

TOWN PLAN
Town of Marlboro
Vermont

Adopted by the Select Board
October 10, 2013

TOWN PLAN
TOWN OF MARLBORO, VERMONT

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I. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF MARLBORO TOWN PLAN

The Marlboro Town Plan is designed to provide guidelines for planning the future of the Town of Marlboro so that community actions, whether private or public, will (a) conform to the wishes of its citizens; (b) avoid the adverse and sometimes irreversible effects often associated with unplanned development; and (c) take into account the planning measures of the State, the Windham Region, and adjoining towns.

The Town Plan is to be used by public officials, businesses, landowners, and residents in a number of ways:

1. To recommend future community programs, actions, and studies that will help ensure a continuous planning program.
2. To provide a framework for zoning and any other bylaw or ordinance the Town may adopt.
3. To guide local decision-making in the review of development proposals, including site plan, conditional use, and subdivision reviews.
4. To serve as a basis for responding to development proposals requiring Act 250 permits or any other similar State or Federal review proceedings.
5. To guide State planning processes.
6. To provide a source of information about the Town.

HOW THE TOWN PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

In response to the passage of the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (Title 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117) in 1968, a generalized planning study for Marlboro and other Vermont towns was completed by Planners' Collaborative of Syracuse, New York. That prototype Town Plan, with some modifications, was adopted by Marlboro shortly thereafter and has been readopted with appropriate and necessary modifications every five years since.

The Town Plan is designed to comply with Chapter 117, in terms of its content (i.e. its ten elements), consistency with Vermont's seventeen planning goals, and compatibility with other Town Plans and the Windham Regional Plan. The Marlboro Planning Commission provided the principal direction for the update of the Town Plan. The Town received technical assistance from the Windham Regional Commission for planning and mapping services, funded in part by a Municipal Planning Grant to the Town.

PROCESS FOR ADOPTION, MODIFICATION AND UPDATING

Formal adoption of the Town Plan will take place after public hearings of the Planning Commission and Selectboard. The Plan is adopted by a majority vote of the Selectboard. A Town Plan expires five years from the day of adoption.

Planning is an ongoing process. Once adopted, the Town Plan continues to be reviewed every few years to account for new information about the Town, new public needs and desires as expressed by the citizens

of Marlboro, and new or modified requirements of the state. This review is one of the main responsibilities of the Marlboro Planning Commission. A Town Plan can be modified and formally amended (through public hearings and adoption by the Selectboard) at any time during the 5-year period.

INTERPRETATION OF THE TOWN PLAN

In situations where the interpretation of the Plan is needed or required, it will be the task of the Marlboro Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Marlboro Selectboard, to conduct a review and issue an interpretive judgment. Throughout the text of this Town Plan many of the policy statements include imperative verbs. "Should" or "may" means that a policy is encouraged but not mandated, whereas "must" or "shall" means that the Town has strong intentions of ensuring that a policy is implemented

II. COMMUNITY PROFILE

HISTORY OF MARLBORO, VERMONT

Marlboro, Vermont is a rural hill town of 26,240 acres or 41 square miles in southern Windham County. Rugged topography and distance from commercial and resort centers have kept the Town small (2010 population 1,078), and have forestalled thus far the pressure for rapid growth and large-scale development affecting many nearby towns. As the site of several recreational facilities and cultural institutions, Marlboro has both regional and statewide importance. Its value to permanent and seasonal residents, students, and visitors alike depends on continued maintenance of its scenic, rural character.

Marlboro, also called "New Marlborough" and "Marlborough" prior to 1800, was first granted a charter from the Crown of England in 1751. Since no settlement took place, that charter was forfeited and a second charter was granted in 1761 to Timothy Dwight and his associates of Northampton, Massachusetts; these charters were all part of the New Hampshire Grants. A third charter was granted to Charles Phelps and his associates in 1764 by the Provincial Government of New Hampshire. Based on the 1761 charter, Marlboro was surveyed in 1762 with the creation of 64 equal divisions of "rights" excepting four lots in the center of the town. A copy of this original plan can be seen at the Town Office.

Marlboro's first settlers came in the spring of 1763. The Town's population peaked at nearly 1300 in 1820, but declined in the following decades in response to economic troubles, westward migration, and the decline of hill farming. As indicated in the section on population trends, there has been a high rate of growth ever since the low of 225 residents in 1940.

In 1782, there were five school districts, two in the western half of Marlboro and three in the east. By 1799 there were 313 "scholars" between the ages of 4 and 18 attending school in seven districts.

Marlboro's first Congregational Church, "a substantial building of the best timber selected from the surrounding forests" (Newton's History of the Town of Marlborough), was built in 1778 on Meetinghouse Hill, now known as Town Hill. In 1820, a second church was built near the first, which by then was in disrepair. In 1822, the Marlboro Town House was built using timbers and boards from the first Congregational Church. It was located at the southwest corner of the "New Meeting House Common" on Town Hill. Annual Town Meetings have been held in the Town House since then.

These two buildings, the Marlboro Meeting House and the Town House, were moved down the hill to the present village center between 1836 and 1844. The Marlboro Meeting House, placed near the inn, burned in June, 1931, along with two small houses and a barn. The fire started in a defective chimney of the

house next door and lack of adequate water supply prevented the Brattleboro fire department to save the church. It was rebuilt and dedicated in 1933. The Town House was placed on the east side of South Road, and remained there until 1965 when it was moved across the road to its present location.

Many industries and activities have been based in the village. At various times, there were: two inns, a brick schoolhouse, a frame schoolhouse, high school classes in the Marlboro Meeting House, a carpenter, a blacksmith, a wheelwright, a wagon maker, stores, an ashery, a tan house, a post office, parsonages, a doctor-in-residence, a chair factory, the Town pound, and in recent years, the museum of the historical society. Another fire in September, 1931 (not 1932) on the east side of the road, was caused by a lightning strike to the large barn owned by the inn and spread to an adjacent shed then to Baxter's general store, destroying all three buildings and their contents.

After numerous studies and discussions, the town center of Marlboro Common took its present form with the building of the Town Office in 1969, located between the Marlboro Meeting House and the Town House. The structure provides for the Town Office and the Post Office.

The Marlboro of yesterday included a variety of traditional rural pursuits: agriculture in the form of dairies, grains, flax, wool, potatoes, and fruit; lumbering which involved many mills; soapstone quarrying; sugaring; soap making; and charcoal making. The ledgers of many self-employed craftsmen show typical self-sufficiency. Hogback Mountain, one of Vermont's first ski areas, was a popular alpine ski area for many years.

The Marlboro of today has inns, lodges and restaurants, artists and artisans, a college, a summer music school, a summer camp and farms, all still in a setting of natural beauty which includes three lakes and many unspoiled roads and trails. The physical characteristics and natural resources of Marlboro have influenced its history, and will continue to influence its settlement and growth in the future.

POPULATION TRENDS

In 2010, population totaled 1,078 persons. This is a growth rate of 10.22%, compared to only .58% for Windham County, for 2000-2010. Interestingly, the current population is almost equal to that of 1800. Census figures show a sharp increase in Marlboro's population between 1940 and 1950. This can be attributed to the founding of Marlboro College in 1946, which brought permanent faculty and other staff to Marlboro. Furthermore, each year, some students stay to become Marlboro residents.

Table 1. Historical Population, Town of Marlboro, VT

Year	Population	Total Increase	Percent Change
1800	1,087	---	---
1850	896	-191	-18%
1900	448	-448	-50%
1940	225	-223	-49%
1950	311	86	38.22
1960	347	36	11.58
1970	592	245	70.61
1980	695	103	17.40
1990	924	229	32.95
2000	978	54	6.00
2010	1,078	100	10.22

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Marlboro grew at an exceedingly high rate (70.61%) between 1960 and 1970. Several factors contributed to this and have continued to affect the growth rate, but the primary reason for this huge jump is that the U.S. Census in 1970 started to count the students at Marlboro College as residents of the Town.

The student population continues to influence the population and economics of the Town. According to the 2010 census, 862 individuals were living in households and 216 in “group quarters”, or on-campus college housing. Students living in off-campus housing is harder to see in census numbers. Of the 862 living in households, 75 were classified as “non-relatives”, including married couples, same sex married couples, and students.

Table 2 shows age distribution in Marlboro for the 20 years from 1990 to 2010. The greatest population increase has been in children under 20 (+55), and over 64 (+61). Of special note here is the rising number over 85 (13). The median age in Marlboro is now 41.6, an increase from 36.7 ten years ago.

Table 2. Age of Population, Town of Marlboro, VT

Age	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2010
19 years and under*	198	186	241	77%	-6%	29.6%
20-64 years	655	694	678	25%	6%	-2.36%
65 years and older	71	98	159	20%	38%	62.24%
Total	924	978	1,078	33%	6%	10.22%
Median age (years)	30	36.7	41.6	11%	22%	13.4%

*1990 and 2000, population divided up to 18; in 2010 divided to 19

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census 1990, 2000, & 2010

The towns surrounding Marlboro have experienced mixed growth in the last decade. Table 3 compares Marlboro's growth with that of other nearby towns, Windham County, and the State of Vermont.

Table 3. Population Trends in Nearby Towns, Windham County and State of Vermont

Town/Area	1990	2000	2010	Total Increase	Percent Change 2000 to 2010
Marlboro	924	978	1,078	100	10.2
Brattleboro	12,241	12,005	12,046	41	0.3
Guilford	1,941	2,046	2,121	75	3.7
Halifax	588	782	728	-54	-6.9
Wilmington	1,968	2,225	1,876	-349	-15.7
Dover	994	1,410	1,124	-286	-20.3
Whitingham	1,177	1,298	1,357	59	4.5

Newfane	1,555	1,680	1,726	46	2.7
Dummerston	1,863	1,915	1,864	-51	-2.7
Windham County	41,588	46,449	46,720	271	0.58
State of Vermont	562,758	608,827			

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000 & 2010

Table 4 lists population projections for Marlboro, which indicate a small but steady growth is expected over the next 10 years.

