

## Planning Commission Reporting Form for Municipal Plan Amendments

Town of Waitsfield, Vermont

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January 5, 2023

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4384(c) which states: “*When considering an amendment to a plan, the planning commission shall prepare a written report on the proposal. The report shall address the extent to which the plan, as amended, is consistent with the goals established in §4302 of this title.*”

A public hearing by the Planning Commission on the proposed changes to the 2017 Waitsfield Town Plan will be held at **7:00pm on Tuesday February 7, 2023** in the upstairs meeting room at the Waitsfield Town Office, 4418 Main Street, Waitsfield, VT.

The Planning Commission has prepared draft changes to the Town Plan for the Town of Waitsfield as required for re-adoption in accordance with 24 V.S.A. §4387. The proposed 2023 Town Plan revisions are intended to address the statutory criteria for re-adoption, including consideration of:

- Recommendations of the regional planning commission;
- Input from the community;
- Consistency with the State Planning Goals in 24 V.S.A. §4302;
- Address all of the required plan elements as specified in 24 V.S.A. §4382;
- Internal consistency among the different plan elements;
- Compatibility with the Regional Plan and municipal plans from adjoining towns;
- Establishing a program and schedule for implementing the plan.

In consideration of the above criteria, the 2023 proposed changes include a few minor edits as well as the following substantive changes:

### Chapter 3: **Population**

This chapter has been updated with the most recent 2020 census data about the population in the Town of Waitsfield (and Washington County and the State). Tables and graphs were updated and data sources cited. Updates were also made to Goals, Policies and Tasks.

### Chapter 4: **Housing**

This chapter has been updated with the most current data about housing in the Town of Waitsfield. Corrections were made as well as deletions of incorrect data. Tables and graphs were updated and data sources cited. Updates were also made to Goals, Policies and Tasks. Minor revisions made to assure consistency with Act 171 and Act 174.

### Chapter 9: **Energy**

Much of the prior chapter has been deleted and the chapter is now intended to serve as the Town of Waitsfield’s Enhanced Energy Plan. This energy plan reflects efforts by the Planning Commission to incorporate the goals of Act 174, and the State Commitment to be 90%

renewable by 2050. Included with this section is a draft map indicating potential siting of sustainable energy projects that conform to other goals of the plan. The energy chapter clarifies which types of energy projects are desired and in what parts of Waitsfield they may be suitable. These changes are being made in order to further State Planning Goals and the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan.

#### Chapter 11: **Natural Resources**

This chapter was updated to address Act 171. The chapter includes new mapping of Critical Forest Tiers and habitat crossings. It also includes the Designated Village Center boundary and changes in preferred development illustrations.

#### Chapter 12: **Land Use**

This chapter was updated with a new Future Land Use map. The Future Land Use Map was updated to be consistent with the goal of maintaining rural character with a designated village center, and to address the new forest block goals in the plan. The new map includes forest blocks, habitat connectors, water service area, and conserved lands and reflects roads, rivers, perennial streams, and ponds. Five new designated areas were agreed upon for the Future Land Use map: Industrial, Forest/Conservation, Moderate Density, Rural, and Village.

In addition, the map appendix in the 2017 Plan was removed and the maps were inserted into the body of the Plan.

#### *General Notes:*

- (1) We do not anticipate significant probable impacts on the surrounding area (e.g., traffic, overall pattern of land use) as a result of these proposed changes.*
- (2) We do not anticipate significant probable impact on the municipal tax base nor the need for public facilities.*
- (3) There is no substantive change proposed in this plan with respect to vacant land.*
- (4) The changes proposed are relatively minor, but help to better address the suitability of the areas for the proposed purpose. For example, this plan strongly encourages the most intensive development to occur where existing infrastructure better supports it.*
- (5) The proposed changes are more appropriate in terms of modifying the Future Land Use Map to be consistent with recent changes and better reflecting existing conditions and future potential for development.*