
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The Zoning Administrator administers the Westford Zoning Regulations. No land development or building of any kind may be started within the Town of Westford without a building permit. Home occupations also need zoning permits. If you have a question about whether your proposed project needs a permit, please contact the Zoning Administrator at the Town Office (878-4587) between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

In addition to a zoning permit, a Certificate of Occupancy must be issued for any new construction or alteration when the project is substantially complete and before it is used. This certifies that the work for which the permit was issued was completed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, and the requirements of the Zoning Regulations.

Several parcels in town have at least some portion located within the Water Resource Overlay District (WROD). The purpose of this district is to ensure that the quality and character of Westford's important water-related resources, including wetlands, rivers, streams, ponds and well-head protection areas are protected. Please check with the Zoning Administrator prior to beginning any logging operation, landscaping, vegetation removal or construction project to ensure the project complies with the regulations governing the WROD.

ANY NEW CONSTRUCTION AFTER 1992 MUST HAVE A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY IN ORDER TO SELL OR REFINANCE THE PROPERTY.

Zoning Permits Issued in 2007

Houses	14
Garages	4
Sheds/Barns	21
Home Occupations	3
Miscellaneous	12
Additions to Houses	16
Accessory Apartments	1

Maurice Rathbun
Zoning Administrator

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) is composed of the following members: Donald Maddocks, Geoffrey Kerr, Gene Hallman, Eric Jacobsen and Mark Letorney. The Board considers applications for conditional use, variance and appeal pursuant to the Westford Zoning Regulations.

During 2007, the ZBA held public hearings and site visits to consider five conditional use applications and one variance application. Of the five conditional use applications, four concerned the construction for subdivision roads within our Water Resource Overlay District. Three were approved and one was denied. The ZBA also approved a conditional use for an indoor equestrian riding facility. The only variance considered was approved for the construction of a garage on a non-conforming property within our Water Resource Overlay District.

ZBA member Chris Dawson resigned and was replaced by Gene Hallman. We would like to thank Chris for his service to the Board. In an effort to make the most of our Town's human resources, and to streamline our permitting process for applications, the Selectboard voted on December 27, 2007 to dissolve the ZBA in favor of a Development Review Board commencing April 1, 2008.

This is the final report from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Respectfully submitted by,
Mark Letorney, Chair

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

The Planning Commission is a 7 member group appointed by the Selectboard. The Planning Commission's primary duties are to:

1. Develop the Town Plan (vision for the future of Westford)
2. Draft and revise Westford's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (regulatory tools to implement Town Plan)
3. Review subdivision and site plan development proposals (e.g., commercial sites)

The Commission continued to draft revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to implement the Town Plan. The Commission has made progress drafting these revisions.

The Commission was again very busy in 2007 with development review requests. The Commission heard 6 final subdivision applications, 6 subdivision amendment applications and 1 site plan application for a hair studio. The approved subdivisions created a total of 21 lots. These newly created lots resulted in 16 new residential building lots, 3 retained lots and 2 open space lots (60.9 acres). Approved subdivisions also resulted in the town acquiring 2 pedestrian path easements.

The Commission will continue to work on drafting revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for consideration by the Selectboard until April 1st, 2008. Our new year features a change in the structure of our planning and zoning boards, which will take effect April 1st, 2008. In late 2007, the Selectboard voted to approve the formation of a development review board (DRB) and a planning commission (PC). This decision changes our previous structure of a planning commission (PC) and zoning board of adjustment (ZBA). In the past, the ZBA reviewed applications related to zoning issues on both new subdivisions and existing lots and the PC reviewed new subdivision requests, drafted revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and drafted the Town Plan.

In the future, the new structure will allow for one board, the newly formed PC, to focus on drafting the Town Plan, drafting revisions to the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to implement our Town Plan, as well as concentrate on a variety of other issues related to "planning". The newly formed DRB will be able to focus on any and all zoning and subdivision requests that previously came before the former PC and ZBA. The new delegation of tasks still allows the DRB to maintain a measure of input in the drafting of revisions to the Town Plan and Subdivision and Zoning Regulations. This change is designed to better serve the residents of Westford in a more efficient, timely and focused manner. Both of the new boards are committed to maintaining effective communications as we go forward.

The Planning Commission meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. These meetings are open to the public, and agendas are posted at the Town Office, Library, Post Office and Westford Market. Subdivision applications and supporting material (e.g., survey plats) are public record, so feel free to stop by the Town Office to learn more about any development projects in town.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Kitsos, Chair

PLANNING COORDINATOR'S REPORT

As you know, the position of planning coordinator was made a full-time position this past April. This has afforded the opportunity to begin many exciting projects as well as seek more grant funding.

This year we were awarded a \$5,000 grant to conduct research regarding our ancient roads. In December, Caroline Brown, Christopher Dawson, Lynn Gauthier, Charles McGill, Chris O'Donnell and Sarah Pinto were appointed by the Selectboard to the Ancient Roads Committee (ARC). Over the course of the next year, these individuals will research the history of our roads, the status and location of potential ancient roads, and will compile a comprehensive report outlining the history and location of all existing and discontinued town roads.