Table 4. Population Projections for Marlboro

Year	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Projected	2010 Census	2015 Projected	2020 Projected
Count	924	978	1,013	1,078	1,130	1,180

It should be noted that between 2000 and 2010 Marlboro had the highest percentage increase in population (+10.2%) of all of the nine Windham area towns with which it was compared in Table 3 above. This increase was more than double the next highest increase (Whitingham at +4.5%) and far exceeded Windham county as a whole (at +0.58%). This population increase appears to have been unanticipated when the previous Town Plan was prepared, as the then-projected population increase of 3.6% actually turned out to be 10.2% (Table 4 above). This population increase was unequally distributed among the three age groups listed in Table 2. The 64+ age group increased 62.2%, and the younger-than-20-years age group increased 29.6%, while the 20-64 years age group decreased 2.36%. This higher-than-anticipated rate of population increase may result in a higher-than-anticipated amount of residential development.

HOUSING

Marlboro is primarily a residential community and most of its residents live in single-family detached dwellings. Table 5 provides a picture of the types of housing in Marlboro as well as trends in total number of housing units from 2000-2010. Seasonal housing continues to represent a significant share (24%) of the total housing stock., but does not include campus housing at Marlboro College.

Table 5. Housing Occupancy, Town of Marlboro, VT

TYPE OF UNIT	2000 NUMBER OF UNITS	2010 NUMBER OF UNITS	% CHANGE 2000-2010
Owner-occupied	272	309	13.6%
Renter-occupied	58	69	18.97%
Seasonal	153	126	-21.43%
For sale/rent	-	7	-
All other vacant	14	15	7.1%
TOTAL	497	526	5.83%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, 2010

Marlboro has continued to have a modest growth pattern in number of households. It had a total of 378 households in 2010, an increase from 330 households in 2000, 296 households in 1990, and 240 households in 1980. The average household size, however, has continued to decline from 2.39 in 2000 to 2.33 owner-occupied and 2.07 rental-occupied in 2010.

As shown in Table 6, 30% of Marlboro's housing stock is 50 years or older. Home construction was slow during the 1940's and increased slightly during the 1950's and 1960's. 61% of Marlboro's housing was built in the last four decades.

Table 6. Age of Housing, Town of Marlboro, VT

YEAR BUILT	NUMBER OF HOUSES	PERCENT (%)
Prior to 1939	120	23%
1940-1949	25	5%
1950-1959	20	4%
1960-1969	39	7%
1970-1979	150	28%
1980-1989	60	11%
1990-1999	76	14%
2000-2004	23	4%
2005 or later	18	4%

Source: DP04 Selected Housing 2007-2011, American Community Survey 5-year estimate

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Although Marlboro functions with a large measure of independence and rural self-sufficiency, its economy is closely related to that of neighboring towns, the Windham Region, the State of Vermont, and the nation. For instance, Marlboro College, the Marlboro School of Music, and Camp Neringa draw their students, patrons, and campers from a wide geographic area, and many of the Town's businesses are tourism-oriented.

In the last ten years Marlboro residents have increased their travel time to work and are often working out-of-state. In 2000 the average travel time to work was 23.5 minutes; in 2010 it was 31.3 minutes (2010 Data Source: DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates).

In 2000 45 workers in Marlboro worked outside of Vermont; in 2010 this number more than doubled to 99. The total number of workers 16 years and older decreased from 561 in 2000 to 509 in 2010, a decrease of 10.2%. (2010 Data Source : B08007 Place of Work, State and County Level, Workers 16 years and over 2006-2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates).

For the years 2005-2009, 8-9 households received food stamps. In 2010 this increased to 35 households. In 2010, Marlboro had a 2.25% unemployment rate, as opposed to 6.25% in Windham County, and 8.08% in Vermont. (2006-2010 ACS 5-year Estimates, DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics 2005-2009, <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsh/pages/index.xhtml>)

Figures available from the American Community Survey (ACS) are not clearly understood for median household income, and will be explored by the Planning Commission in the future.

Table 7 Adjusted Median Household Income

	Adjusted Median Household Income 1979	Adjusted Median Household Income, 1989	Adjusted Median Household Income, 1999	Adjusted Median Household Income, 2009	Adjusted Median Household Income, 2010	Adjusted Median Household Income, 2011
Marlboro	\$39,621	\$54,286	\$55,936	\$40,867	\$49,276	\$56,250
Windham County	\$40,472	\$48,041	\$49,197	\$63,277	\$48,952	?
Vermont	\$43,705	\$51,544	\$52,612	\$51,555	\$53,422	?

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. Adjusted to 2011, and US Census.

One of the issues needing analysis is who is included in ACS household incomes, as Marlboro College's sizable student population may or may not be included in the median income estimates. As mentioned previously, of the 1,078 total population in 2010, 216 lived in group quarters, reflecting on-campus students, and 75 of 862 householders were non-relatives including some off-campus students (US Census 2010). For 2011, ACS reported an estimate of non-family income of \$24,304.

Reflecting the lack of public transportation and the town's hilly nature, out of the 509 workers in 2010, 313 drove to work alone, 77 carpooled, 0 commuted by public transport, 0 biked, 48 walked to work (a decrease of 69% since 2000), 3 commuted by some other means, and 68 worked at home, (an increase of 19% since 2000). (2010 Data Source: DP04 SELECTED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Marlboro residents clearly value the quality of their life in town enough to commute longer distances, or adapt and work from home, rather than leave their homesteads.

Many necessary public and private services, such as heating fuel, power, medical services, library facilities, recreational facilities, secondary school, and social services are to be found outside of Marlboro. Nonresident landowners, who are important contributors to Marlboro's tax income, as well as to its tourist-oriented commerce, are much influenced by national and international economic trends.

Like that of many other Windham Region towns, Marlboro's economy has evolved from traditional bases in agriculture, natural resources and manufacturing of durable goods to new bases in services (including education and health services, construction, and real estate), and wholesale/retail trade and the arts.

The VT Department of Employment and Training data indicate that a high proportion of the workforce is employed in professional or service occupations. While most employment opportunities are centered elsewhere, there are also opportunities in Marlboro. Marlboro College and Marlboro Elementary School employ Marlboro people, although many do not find affordable housing locally and do not live in Town. Many of Marlboro's residents are self-employed with either home-based workshops, telecommuting, or other businesses that provide high-quality work opportunities.

Whatever the actual median household income numbers currently are for Marlboro, compared to Windham County and the State as a whole they appear to be lower.

2. LOCATION AND SCALE OF DESIRED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The focus in Marlboro is to continue to support local, often home-based, businesses. Marlboro's settlements are non-localized, so means to increase communication both within and without the town, both in transportation and through the internet, need to be encouraged.

As Marlboro plans for its economic growth, the following factors must be considered:

Infrastructure: Adequate infrastructure is essential to support economic activities. Marlboro does not have a public water or sewer system anywhere in Town. This limits the scale and type of businesses which can locate to town.

Land Use: Flexibility in land use is important to allow for the expansion of existing operations while preventing expansion of commercial growth that is out of scale with existing development along the Route 9 corridor.

In light of recent fluvial erosion along Route 9 , Marlboro needs to review zoning and subdivision regulations indicating optimal locations and requirements for commercial enterprises.

At present, the town center is not well-defined, which could be improved by adding a Village District which would add to its esthetic and economic attractiveness.

3. PROJECTS, PROGRAMS AND POLICIES NECESSARY TO FOSTER ECONOMIC GROWTH

Residents choose to live in Marlboro for its esthetic, natural and historic rural character, as well as its educational opportunities. They are willing to travel far to employment, or create a home business to be able to live where they do. These qualities must be maintained while focusing on the evidence of the difficulty of making a survivable income in town. There is an increasing number of elderly living in Marlboro whose needs must also be addressed through communication and transportation networks, and health, housing and social services.

Economic Development Policies

1. Promote economic development that provides for the wise and sustainable use of Marlboro's natural resources and preserves overall environmental quality.
2. Encourage the development of home-based work and entrepreneurial ventures which preserve and revitalize Marlboro's rural character and minimize adverse impact on the community's environment or infrastructure.
3. Prevent scattered development
4. Encourage local manufacturing and marketing of value-added agricultural and forestry products.

In order to maintain the character of Marlboro and foster its economic growth, the following projects will be promoted:

1. Town-wide high-speed broadband service of highest priority
2. Public transportation to and from the center of Marlboro, Marlboro College and other locations to Wilmington and Brattleboro
3. Designation in zoning to add a Village District
4. Establishment of a community center/cooperative store to enhance communication and community projects

5. Continued support for community projects facilitated through the Marlboro Alliance
6. Exploration of affordable senior housing and other joint projects with Marlboro College
7. Support existing diversity of economic base. Participate in economic development planning with neighboring towns and Windham Regional Commission.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

The government of the Town of Marlboro derives its authority from its general charter and from the Vermont Constitution. There are three selectmen for the Town each of whom serves a three-year elected term. Selectmen are responsible for the general supervision of the affairs of the Town and must see that all duties imposed by Vermont State Statutes upon towns and school districts are performed.

The Town functions through the active participation of its residents and volunteer groups. Many residents serve on various boards and committees and either join or financially support various associations in Town. The Town employs several road workers and an administrative assistant and provides stipends or salaries to the following elected officials: Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Selectboard, School Board, Auditors, Listers, and Town Constable; and the following appointed officials: Assistant Town Clerk, Assistant Town Treasurer, Zoning Administrator and Health Officer. The Marlboro School District employs 30 individuals who are involved with administration, teaching, support services, and health services.

The Marlboro Planning Commission consists of nine (9) members who are appointed by the Selectboard. The Commission is the legislative body responsible for drafting the Town Plan and creating both regulatory and non-regulatory tools that implement the Town Plan, including writing bylaws and performing any pertinent planning studies.

The Marlboro Development Review Board (DRB) is also appointed by the Selectboard and consists of six members, with four alternates. The DRB is the quasi-judicial entity responsible for hearing all applications for development review, including applications for site plan, subdivision, variance requests, conditional use applications, appeals of the decisions of the Zoning Administrator, and any other reviews authorized by the bylaws.

The following ordinances and bylaws are in force in the Town of Marlboro: Zoning Regulations (including Flood Hazard Regulations), Subdivision Regulations, Driveway Ordinance, Road Naming Ordinance, and Dog Ordinance.

Local revenue is generated through property taxes, State funds, permits and licenses, fees and charges for services, and other miscellaneous reimbursements. Property taxes comprise roughly 86% of the total income for both Town and School expenses. Table 8 shows how Town expenditures were dispersed in 2000, 2005, and 2010.

