commercial District	140,740	5,850,297
D –Rural Residential and Agricultural District	0	0
E – Agricultural and Forest Conservation District	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>243,765</b>	<b>11,932,990</b>



Legend	
<b>Build Out</b>	Building Footprints
Potential Residential	Roads
Potential Non-Residential	Streams
	Parcels2010



## ***Build Out Summary***

Housing Demand According to population forecasts undertaken by EPR for CVRPC in 2001, East Montpelier's future housing demand for 2020 is 1,468 units. The 2010 Census indicates there are currently 1,129 units throughout town. CVRPC identified 262 units located within the Village study area. Under Build Out scenario #2 the East Village has the current capacity to accommodate 100% of town-wide 2020 future housing demand.

Non-residential Buildings Both Build Out scenarios identified ample non-residential development capacity. To put potential square footage into perspective, consider the following averages:

	Average sq ft	Build Out potential sq ft	Number of potential stores
Main Street Retailer	2,000 sq ft		5,966
Chain Drug Store	13,000 sq ft		918
Supermarket	40,000 sq ft	/ 11,932,990 =	298
Home Depot	125,000 sq ft		95

While the Build Out suggests that there is ample development potential within the Village area, the analysis does not factor in the physical capacity for on-site wastewater treatment; hence the Build Out is a theoretical estimate of development potential in the Village area.

## Findings and Considerations

The two forums were well attended with about 30 people at each of the two meetings. Attendees included business owners, residents, local officials and people living near the village and a few from other parts of Town. Participants showed great enthusiasm for future opportunities to make the village a desirable place to live, work and conduct business. Work has already begun on several of the short term goals identified. This year's Rally Day was held in the village with a River Walk, history tour and farmer's market on the new Green. Two new committees were formed as a result of the forums: a wastewater committee and a committee to investigate entry signage for the village gateways.

As identified in the public participation process, implementing a municipal or community wastewater system is a priority for the future of the East Village. The current reliance on individual on-site treatment and access to potable water may well inhibit the intensity and diversity of uses for which forum participants expressed the desire (see GOALS chart). Participants responded positively to the Future Development Scenario which illustrated village-scale development as an example. However, the feasibility of this type of development would rely on a municipal or community wastewater treatment system.

The Village Sampling Inventory identified that approximately half of surveyed parcels currently conform to minimum lot size requirements. Yet, one acre lots are considerably larger than those typically found in historic villages. This suggests that the current one-acre zoning may be too restrictive if historic patterns are considered desirable for the future. This issue may need to be explored further through the planning process. The *Vermont Growth Center Planning Manual* indicates historic lot sizes for single-family homes average 4,800 sq ft or 0.11 acres.

The Build Out Analysis theoretically indicates ample development potential within the Village area. Undertaking subsequent Build Out scenarios utilizing alternative development constraints and zoning parameters could help East Montpelier define a Village-specific zoning district. A Village-specific zoning district would help direct infrastructure investments, economic development and new housing to the Village and contribute to *developing a sense of place* as identified at the public forums.

Lastly, recent changes to 24 VSA Chapter 117 now require town plans to contain an economic development element or chapter. While economic development planning has been embedded throughout the enabling statute, separating it out elevates this important facet of planning. The effective date of this new requirement is July 1, 2012. Under the plan for the municipality, Chapter 117 section 4382 now includes:

*(11) an economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects and programs necessary to foster economic growth.*

Public forum participants expressed the need to *cultivate a vibrant local economy* within the East Village. Hence, the timing of this new element may prove beneficial as East Montpelier updates its municipal plan and continues to plan for the future of the East Village.