In 2007, the Town Center Committee (TCC) was also formed. The Selectboard appointed Sue Adams, Jason Hoover, Leni Jorschick and Linell Vileseca to the TCC. This Committee has been working on numerous town center projects pertaining to safety. This coming fiscal year the town hopes to convert the "Y" intersection at the corner of Route 128 and Common Road into a "T" intersection. Furthermore, the TCC is looking into upgrading the parking lots on the Common, upgrading the Town Office parking lot, constructing a library parking lot on the west side of the library, installing landscaping and planting trees in and around the Common as a traffic calming measure, and installation of a sidewalk on the north side of Route 128 (library to market). These projects will be on-going over the next few years. Thus far, the Town has been awarded \$12,000 by the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization to conduct an in-depth sidewalk study and the TCC plans on applying for a Park and Ride Grant this year to pay for upgrades to the parking on the Common.

This coming year, the Town will be gathering data in the hopes of applying for a 2010 Enhancement Grant through the VT Agency of Transportation to construct a salted-sand and salt containment structure. This structure will ensure the safety of our surface and ground water.

Also, the Town will be undertaking the development of a capital budget. A capital budget takes inventory of the town's assets, their worth, their useful life, and creates an asset replacement plan estimating cost. This will allow the Town to plan well in advance for expenditures necessary to maintain a high level of service to residents.

Please note that the Town will be applying for enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program this coming fiscal year. This program will allow residents to purchase flood insurance at reduced rates and will

make the community eligible for federal financial assistance to reconstruct and/or repair structures damaged or lost in a flood.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to the Planning Commission for all their hard work and diligence in revising the Zoning & Subdivision Regulations over the last two years to bring them into conformance with the Town Plan. Also, I would like to give a special thanks to Jason Hoover, Landscape Architect, for his volunteered GIS services and expertise. He has developed many of the maps used in revising the Zoning & Subdivision Regulations and has drafted the site design plans for the Town Center Committee.

Respectfully,
Melissa Manka
Planning Coordinator

CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Created in 1966 by Chittenden County municipalities, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) is a 24-member board consisting of one delegate from each of the County's 19 municipalities and five at-large members representing the interests of agriculture, environmental conservation, business, housing and transportation. CCRPC provides planning leadership through policy guidance and technical analysis. Member communities benefit from the expertise of staff through the Commission's professional and technical assistance services.

In 2007, several CCRPC projects benefited all member communities:

- The Chittenden County Brownfields Assessment Program facilitates analysis of petroleum contamination of land so that it can return to productive use
- Analysis of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Circumferential Highway (CIRC-Williston Project)
- Negotiation to prepare legislation encouraging new housing construction
- Update of municipal Emergency Rapid Response and Emergency Operations Plans

CCRPC also provided a wide variety of technical support to its member communities, especially the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services such as:

- Cartographic services
- Data Development
- Computer modeling of municipal land use plans and regulations

In addition, Westford also benefited from the following special CCRPC projects:

- Water Resource overlay data development and mapping
- Road map for town and Fire/Rescue
- Various maps for Fire/Rescue
- Other maps and data requests

CCRPC reviews municipal plans as part of the statutory requirement to confirm municipal planning processes. In addition, CCRPC regularly reviewed development applications governed by *Act 250* for compliance with the *2006 Chittenden County Regional Plan*.

Maintaining a balanced built and natural environment involves continuous collaboration and coordination. CCRPC appreciates the opportunity to work with its municipal members to plan appropriately for the region's future to protect the special quality of life that is shared throughout Chittenden County.

CHITTENDEN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) serves as a cooperative regional forum for the development of transportation policies, plans and programs that address transportation issues and opportunities in Chittenden County. CCMPO plans, prioritizes, and coordinates the use of all federal transportation funds in Chittenden County.

CCMPO is a federally mandated agency to undertake transportation planning, but it is locally controlled. CCMPO is responsible to all citizens of the region to ensure the implementation of the best transportation plan for Chittenden County. The CCMPO Board is composed of appointed officials from each of the 18 county municipalities, the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA), the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Vermont Transportation Authority (VTA) and air and rail representatives. These officials are accountable to their respective constituencies. The implementation of the transportation plan is primarily carried out by VTrans and the municipalities.

Under federal law, CCMPO is required to maintain and update a long range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and a short range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In addition, CCMPO provides technical and planning assistance to its member municipalities and VTrans.

In January 2005 CCMPO adopted the 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the county. The transportation plan was based upon a forecast of over one billion dollars of federal funds to be spent within the county by the year 2025. More than half of these funds are to be used for maintaining our present transportation system.

CCMPO approved the Federal Fiscal Year TIP for 2008 through 2011 in July 2007. It is a prioritized multi-year list of transportation projects in Chittenden County. To receive federal funds, each transportation project, program or operation must be authorized through the TIP. During the period of this TIP, more than \$166 million in federal dollars are slated for transportation projects within the county during this time period.

CCMPO provides a wide variety of technical and planning service to its membership. Some recent projects for Westford include:

Technical Assistance

- Old Stage Road/Woods Hollow Road intersection safety analysis – 2007
- Village Green Study – 2006
- Brookside Road path study – 2003

Safety

- Road Safety Audit Review, Milton-Westford Road – 2007

Transportation for Livable Communities

- Pedestrian Safety Improvements to the Westford Common – 2004 (\$8,000)

These studies, once complete can also be found at www.ccmpto.org, which is also where you can find traffic count data generated for your community.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey B. Carr, Chair