Table 8. Marlboro Annual Expenditures - 2000, 2005, and 2010

TOWN DEPARTMENT	2000 Actual	2005 Actual	2010 Actual
Administrative Expenses	\$88,353	\$173,243	\$225,097
Highway Department	297,049	422,530	349,889
Emergency Management	0	0	48,690

Building Maintenance	17,357	11,282	23,322
Cemetery Care, Grants/Forest Fire	15,415	4,393	500
Windham Dues, VCLT, WRC	8,003	9,376	12,681
Separately Warned Requests	18,749	23,758	39,906
Miscellaneous Items	8,486	34,152	72,799
TOWN--Subtotal	\$453,412	\$678,734	\$772,884
Marlboro Town School District	1,138,431	1,474,011	1,559,155
Act 68 - State	46,125	70,000	112,157
SCHOOL--Subtotal	\$1,184,556	\$1,544,011	\$1,671,312
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,637,968	\$2,222,745	\$2,444,196

Source: Marlboro Town Reports, 2001,2006, and 2011

Note: the above figures are only the Town's portion of school expenditures. Total school costs were \$1,414,967 in 2000, \$1,982,020 in 2005, and \$2,169,837 in 2010.

Future Growth in Population and Housing

Marlboro's population growth has been affected by several factors. Good highway access has made it possible for those working in nearby, more populated areas to live in rural Marlboro. The excellent reputation of the Marlboro Elementary School has attracted families from surrounding communities. In addition, many of Marlboro's formerly seasonal residents have chosen to reside here. Finally, the presence of Marlboro College and the Marlboro School of Music draws students and visitors, some of whom become new permanent residents. These trends are expected to continue.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN ADJACENT TOWNS

Marlboro shares boundaries with Brattleboro, Halifax, Newfane, Dummerston, Wilmington, Guilford, and Dover. Marlboro's neighboring towns are small to medium in size and principally rural except for the regional center of Brattleboro. Wilmington and Dover (home of Mount Snow) serve as the hub for year-round recreational activity in the Deerfield Valley.

Marlboro residents and businesses depend on Brattleboro for its full range and diversity of institutional (including schools), governmental, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

Although some Marlboro residents and businesses may rely on Wilmington commercially, the Deerfield Valley does not provide the same level of services that Brattleboro does, except, of course, for commercial recreational and cultural activities. The greatest impact that Marlboro faces from its Deerfield Valley neighbors is the year-round visitor traffic along Route 9, and increasing traffic along roads in Marlboro, such as Higley Hill Road, and Upper Dover Road. As was clear during Tropical Storm Irene, Ames Hill Road is a major East-West corridor when Route 9 is closed, and it is a high

priority that it be maintained to be able to perform this service. Another impact is the development pressure for vacation homes and housing for seasonal employees.

Census data shows that new residents moving into Windham County choose to live in rural areas, and therefore move to smaller towns like Marlboro and its neighbors. New residents seek not only a rural environment, but also to avoid higher tax rates found in Brattleboro. The scenic landscape of Marlboro is attractive and will continue to draw new residents.

III. TOWN PLAN ELEMENTS AND STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The Town Plan is based on a Statement of Objectives, which outlines a direction for the future of Marlboro. Following the Statement of Objectives are several chapters, which provide background information about the Town's physical features, natural and cultural resources, community facilities, and land use. An effort has been made to provide users of the Plan with sufficient background material and inventory data to support the policies and objectives articulated in the Plan.

The Statement of Objectives shall serve as the foundation of this Town Plan and is given further definition through policy statements. Policy statements will be interpreted as guidelines and standards by the Planning Commission and Selectboard for implementing the Town Plan. Town Plan policies are also intended to guide the Windham Regional Commission and the State of Vermont in their planning efforts; and to assist the District II Environmental Commission in evaluating applications submitted under Act 250.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

When Vermont's Growth Management Law, Act 200, was passed in 1988, Vermont set up a system for communities to work in concert with their neighbors and with agencies of State government to shape the future. As envisioned, decisions on local growth issues are to be made by the local communities; decisions of regional significance are to be made by the region's communities acting in consort. Each State agency action and program that affects land use is to be based on agency plans developed in consultation with communities and regions to be compatible with approved municipal and regional plans.

To achieve a unified vision for the future, plans at all levels are to be consistent with the 16 Vermont planning goals and compatible with one another. The Town of Marlboro analyzed the 16 goals and established the following planning objectives for the Town's future.

This Plan has been prepared by the Planning Commission for the people of Marlboro who wish to maintain Marlboro's rural character by:

1. Protecting significant natural areas and locations of special educational, recreational, scientific, historical, architectural and scenic significance;
2. Encouraging and supporting the continued use of lands for agriculture, forestry, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenic appreciation, and production of renewable energy resources;
3. Maintaining the Town's characteristic pattern of settlement typified by a small, historic village surrounded by settled roadways and undeveloped areas, with increased local communication through a community center, the bimonthly newsletter *The Mixer*, and on-line resources.
4. Promoting limited and appropriate growth, especially by encouraging local economic growth and sustainability of home businesses through increased transportation and broadband services;

5. Encouraging supportive services for a growing senior population;
6. Promoting development activity that will not jeopardize public and private investment or damage environmental quality;
7. Addressing changing needs through an ongoing planning program;
8. Identifying areas in Town most suitable for accommodating the projected population and related facilities and services in a manner that will be compatible with the objectives and policies stated in this Plan;
9. Identifying areas especially worthy of protection;
10. Encouraging a strong, stable, and balanced rural economy that provides satisfying and rewarding opportunities to meet the needs of Marlboro's residents without detracting from aesthetic or environmental standards;
11. Fostering strong local government based on broad citizen participation, voluntary, elected and appointed officials, and continued active membership in the Windham Regional Commission;
12. Providing quality education for the Town's young people and encouraging adults to take advantage of community educational and vocational training opportunities;
13. Maintaining a safe and scenic rural transportation system;
14. Encouraging the use of practical energy-conserving measures and renewable energy resources;
15. Providing for local use of available natural resources with a minimum of environmental and scenic damage;
16. Encouraging the availability of safe and affordable child care;
17. Continuing to encourage the use and construction of a diversity of safe and affordable housing types; and
18. Providing for the public health, safety, education and general welfare of the community.

A. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Marlboro has a strong history of community development. Maintenance of a strong balanced economy is vital to Marlboro's future. Because of Marlboro's small size, rural location and the nature of its resources, future economic development should be closely related to that already existing. Recognizing the challenges of maintaining communication in a small rural town, the town's committees regularly disseminate information about meetings, community events, and regulatory changes on the town website (www.marlboro.vt.us), at the Elementary School, the Town Office, in addition to publishing such information in the bimonthly newsletter, *The Mixer*.

Community facilities are either owned or maintained by the Town of Marlboro, and include structures, lands, and equipment. Community services are provided directly by the Town, provided by others under contract with the Town, or provided by non-profits and small businesses. School facilities and transportation facilities are described in subsequent chapters.

To anticipate facility and service problems and to take advantage of opportunities for service efficiencies, this chapter and the Education and Transportation chapters should identify capital needs and projects that need attention in the next five years. A capital need or project is any major, non-recurring expenditure,

such as land or road equipment purchase, or building construction or improvement. These differ from regular, ongoing operating and administrative expenses, such as salaries, utilities, and road maintenance.

TOWN PROPERTY

The Marlboro Town Office Building, located in the village, houses the Town Clerk's Office, a meeting room, and provides office space for the U.S. Postal Service and various Town boards and commissions. The Town Garage, which was renovated and enlarged in 2005, provides storage for all Town Highway Department equipment. Other facilities owned and maintained by the Town include the Muster Field, Town Meeting House, the Town Park, the Hogback Mountain Conservation Area, and Marlboro School.

FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION

Marlboro is served by the Marlboro Volunteer Fire Company, a private, non-profit organization that operates solely through contributions of time and money. Given the constraints imposed by this type of support it has neither the financial nor the human resources to provide the level of fire protection that would be required by large-scale development.

Marlboro Volunteer Fire Company aims to be the first to arrive on the scene in emergencies: medical calls and motor vehicle accidents comprise the vast majority of responses.

The Fire Company is a member of the Southwestern New Hampshire and Deerfield Valley mutual aid associations. Officers and personnel of the Fire Company include a Fire Chief, a Communications Officer, an Assistant Fire Chief, a Training Coordinator, and about 10 active firefighters. MVFC makes all efforts to recruit or hire fire-fighting personnel to protect Marlboro residents. Members attend training courses sponsored by Vermont and New Hampshire when available. The Fire Company has been granted a Class C rating by the Vermont Fire Underwriters.

The firehouse, located on South Road ½ mile south of the village, is a two-story structure with an upstairs meeting room. Fire apparatus includes a 1968 1000-gallon pumper/tanker, a 1983 1000-gallon pumper/tanker and a rescue vehicle. Water sources include five fire ponds with seven dry hydrants and one flusher, and other small ponds scattered throughout the Town, which are usable most of the year. Numerous additional small ponds may be used seasonally.

In Marlboro, police protection is provided by the Vermont State Police and the police departments of surrounding towns. The Windham County Sheriff's Department is contracted to provide services on a part-time basis.

HEALTH AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Marlboro Health Officer is appointed by the State Secretary of Human Services on recommendation of the Selectboard. The Health Officer's responsibility is to make sanitary inspections and to respond to complaints regarding public health hazards.

The nearest clinics to Marlboro are the Deerfield Valley Campus of the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center and an office of the Windham County Mental Health Clinic in Wilmington, seven miles west from Marlboro's center. The nearest hospitals are Brattleboro Memorial in Brattleboro, Grace Cottage in Townshend, the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington, and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Keene, NH, (Cheshire Medical Center) and Lebanon, NH. The Vermont State Department of Health provides various services available to Marlboro residents, including well-child and immunization clinics, various screening clinics, including epidemiology, and consultations.

Also available are the services of the Southern Vermont Home Health Agency, and Bayada Home Health Services, which offer a broad range of comprehensive home care; Mental Health Services of Southeastern Vermont, an agency providing professional counseling and rehabilitation services to persons of all ages, and Health Care and Rehabilitative Services, providing mental health services to persons of all ages. The Town contributes to other social service programs and agencies as listed in the Annual Report.

Equipment and supplies for medical emergencies are carried in Marlboro Volunteer Fire Company trucks. Ambulances and rescue vehicles are available on call from Deerfield Valley Rescue, Inc. in Wilmington, Rescue, Inc. in Brattleboro, and through Mutual Aid Dispatch.

Starting in 2011, Marlboro Cares organized a volunteer community-based clinic, located at Marlboro College, to offer consultations and minor treatments such as blood pressure checks, medication review, and nail-clipping to Marlboro residents.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Town now has an Emergency Management Director. Residents are adequately served by various public safety agencies, available by calling into the E-911 system when assistance is required. Emergency assistance is limited by non-existent cell phone coverage in many parts of town. It is important that the Town keeps up with advances in communications technologies and participates in their implementation. While such services will ultimately provide for more timely and accurate provision of emergency response, it is also very important that individual privacy be carefully protected as such systems are implemented. In addition, the fire company and highway department maintain the ability to communicate via two-way radio.

Marlboro is now considered by the State of Vermont to be an Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) town; this secures funding for Marlboro on a par with other EPZ towns. The town has established an Emergency Management Committee, and developed an all-hazards response plan and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). It is working on the following issues:

- Development of a warning plan
- Assistance to residents during emergencies
- Communication during emergencies
- Participation in the Radiological Emergency Response Plan (REAP)
- Emergency shelters and information kiosks

SOLID WASTE

Marlboro is a member of the Windham Solid Waste Management District and is bound by that membership to abide by District regulations and participate in District programs. The Town does not provide for refuse collection. Residents may contract with one of several private waste haulers, or bring their refuse to the District transfer station in Brattleboro themselves. A recycling station for mixed papers, cardboard, glass, metals and many plastics is located next to the Marlboro School on Route 9.

Many Marlboro residents have shown a sincere interest in working with the District to implement recycling, waste reduction, and hazardous waste programs that will reduce the need for technology-intensive alternatives in the future. These programs involve participation by all members of the Town from school age on up and receive full support from Town officials. The most effective means for reducing the amount of solid waste produced is to limit activities which produce such waste (e.g., eliminating hazardous materials from the waste stream, limiting purchases of heavily packaged or disposable goods, or changing methods of production in favor of those which make more efficient use of

raw materials). Modern packaging methods and throwaway products are a great convenience, but the disposal of the resulting increase in solid waste requires the use of expensive highly specialized technologies (e.g., lined landfills and mass-burn facilities) to limit environmental contamination.

RECREATION

Outdoor recreational activities in Marlboro include hunting, tracking, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, primitive camping, canoeing, boating (non-motor), snowmobiling, ATV's, sailing, swimming, skiing, snowshoeing, ice-skating, and bicycling. These activities are important for residents and visitors to the Town.

The Marlboro Park Association (whose membership is open to Marlboro voters upon payment of a modest fee) has an arrangement with the Marlboro Music School and Festival, which in turn leases the use of Camp Kenmore on South Pond from the Ames Hill-Marlboro Community Center. This arrangement provides for general recreational use of the premises including the beach area. Membership is also available to Marlboro residents in the Ames Hill-Marlboro Community Center.

Hogback mountain, is known for its spectacular view as well as habitat for wildlife, along with its associated commercial buildings. In 2010, the Hogback Mountain Conservation Association, a non-profit group founded in 2006, bought 591 acres and donated them to the town of Marlboro to manage as a conservation area. It is now maintained as a town forest and conservation area, with oversight by the Hogback Preservation Commission. The area provides a large travel corridor for wildlife stretching from Massachusetts through Halifax and Marlboro to Newfane and beyond, and is conserved through a formal agreement held by the Vermont Land Trust.

Interest in cross-country skiing, mountain biking, hiking, and horseback riding indicates a need for a designated trail system. The location of existing private trails and unplowed Town roads suggests that it would not be difficult to plan a series of north-south trails connected with at least one east west trail traversing the Town. The extensive multi-use trail network in the Hogback Mountain Conservation Area would likely be a major component of such a designated Town trail system. The Hogback trails also form the connecting link in a lengthy through-trail system which includes the Town of Wilmington's Lake Raponda Trails and the Molly Stark State Park Trails.

A small town-owned parcel near the center of town has been developed into a park used for recreation or summer events as well as providing a quiet spot to linger and enjoy the out-of-doors.

OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

Non-profit organizations with an educational, cultural, religious or public service purpose are valuable assets, increase the diversity of the town, provide cultural opportunities to townspeople and others, and may have a potentially beneficial effect on the Marlboro economy.

The town's largest industry and employer is Marlboro College with an enrollment of some 330 students and employing more than 100 faculty and staff. The college has a significant impact on Windham county and contributes greatly to the economic, intellectual and cultural life of the area. Many members of the college community live in the town and participate in such activities as the volunteer fire department, the historical society as well as many town boards. In addition, the campus offers many resources to town residents. More details about Marlboro College are listed in the Education Section of this plan.

In addition to Marlboro College, the town hosts the Marlboro Music School and Festival, Camp Neringa, Marlboro Meeting House, and Marlboro Historical Society.

During the last five years there has been increasing focus on establishing community services through non-governmental local organizations. Over the years, a number of organizations were created to answer perceived service needs, and in 2006 they came together to form The Marlboro Alliance to serve as a non-profit umbrella group. The organizations currently included in the Alliance are:

- Marlboro Cares, a community support volunteer program which provides non-emergency assistance for residents with needs such as transportation, simple handyman tasks, running errands, or referrals to other agencies;
- Marlboro Community Center, which is seeking funds and location to provide a venue for activities;
- Marlboro Mixer, a bi-monthly newsletter available to all residents by mail and in various venues throughout town, which provides information about local events and personalities;
- Marlboro Fair Committee, which runs the town fair every autumn as a festive celebration for persons of all ages.

SMALL BUSINESSES

Marlboro's small local businesses include gift shops, lodgings, restaurants, and professional services. A variety of home enterprises are found scattered throughout the town, providing an important component of local economy and often community services, such as yoga and exercise classes.

TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Lack of cell phone coverage in Marlboro presents a problem. Like the rest of the country, residents of Marlboro increasingly rely on cell phone coverage for their personal lives (e.g. keeping track of teens, remembering to pick up the milk), and work.

In addition, increasing numbers of telecommuters and home-based businesspeople rely heavily on the internet, and are negatively impacted by lack of broadband in Marlboro. Although Marlboro College and Marlboro School are served by a high-speed T-1 line, the provider limits its use to the schools only.

In response to this perceived need, the Town established a Broadband Committee in 2005 who polled residents and internet service providers. Over 200 households responded to a survey indicating that they want broadband internet access. State monies were received to plan broadband services for the Town, and a local company began to provide limited services in 2007. Over time, no providers were found to be interested or capable of delivering services. The State grant was returned, and the Broadband Committee was dissolved. In 2010 the Planning Commission created a Telecommunications Subcommittee, in part to monitor the progress on a large Federal Grant received by VTel that guarantees wireless broadband coverage for the Town of Marlboro by 2014, and general progress towards universal broadband for the Town, a high priority.

Aesthetic criteria for location of cell or internet towers have been outlined in Section F Scenic Areas and Historic resources (p 38).

In addition, freestanding telecommunication towers or antennas over 20 feet in elevation shall not be located in any of the following locations, without a plan to prevent impingement on the potentially affected area:

1. Within 300 ft. horizontally of a State or federally designated wetland.
2. Within 300 ft. horizontally or twice the tower elevation whichever is greater, of the boundary of the habitat of any State listed Rare or Endangered species.

3. Closer than 300 ft. horizontally or twice the tower elevation, whichever is greater, to the boundary of the property on which the tower is located.
4. Closer than 500 ft horizontally or twice the tower elevation, whichever is greater, to any structure existing at application which is used as either a primary or secondary residence, to the property of any school, or to any other building.
5. Within 300 ft horizontally or twice the tower elevation, whichever is greater, of any river or perennial stream.
6. Within 300 ft. horizontally or twice the tower elevation, whichever is greater, of any known archeological site.

TAX BASE

Although State and Federal financial aid are vital to the Town, local property taxes remain the most important source of revenues. The Town's ability to raise local revenues without increasing the taxpayer's burden to unacceptable levels depends on maintenance of the tax base.

Currently through Act 68, the State levies Education taxes on towns. These taxes coupled with sharply increased property sales locally have stressed local taxpayers in recent years, increasing pressure on the Town and school district to maintain a high level of efficiency in current budgeting.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES: POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

POLICIES:

1. The projected capacity of community facilities and services must be consistent with the natural environment and the Town's rural character.
2. In the absence of a capital budget and program, which would define current and projected capacities of community services, the Town's rate of growth should be limited, cautious, and consistent with the Town's ability to provide services.
3. Proposals for large-scale development, which require review under Act 250, shall include a statement of impact on existing Town facilities and services, and of measures which will be taken to minimize the additional burden which a major development will place on them.
4. The Town shall not accept privately owned municipal-type facilities or services such as water or sewage systems unless the cost and impact of owning and maintaining the facility is outweighed by advantageous attributes that will further the objectives of this Plan and be a positive gain to the Town as a whole. However, the Town shall require adequate surety from the owner or developer in the event that the Town is required to assume responsibility for any services or facilities.
5. Broad and voluntary participation in Town government to avoid the necessity of hiring a town manager or other administrators is encouraged. This broadly based local commitment is designed to foster a sense of pride and personal responsibility toward the Town, as well as sensitivity to the Town's limited ability to provide services.
6. Developments and major subdivisions are responsible for providing adequate water resources, sewage disposal, dry hydrants, and satisfactory year-around emergency access to the property.
7. The Town should encourage the creation of additional small private ponds for fire protection as well as for recreation. Private fire ponds and hydrants should be better maintained by their owners; additional impoundments should be encouraged.
8. Dry hydrants of approved design should be installed in areas of concentrated development.

9. Development which is responsible for unique or large amounts of solid or liquid waste shall be required to demonstrate that the methods of disposal will not adversely affect the environment or place an unreasonable burden on the Town or the District. New development should put in systems that will comply with District requirements or take advantage of District separation or recycling facilities.
10. The Town shall continue to meet the requirements of all State solid waste laws and participate in District solid waste programs.
11. The Town highly values recycling and the importance of making recycling facilities available to the community.
12. The Town shall support and encourage the development of recreational opportunities appropriate to the Town's rural character.
13. Residents shall display their house numbers in such a way that they are clearly visible from the road.

ACTION STEPS:

Community Facilities

1. The Town shall explore means to support community use of Town properties, including the school (see educational section).
2. The Town shall encourage volunteer non-profits, such as the Marlboro Alliance, to create space and activities for the Town.
3. In conjunction with volunteer organizations, the Town will conduct a needs assessment and create a plan for future Town services.
4. The Town should explore the possibility of creating a Town Library.
5. The Town shall cooperate with all appropriate agencies to maintain a recycling facility for glass, paper, wood, household-hazardous waste, plastics, and metals and should encourage methods for reducing waste.
6. The Town shall explore different options to maintain the cleanliness and accessibility of the Town's recycling area.
7. Wireless services, both cell phone and internet, should be monitored by the Town through its support of the Telecommunications Subcommittee and public hearings on proposed projects.

Fire Protection and Emergency Services

1. The Town will make all efforts, in coordination with the Marlboro Volunteer Fire Company, to recruit fire-fighting personnel to protect Marlboro residents adequately.
2. The Town will make all efforts to equip the Town Office with needed emergency equipment as specified in the Emergency Plan.
3. In conjunction with volunteer organizations such as Marlboro Cares, the Town will conduct an assessment to determine the individual emergency needs and resources.

B. EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

Marlboro is a town that values education and, for a community of approximately one thousand people, has a wide range of educational facilities and a reputation for educational and cultural excellence that

reaches far beyond its municipal borders. Educational institutions in town include (1) the Meetinghouse School (pre-school); (2) the Marlboro Elementary School (K-8); (3) Marlboro College; (4) the Pool Learning Center, and (5) a variety of opportunities for informal education and cultural enrichment. (See Community Facilities and Transportation map for the locations of these institutions.)

1. The Meetinghouse School is a parent cooperative preschool for children 3-5 years old. Located on the first floor of Marlboro’s Meeting House, it is the longest continuously running preschool in Windham County. It is open Tuesday through Friday 8:30-12:00, with an extended day program available Tuesdays and Thursdays until 1:30 (depending on parent needs year-to-year). The school had 11 students in 2006-07 (four at age 3, five at age 4, and 2 at age5). While capacity is 20, the more typical number is 10 to 14 children. In 2006-07, all but two of the children resided in Marlboro; however, this number has varied greatly. The school employs 1 teacher/director and 1 teaching assistant.

The Meetinghouse School has been involved in a collaborative funding agreement with the Marlboro Elementary School for the past few years whereby Marlboro residents who are 3 by October 15 are currently eligible for 10 free hours of preschool each week for 2 years. This collaboration depends upon state funding for preschool education and makes preschool education available to families who might not otherwise be able to consider it. That said, it has always been the intention of the School to meet the needs of families regardless of their ability to pay. A scholarship program is therefore available as well.

The Children’s School of Marlboro College, a child care program for children 6 months and older, closed in 2004. The school was run by Marlboro College until 2003 and then operated as a parents’ cooperative in 2003-2004. There is currently one private child care facility in town.

2. The Marlboro Elementary School (MES) and its associated activities are an important focus for community involvement and community identity. As it is in many rural towns, the local school is traditionally a central component of the community. The town’s public school facility consists of a building with six classrooms, a library, several conference rooms, a nurse/guidance room, and two offices. A large detached all-purpose room with two storage areas was added in 1994 as space for physical education, art, music, and other school and community activities in need of a large space. This building and the playground occupy approximately seven acres of land along Route 9. The school facilities have a capacity for approximately 120 students.

As of October 23, 2013, 89 students attended MES and 33 attended area high schools. The school continues to make small gains in population. Figures for individual classes are:

Table 9. Marlboro School Enrollment

Grade Level	Number of Students		Grade Level	Number of Students
Kindergarten	8		Grade 5	10
Grade 1	9		Grade 6	12
Grade 2	9		Grade 7	14
Grade 3	5		Grade 8	8
Grade 4	14			
MES	TOTAL:	89 Students		
Grade 9	7		Grade 11	8
Grade 10	13		Grade 12	5
Area High Schools	TOTAL:	33 Students		

Marlboro belongs to the Windham Central Supervisory Union.

Per-student costs have risen to \$12,680 per "equalized pupil," with this figure coming from the state. Secondary school education is obtained by tuitioning students to nearby secondary schools selected by each student's family, including private schools (as permitted by state statutes). In the last ten years, the majority of Marlboro's secondary school students have attended Brattleboro Union High School. Program mandates (such as special education and public school assessment standards) continue to be imposed on towns. The financial burden lies more heavily than ever on local property taxes.

A 21st Century Grant is currently funding after school activities open to all students. This meets some families' need for childcare and also provides high quality programming with paid instructors. The grant covers six years and in the last three years the school and community will need to share in the cost of the program.

The school is now offering both snack and lunch daily. After upgrading the kitchen and making improvements to the wastewater system we are able to provide nutritious meals to all students. As of October 23, 2013 60% of school families qualify for free or reduced price meals.

3. Marlboro College is a private, 4-year liberal arts college located on 360 acres in the southwest quadrant of town. The student population averages 330 full-time equivalent and there are some 40 faculty and 65 staff members. Courses at the college are primarily attended by fulltime, matriculated students, who largely come from outside the community. Local residents, however, can audit classes as non-matriculated students. The college also organizes a number of events each year—lectures, concerts, community dinners, sports events, and more—and Marlboro residents regularly take advantage of these offerings. The Drury Gallery has art exhibits throughout the academic year, and the Whittemore Theater is the site of a number staged performances (by college members as well as MES students and community members). The College provides a monthly calendar announcing events. During the summer large parts of the college campus are taken over by the Marlboro Music School and Festival. (See Section 5 for additional information.)

The presence of the College (with Marlboro Music in the summer) relates to topics in other sections of this Town Plan. For example, the College is a major employer of townspeople; traffic to the College and Music Festival has a significant impact on road use; and the Moover route includes South Road thirty weeks each year because of the College. A large number of College employees live in Marlboro, though the number buying houses in the community has decreased in recent years. It should also be noted that a significant number of Marlboro residents attended the college and settled in the town after graduating.

4. The Pool Learning Center for All Ages began operation in 2007 with tutoring services for children with Dyslexia. The mission of the Center is "to provide a healthy and supportive program in a natural environment for children and parents to manage the challenges of Dyslexia." Any child with a specific learning disability in the area of reading is eligible to work with professional tutors trained in the Orton Gillingham reading system and a range of volunteers. There is a small co-payment for the tutoring service. Other funds come from grants, donations, and special events.
5. Marlboro is the home of institutions and organization that have education as part of their mission, including the Marlboro Historical Society, the Marlboro Music Festival, and the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum.
 - The Marlboro Historical Society (MHS) is housed in Ephraim Holland Newton House in the center of town. The purpose of the Society is to maintain the Newton House museum, provide genealogical assistance, recall and record Marlboro's past, and honor the present-day community with educational events. The museum is open during July and August, and the MHS organizes lectures, exhibits, and educational walks throughout the year. Currently it is working in

partnership with the Marlboro Elementary School in recording oral histories from town residents for the Community History Project.

- As mentioned in Section 3, each summer Marlboro College is the home of the Marlboro Music School and Festival. Founded in 1951, Marlboro Music brings together master concert artists and young professionals from around the world for seven weeks. Concerts in July and August are well attended by members of Marlboro and neighboring communities. Marlboro Music also offers occasional lectures, films, and other events. Some of the people associated with the Music Festival (and the Festival itself) own homes in the community. The impact of Marlboro Music is also felt with increased traffic for concerts.
- Founded in 1996, the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum is located on Route 9 at the Hogback Mountain Scenic Overlook. The mission of the Museum is “to foster an interest in nature, the environment, and the natural sciences through exhibition, research, and educational activities.” The natural history collection includes over 600 native New England birds and mammals in 150 small dioramas, one of the largest collections of its type in the northeast. The wild animal specimens were collected by Luman Ranger Nelson between 1900 and 1962 with most of the collection obtained during the 1920's and 1930's. The Museum has over 200 members and a staff consisting of an executive director, an assistant director, and several volunteers. Visitors include tourists passing through the region as well as school and other local groups.

EDUCATION: POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

POLICIES:

1. As long as financially possible, the Town shall continue to maintain its local public school with the goal of meeting the needs of individual students all along the learning continuum.
2. Community uses of MES facilities should be encouraged during evenings and vacations when such use does not conflict with normal school activities.
3. The use of MES facilities shall be made available to appropriate private activities for a fee.
4. The Town should encourage the expansion of toddler and early infant day care programs within the community.
5. The different educational organizations in town should work together whenever possible, calling upon the strengths of each institution and fostering inter-institutional initiatives.
6. The Town should encourage local life-long learning opportunities.
7. The Town should work to expand the range of after-school programs.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Investigate ways that the Town might use an area of the MES facilities for, say, a community center or town library.
2. Consider ways to create and foster new day care programs in town to meet local needs.
3. Maintain a list of all child care programs in the area and their capacity.
4. Foster the creation of more opportunities that bring together people from the different educational organizations in town.
5. Expand the degree to which local educational organizations co-sponsor events, with each other or with other groups in town. These could be short-term, small-scale endeavors (e.g., a speaker on environmental issues) or larger initiatives (e.g., a joint project on the Town history).

C. TRANSPORTATION

Marlboro's transportation system includes about eight miles of State highway, 15 miles of Class 2 roads, and 39 miles of Class 3 roads. Route 9, the Region's major east-west highway, passes through the Town, linking it with southern Vermont, the northeastern United States, and New York. Major inter-town (Class 2) roads carry regular and year around traffic between Marlboro and adjacent communities. Minor intra-town (Class 3) roads are used for access to residences and properties. Marlboro has a total of 26 bridges, two of which are maintained by the State, with the remaining 24 owned by the Town. Numerous other bridges are maintained by the owners.

Many of Marlboro's roads provide vistas of high scenic value. These routes are enjoyed by motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The major traffic load affecting Marlboro is the east-west traffic passing through Town on Vermont Route 9. Local motorists from Marlboro and surrounding towns, visitors to the Region's attractions, and commercial vehicles and interstate haulers traveling through southern Vermont comprise the bulk of the traffic load. This traffic has been increasing as well as the rate of vehicle speed and these trends are expected to increase especially as more road improvements are completed.

Route 9 has been designated by the State of Vermont as part of the National Highway System with the purpose of "providing an interconnected system of principal arterial routes which will serve population centers, international border crossings, airports, public transportation facilities and other major travel designations, meet national defense requirements, and serve interstate and interregional travel." This designation enables the towns and State to access Federal funds allocated for National Highway System roads for new construction and reconstruction. Towns throughout Windham County have determined that one of the top priorities of our residents is preserving the quality of life and rural character of the region. Expanding Route 9 to better serve interstate commerce is contrary to this goal. Interstate traffic is more than adequately served by the existing Interstate Highway System.

The present Route 9 has a very low State sufficiency rating, and should have some necessary improvements made for the traffic it will carry. Possible improvements supported by the Town include lowering design speed, police patrol for speeding vehicles, removal of brush and ledge for better visibility, increased drainage to reduce frost heaves, warning signs and lights, shoulder widening, and pedestrian/bicycle paths. In some cases, however, improvements to Route 9 have created dangerous conditions. Increased speed on improved segments has made access points more dangerous. Transitions between improved and unimproved segments have also created dangerous conditions. Improved cautionary signs could improve safety at critical points for a relatively small cost.

As a result of the fluvial erosion and flooding that occurred after Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, major sections of Route 9, Augur Hole Road, Ames Hill Road and other Class 2 and 3 Roads washed out, isolating the Town as a whole until a temporary repair on Ames Hill Road was made for limited vehicular traffic. Many bridges (both private and public) washed out, and some buildings washed away, stranding residents who had not evacuated during the Hurricane. Through many volunteer activities coordinated by the Town and Marlboro Alliance, emergency assistance was provided quickly to affected residents, with coordinated referrals to local, state, and federal flood assistance programs.

Future planning is needed to map out fluvial erosion areas, review road, bridge and culvert repairs in sensitive areas, and create decentralized emergency communication and shelters. In addition, the close proximity of Route 9 to the Whetstone Brook makes future flooding a near-certainty, with implications for the commercial business district along sections of the road.

The Town Meeting of 1968 voted overwhelmingly against any new arterial route cutting through the Town. The consensus of Marlboro residents remains today to prohibit such a route. A limited-access

highway passing through the Town would divide the Town in two more than it already does, and seriously restrict north-south movement by property owners, residents, and visitors. Furthermore, any new major highway in the neighborhood of the Town would have a damaging impact on the environment extending beyond the right-of-way itself.

Marlboro's transportation system is essential to its economy and residents. The Town must provide adequate transportation services while preserving its natural and scenic resources, as well as community values. Due to the rural nature of Marlboro, public transportation is limited to Route 9 and South Road (when Marlboro College is in session). The MOOover Bus is free and will pick up and drop off anywhere on the route. Marlboro Cares offers limited short term non-emergency transportation to those over 60 years of age. Connecticut River Transport offers 1 ride per week to those over 60. Marlboro's aim is to fit the pattern of traffic, both present and future, within a rural setting, rather than let the demands of motorist and engineers dictate the shape of the town.

TRANSPORTATION: POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

POLICIES:

1. Construction of new roads or road improvements should be carried out in conformance with Marlboro's Road Specifications. The Road Specifications should be reviewed on a regular basis. Marlboro's roads and bridges should be adequately maintained to ensure safety.
2. When improving Town roads, the scenic value of the road, potential fluvial erosion hazards, and the impact that greater traffic speed and volume will have on the rural character of the Town must be considered. Roads should be improved only when necessary for safety and year-round maintenance.
3. The Town advocates continued gradual Route 9 improvements as long as design speeds to limit traffic speed, volume, traffic noise, and potential fluvial erosion hazards are used in engineering and construction phases of all roadway projects.
4. When improvements to Route 9 are being planned the Town should work with State Agency of Transportation officials to ensure identified wildlife corridors crossing Route 9 will not be impacted by the improvements.
5. Although Route 9 is a major East-West thoroughfare in Southern Vermont, the Town encourages the diversion of future traffic load on Route 9, especially heavy trucking, to routes with less impact on Marlboro, such as existing interstate highways.
6. The Town should limit the impact of increased resort traffic on secondary roads, particularly Higley Hill Road, by working with adjacent towns and regional commercial interests to keep through-traffic on Route 9. The Town strongly discourages any new arterial route cutting through the Town.
7. Developers are responsible for relieving traffic problems created by their development. In resort areas, commercial interests must share responsibility for relieving traffic problems generated by resort area users.
8. Unsafe access to and from highways should be avoided. This is especially true for sections of highway which are poorly designed or carry more traffic than that for which they were designed. Access points should be kept to a minimum.
9. Energy efficient modes of transportation, such as public transit and carpooling, should be encouraged as long as they meet public needs.
10. The development and expansion of government and public utility facilities and services should generally occur within existing highway or public utility rights-of way corridors to reduce adverse

physical and visual impact on the landscape and achieve greater efficiency in the expenditure of public funds.

11. The Town should be vigilant monitoring reclassification of its roads and reclassify them as needed. The retention of Class 4 roads for recreational use is encouraged.
12. The siting and design of any new parking areas in Marlboro village shall not impair the visual, architectural, or historical significance of the village.
13. State laws concerning snowmobiles and all-terrain or off road vehicles should continue to be enforced, and local ordinances for control of such vehicles should be formulated and adopted.

ACTION STEPS:

1. The Town strongly supports seeking funding from the Agency of Transportation to work with them on building broad, local public involvement and achieving consensus in planning for the future of Route 9.
2. Cautionary signs and speed control should be implemented on South Road and other heavily traveled roads in town to improve safety without the need for physical improvements.
3. Traffic problems, particularly along Route 9, South Road, and other heavily traveled routes should be alleviated through alternative methods such as public transit systems, car pooling, traffic calming, and mass-transit to resort areas.
4. The Town should encourage alternative methods such as public transit systems, car pooling, traffic calming, and mass transit to resort areas.
5. The development of pedestrian and bicycle paths or lanes as alternative and safe modes of travel should be promoted and encouraged in general and in particular with the expansion of any highway.
6. The Town should explore the possibility of establishing regular stops by regional mass transit providers (such as MOOver) at the Town Office/Post Office.
7. The Town shall review current zoning in areas near roads at risk for fluvial erosion, and rewrite Article VI of the zoning Bylaws to include fluvial erosion hazard regulations.

D. ENERGY

“Energy is a global commodity and its reliable supply requires global actions. But energy use is local, as are both the positive and negative impacts [of] how it is used. State and local governments, businesses and individuals can best prepare for the future by taking action to diversify energy sources, to improve the efficiency of energy use, to stimulate the use of renewable energy resources, and to implement land use strategies that foster and support sustainable energy.” (Windham Regional Plan, 2006)

Our economy and society are built on a foundation of easily available and relatively inexpensive energy resources. We have come to depend on reliable and affordable deliveries of oil and gas to heat our homes, schools, and businesses; of gasoline and diesel to fuel our fleet of personal and commercial vehicles; of electricity that seamlessly flows to Marlboro across regions and nations from hydro dams, fossil fuel generating facilities, and nuclear reactors.

As these sources of energy become scarcer and more expensive, and as we are confronted increasingly by the environmental and political costs of our continued reliance on them, we look toward ways that we, as

residents of the town of Marlboro, can support patterns of energy use and development that are sustainable, globally aware, and locally based.

Some salient points about our regional and statewide energy patterns, drawn generally from the Windham Regional Plan, frame our actions and decisions:

- Total energy use is expected to increase 54% statewide over 1990 levels by 2015, largely from increased transportation energy use, which represents nearly 50% of the state's total energy usage.
- Except for wood used for space heating and very small amounts of locally-generated wind, hydro, and solar, the state's energy resources are imported from other states and nations.
- About 70% of all energy used in Vermont is from petroleum products, used primarily for transportation and home heating.
- About 15% of all energy used is in the form of electricity. About one-third of this is provided under contract from Hydro Quebec. At the time of writing this town plan, it is uncertain what, if any, proportion of this will come from Vermont Yankee as the state did not renew its contract in 2012.
- Wood as a primary source of home heating has declined from its peak in the 1970s, but wood and biomass are likely to increase in importance and represent the potential for local and regional production. While these sources can produce significant pollution, they hold out the promise of carbon neutrality.
- Solar provides about 0.1% of the state's energy, and its near-term potential will likely be limited to small-scale residential and commercial use.
- Wind currently provides negligible power to the state. Its considerable potential could be limited by local opposition to specific siting proposals for large-scale projects.
- Conservation and efficiency improvements represent the most accessible and affordable energy source.
- Small-scale wind, solar, and hydro installations, with and without net metering, can contribute to a more diverse and independent energy system.

Life in Marlboro has always been intimately tied to energy supplies, and Marlboro citizens have been attentive for many years to the implications of our energy dependence. Marlboro has appointed a town energy coordinator since 1975, and an Energy Committee that has taken the initiative to provide information and promote action on alternative energy sources and systems, including wind, photovoltaic and biodiesel. It was able to secure a grant in 2010 to install energy-saving enhancements to the Town Offices. Town residents are active in regional initiatives, such as Post-Oil Solutions, and they are engaged at the policy level in promoting more sustainable state and national laws and regulations. Marlboro College has adopted an environmental mission statement that focuses the institution on its patterns of energy and resource use, and it has launched a new MBA in managing for sustainability at its Graduate Center in Brattleboro.

Individual home and business owners have long incorporated energy-efficiencies and, to a lesser extent, alternative energy systems, into building designs. Small scale wind, photovoltaic, and hydro, while contributing to energy independence and sustainability, may also enable increased dispersal of settlement, which may increase energy demand for transportation and other services.

In general, effective land use planning is among the most important local strategies for energy conservation. Encouraging clustering, village development, and the location of new structures close to existing transportation and utility corridors are important, as are the siting, design, and construction of buildings.

The 2002 Town Plan was amended in 2003 to address the potential benefits of wind energy. There are concerns raised related to large-scale installations, regulation of which is under the jurisdiction of the state public services board. In 2005, the town adopted amendments to the zoning regulations designed to encourage small-scale wind energy systems. Two town maps, of recommended sites for community wind and photovoltaic installations, were developed by the Windham Regional Commission on behalf of the Marlboro Energy Committee and the Planning Commission.

The Vermont Residential Energy Code, most recently revised in 2005, sets minimum energy efficiency standards for virtually all new residential buildings in the state and requires that builders file a compliance certification on each residence with the State Department of Public Service and the Town Clerk.

The Windham Regional Plan identifies four types of appropriate actions that suit the new energy realities: diversify energy sources, improve efficiency of energy use, stimulate development and use of renewable energy resources, and implement land use policies and strategies that encourage and support sustainable energy

These actions can and should be considered at five levels : 1) **Individual** actions to improve the energy efficiency of our homes, appliances, vehicles; consider the potential for incorporating renewable energy into our lives and livelihoods; 2) **Town** policies to support the development of renewable energy resources and systems, foster land uses and settlement patterns that economize on energy use; 3) **Regional** cooperation in developing larger-scale sustainable energy solutions, transportation infrastructure, networks of information and advocacy; 4) **State and Federal** law and regulation that reconcile the prices we pay for various types of energy and the real costs associated with their use and that correspondingly encourage the development of alternative energy technologies; and 5) **Global** awareness, both in terms of understanding the larger implications of our individual energy choices and in terms of the way those choices are presented and constrained by national and international politics and markets.

The Town of Marlboro encourages the following policies and action steps to guide the Town's planning concerning energy:

ENERGY: POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

POLICIES

1. New development, including new public buildings, shall be planned, sited, and designed so as to minimize demands on limited energy resources by employing practical conservation measures such as effective insulation and efficient appliances.
2. The Town shall promote the development of renewable energy resources such as wood, solar, hydropower, and wind.
3. The Town supports sustainable land management and encourages landowners with woodlot/biomass potential to participate in sustainable management programs.
4. The Town should promote strategies to reduce transportation energy use whenever possible by encouraging land use patterns that concentrate housing, work opportunities, and social services, and by supporting locally based employment, telecommuting, bicycle and pedestrian paths, carpooling, and public transit.
5. Energy generating facilities, both conventional and alternative, shall meet Town- specified site selection and design standards.

ACTION STEPS

1. Through the Volunteer Fire Company, continue to work with residents and inform them about the hazards of wood stoves and chimneys and to take measures to reduce the hazards. Encourage residents to install or convert to modern high-efficiency wood stoves.
2. Consider whether to regulate the use of free-standing wood/biomass furnaces.
3. Continue to appoint an Energy Coordinator to coordinate existing energy sources in the Town, chair Marlboro's energy committee, cooperate with other energy agencies, study and recommend alternative energy resources, and perform other duties as specified in 24 VSA Section 1131.
4. The town should consider energy efficiency in purchasing new or used vehicles and equipment and in any new construction and should reduce municipal energy use by improving energy efficiency of existing Town buildings.
5. Encourage site selection and site design of any potential commercial energy facilities to meet Town specific site selection requirements and design standards.
6. Promote among its residents and landowners the Use Value Appraisal Program to stimulate firewood production and improve forest management.
7. Support neighborhood and community-based efforts to develop alternative energy resources, transportation networks, and collaborative fuel-purchasing programs, and define more fully wind, hydro, and photovoltaic systems in zoning bylaws (Article IV Section 470).
8. Support the development of energy-education programs in the community and at the elementary school.
9. Maintain open communications with Marlboro College to share information and explore collaborative conservation and alternative energy projects.
10. Participate, as appropriate, in regional or statewide initiatives that may impact favorably on energy consumption or production in Marlboro.

E. HOUSING

Housing conditions in any community are affected by economic and demographic trends, local and state property taxes, and town land use regulations. This section will offer data to provide some insight into Marlboro's current housing condition, an overview of general attitudes held and issues faced by townspeople, and finally, an attempt to lay out policies and action steps we can take to improve the housing situation here.

From May to August 2005 the Planning Commission (PC) conducted a housing survey of voters, property owners, and residents of Marlboro. The first section of the survey asked for opinions about existing conditions and concerns; the second dealt with housing strategies, priorities, and possibilities for increasing the affordability of existing and new development. When the results were tabulated and analyzed, the Planning Commission hosted a series of public discussions on housing, and explored various methods, both regulatory and non-regulatory, for achieving greater affordability of current and future housing in town.

As one result of these efforts, the PC drafted regulations implementing density bonuses for affordable Planned Unit Development (PUD) projects and completely rewrote subdivision regulations, both measures which the voters approved in March 2007.

The survey also provided insight into the dilemma of rising values of real estate and land, and what role the town might play in exploring affordable housing options for those who would like to live here. If Marlboro is to maintain an adequate housing supply and meet the housing needs of all members of the community, the Town needs effective planning that anticipates projected permanent population growth and addresses community, social, environmental, and economic impacts, as well as the nature, density, and impact of future housing development.

It is hoped that Marlboro's creation of a Development Review Board (DRB), established in the summer of 2007, will free up the PC to work more intensively on the development and implementation of affordability strategies, such as community land banks, village districts, accessory apartments, mixed-use, and elderly housing, and assisted living facilities, and to deepen the level of public awareness and involvement in the process.

TRENDS IN HOUSING

Since the 1940's housing development in Marlboro has been dispersed throughout the Town, mostly along existing roads and on parcels of ten acres or more. What village pattern development once existed at the town center has long since stagnated. If this pattern continues as new development occurs, the rural nature of Marlboro will be seriously impacted in the near future. Some likely impacts include:

- Further encroachment upon productive agricultural or forestlands resulting in the net loss of this valuable natural resource base and reduction in related local economic activity;
- Increasing fragmentation of remaining natural habitats and wildlife corridors;
- Some landowners may experience difficulty in managing their lands as productive agricultural or forest lands, or wildlife habitat, because of increased economic pressures on unprotected undeveloped land;
- An increase in residential development spreading along increasingly less rural-appearing roads, limiting the desired scenic and rural nature of Marlboro; and
- Increasing costs of delivering community services such as fire protection, police protection, emergency/rescue services, school busing, and road and bridge maintenance to a widely dispersed and growing population.
- Continuing lack of significant population centers that could make infrastructure improvements economically viable, such as community water and/or sewer systems, and cable and high-speed internet access.

Single-family housing is the predominant form of local land development in Marlboro. New development tends to occur along existing roads, one lot at a time. Because Marlboro is considered a desirable place to live, the Town will come under more and more pressure for residential development. The lack of municipal water and sewer facilities makes compact village development difficult. Demand for vacation housing will likely continue, and often occurs on parcels with scenic or conservation value to the town. The percentage of total housing units that are used as seasonal, or vacation homes has remained at about 20-30% during the last 20 years. Growth in total housing units has risen by more than 5% in Marlboro between 2000 and 2010.

The 2010 census indicates that the age distribution of the Marlboro population has changed since 2000. Age distribution is a significant determinant of housing need. In their 20's people tend to live in apartments, in their 30's they look for "starter homes," which includes mobile and manufactured units. For the last twenty-five years, the "baby boomers" have driven the housing market in Vermont. Currently this age group is beginning to reach retirement age, facing income reduction, and often "over-housed." As a group they may tend to look for smaller homes more convenient to services, and easier to maintain. In Marlboro, the greatest population shift was in the over 65, a 62% increase from 2000.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

It is evident from the Housing Survey that residents and non-residents alike are worried about rising property values and taxes, future growth, and affordability of housing in Marlboro.

“The generally-accepted standard for housing affordability defines housing as ‘affordable’ if the household is paying no more than 30 percent of its income for rent and utilities or for mortgage, taxes and insurance. This standard may be too high when considering the rising costs of other necessities, such as health care, fuel, and child care, but it remains the basis for defining ‘affordable housing’.”¹

“Affordability is determined by two factors. The first is the cost of housing, and the second is the ability of people to pay that cost. As home prices and rents rise at a faster rate than Vermonters’ wages, housing becomes less affordable for an increasing number of people.”²

In 2007, the median price of an existing primary residence in Windham County was \$184,500. ³ For that to be affordable, a household would need to be earning over \$63,000, but the median family adjusted gross income in Marlboro was \$53,969, or enough to afford a home priced at \$135,940. Recent median incomes have not changed this situation, and costs of new construction continue to rise.

We know from the 2005 survey responses that many current Marlboro residents are already challenged to retain their housing in Marlboro. Starting families and elderly on fixed incomes are particularly likely to be priced out of Marlboro.

Looking at Marlboro 1999 household income (US Census 2000 summary file 3), based on the standard definition of “affordable,” over two-thirds of Marlboro households would not be able to purchase an “average-priced” house today. And over three-fourths would not be able to purchase a newly constructed “average” house in Marlboro.

To some extent, the affordability gap in Marlboro has been bridged by ingenuity. People rent and convert summer homes and cabins or somehow obtain the use of raw land and erect simple inexpensive housing, mobile homes, and even yurts. So long as the living conditions are safe, sanitary and in compliance with local bylaws and ordinances, such ingenuity is welcome in Marlboro.

But more needs to be done to make Marlboro affordable for the people who live here. The Town is committed to pursuing strategies that will help close the affordability gap, and provide opportunities for all residents to continue to live here and feel secure in their homes.

HOUSING: POLICIES AND ACTION STEPS

POLICIES: It shall be the policy of the Town of Marlboro to:

1. Encourage the provision of safe, environmentally responsible, and energy efficient year-round housing that offers a variety of size, cost, and location and which respects the physical limitations of the land as well as the overall interests of the community.

¹ *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Housing and Wages in Vermont*, Vermont Housing Council and the Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign, March 2007.

² *ibid*

³ 2003-2007 Vermont Housing Data, last revised August 7, 2007.

2. Concentrate development in appropriate areas and in ways that preserve the rural character of the landscape, particularly respecting conservation areas and corridors, as well as scenic and recreational areas.
3. Encourage the reuse and renovation of older buildings whenever possible.
4. Whenever appropriate to the Town's rural character and the capability of the land, and to the efficient provision of services, encourage housing developments to preserve open space, conserve energy and transportation needs, and assist in the preservation and connectedness of important resource lands.
5. Accommodate a diversity of housing types, both ownership and rental, and ensure that they are coordinated with the provision of adequate community facilities and services.
6. Support affordable residential development proposals that can help to meet the needs identified in this plan.
7. Promote development projects that can guarantee the long-term affordability of the housing.

ACTION STEPS: In support of these policies, the Town should:

1. Identify means by which people of low and moderate income can secure and maintain housing and land, such as housing subsidy programs by non-profits, and programs such as the Town's low-income housing rehabilitation program, which maintains a revolving loan fund for making housing improvements.
2. Publicize and educate residents about these programs, including the Town's Low Income Housing Rehabilitation Program and Community Loan Fund. Other housing resources include the Vermont Community Development Program, the Windham Area Community Land Trust (WACLT), Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing (BAAH), Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA), Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA), federal HUD and Rural Development programs.
3. Encourage Marlboro College to continue to accommodate the bulk of its enrollment in on-campus housing, and to assist in securing additional rental housing elsewhere in the Town in ways that support and foster the well-being and health of the community.
4. Consider design and implementation of an affordable housing overlay district as a tool for increasing housing affordability while maintaining a balance between conserved land and needed growth. In particular, identify areas suitable for encouraging compact "village pattern" development and encourage creative PUD's by allowing higher densities, graduated tax abatements, smaller frontage and setback requirements, etc
5. Ensure that Zoning and Subdivision regulations include incentives and opportunities for creation and retention of affordable housing.
6. Review current subdivision regulations to ensure that development can be achieved in Marlboro that is both affordable and pleasant, and that conserves existing and future demands on resources.
7. Encourage diverse housing types (single family housing, rental housing, multi-family housing, accessory apartments, elderly housing (including assisted-living facilities), and mobile and manufactured homes, and ensure that they have access to adequate community facilities and services.
8. Support affordable residential developments when appropriate in meeting the needs identified in this plan. Such support may include, but is not limited to (a) reduction of permit fees, (b) donation of public lands or buildings, (c) density bonuses, and (d) other incentives for providing affordable units.

F. SCENIC AREAS AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

SCENIC AREAS

Marlboro's scenic landscape, including its back roads and trails, its open lands and bodies of water, and its wetlands and streams, is widely appreciated by residents and visitors alike. The landscape itself is a valuable economic resource. Many of the commercial facilities and recreational and institutional facilities are in some important way related to the Town's scenic landscapes. The conservation of scenic resources may have to take precedence over development in those situations where development will create the loss of a scenic resource. Scenic areas including panoramic views and landscapes contribute to the Town's distinctive visual character and are listed in the Land Use section after "Land Use Classifications" under "Other Land Use Considerations".

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Marlboro's historic resources include existing structures, sites of significant events in the history of the Town, ruins and remains of the Town's economic history, and reminders of the Town's settlement and transportation pattern. They are important for their economic and educational value and as direct links to the former style and quality of life within the Town. Destruction of historic resources may often be caused by lack of awareness, insensitivity, or lack of public appreciation of their value.

The Natural and Cultural Resources Map pinpoints locations of historic sites and structures that have been identified by the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation and/or the Marlboro Historical Society. The following (see map) have significant local historical value, and deserve protection, maintenance, or renovation:

- The Ephraim Holland Newton House (1), now a museum owned and operated by the Marlboro Historical Society. The Houghton Schoolhouse, which was moved from Cow Path 40 and the Mather House (2) at the corner of North Main Street and Town Hill Road.
- The Town House (3).
- The Whetstone Inn (4).
- The Captain Dan Mather House (5) (wall paintings dating from the early 1800's) on South Road.
- The Will Adams House (6).
- The Rice House (7) (moved to Butterfield Road from Searsburg).
- Muster Ground (8) on Ames Hill Road.
- Colonel Williams Barn (9).
- Phelps Cemetery (10)

Many other sites or structures have significant historic or architectural interest. In addition, numerous stone walls, foundations, mill sites, ruins and hiking trails testify to the Town's pattern of settlement and style of life in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Light pollution or "sky glow" is a cumulative and increasing problem, especially in the commercial clusters along Rt. 9 and the educational/institutional cluster at Marlboro College. Light projecting upwards from these areas produces a glow near the horizon, which diminishes the natural quality of the nighttime landscape and night sky. Light from these areas is also directly visible from many distant locations in Town. As these developed areas continue to expand or intensify, special consideration needs to be given to lighting design to minimize these cumulative adverse effects.

The purpose of the following policies is to minimize negative effects of lighting on neighbors, travelers, and the region; to avoid glare and light pollution; to promote safety; and to promote the enjoyment and preservation of the night sky.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

There has been phenomenal growth in the development of a global telecommunications infrastructure. This includes expansion of broadband high-density fiber-optic lines (telephone, cable television), as well as wireless communications as in the use of cell phones. The latter has been a concern of communities because of the use of cellular towers to transmit uninterrupted signals. The Town encourages use of creative means of placement and configuration of relay infrastructure to avoid adverse aesthetic impacts. The topography of Vermont is such that some installations may be unavoidable.

Also of community concern has been increased pressure by the industry to locate facilities in rural areas. In some cases this can mean more structures simply because of the competitive nature of and growth of the industry. The policy of collocation is advocated by this plan, as is the use of existing structures for cellular infrastructure. The location of tower and relay structures needs to take into account nearby uses and sensitive areas.

Although the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) pre-empts local government, it should not limit the community's concerns or participation in proceedings to ensure safety of the residents and visitors and to protect the Town's historic character, rural nature, and aesthetic beauty.

Many towns now realize the potential for adverse impacts caused by the placement of towers and related infrastructure, and seek the cooperation of all parties in resolving these concerns. The Town of Marlboro is very concerned about the aesthetic and environmental impacts of tower facilities. When planning new infrastructure or upgrades to existing systems, special consideration shall be given to any primary or secondary impacts that would reduce resource values (including but not limited to aesthetics and streetscape design, agricultural land, timber resources, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and historic sites). In addition, when a new facility is planned, there must be clear evidence that the proposed location is necessary based upon economic considerations, potential impacts on resource values, and the resulting public benefits.

In all cases, appropriate and suitable techniques shall be used to minimize or prevent any adverse impacts from the placement of towers and related infrastructure.

SCENIC AREAS AND HISTORIC RESOURCES: POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

Scenic Areas Policies:

1. Foster greater appreciation of scenic resources as a significant environmental and economic resource.
2. Development within the scenic areas should be carefully planned to complement these landscapes of scenic value. Give special consideration to high quality scenic landscapes and scenic corridors.
3. Ridgelines and hilltops and their upper slopes are visible for great distances and give the landscape form and coherence. Development should be sited to minimize incompatibility with these landscapes.
4. The visual character of stream corridors and of shore lands of lakes, ponds, marshes and other wetlands should be preserved.
5. The visual impact of development on meadowlands and fields should be minimized by careful grouping of structures and sensitive alignment of access roads.

6. Improve sites that diminish a scenic view, particularly along State and Federal highways and within scenic corridors.
7. Encourage scenic easements and implement appraisal practices that encourage donation of scenic easements to public and private natural resource/conservation agencies and organizations.
8. Encourage the scale, siting, design, and management of new development to be in keeping with the landscape and to enhance it.
9. Encourage incentives for not developing scenic lands that may otherwise be suitable for development.
10. Minimize visual impacts of communication towers and other high-elevation or ridgeline structures through collocation, design, siting, and color choice.
11. Strenuous effort should be made to influence public utility companies to be sensitive to scenic resources when trimming trees and shrubs for line maintenance.

Historic Resources Policies:

1. Lands adjacent to or including areas of historical, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural or archaeological value should be used in a manner that will not reduce or destroy the value of the site or areas.
2. Wherever architecturally and historically significant structures become obsolete for their original use, new and compatible uses should be found which will allow them to continue as a visual and cultural asset to the community.

Exterior Lighting Policies:

1. Design and site communication and other high elevation towers so that they do not require nighttime illumination.
2. Illuminate structures and exterior areas only at levels necessary to ensure safety and security of persons and property.
3. All exterior lighting shall be installed or shielded in such a manner as to conceal light sources and reflector surfaces from view beyond the perimeter of the area to be illuminated. Shield exterior lighting so that the source light does not project above the lamp.
4. Discourage exterior area illumination of regionally prominent physical features and landscapes. Ensure that any such illumination will not significantly reduce the natural appearance of the night-time landscape, will not be obtrusive in the viewshed, and will not distract unduly from the night-time horizon or night sky.

Telecommunications Policies:

1. The zoning amendments shall incorporate appropriate guidelines and regulations governing at least the following areas: aesthetics, integrity of residential zones (that is, intrusion of commercial structures into residential areas), ridgeline protection, preferred locations (whether general or specific), and collocation or clustering of tower facilities.
2. Discourage location of telecommunications facilities and towers on regionally prominent physical features and landscapes. Ensure that any such facility or tower will not significantly reduce the natural appearance of the landscape and will not be obtrusive in the viewshed.
3. Encourage the collocation or clustering of facilities and towers.
4. Assure a community voice in the location and expansion of telecommunications infrastructure.
5. Any permits granted for these facilities should be for a limited time period. This will allow for periodic review, and new permit conditions reflecting advances in knowledge, experience, and

technology. Equipment shall be downsized as technology advances, and removed when no longer used or needed. These requirements can minimize aesthetic intrusion, while maximizing the potential to serve a greater number of users in the same physical area. A bond may be required to ensure that funds are available to accomplish these purposes.

ACTION STEPS:

Exterior Lighting:

1. Draft language to incorporate lighting policies in the Zoning Bylaw.
2. Work with Marlboro College and Hogback area enterprises to encourage compliance with this section as the new bylaw is developed. Work toward conversion of existing lights.

Historic Preservation:

1. With the assistance of the Marlboro Historical Society: a) review and possibly expand the list of Historic Sites and Structures and b) identify and mark historic sites in the Town.

G. NATURAL RESOURCES

Our landscape defines us, strengthens our community and holds it together. Marlboro's enduring rural lifestyle depends on its ecological integrity.

Marlboro has abundant natural resources that are central to its economy and the quality of life and health of its citizens and visitors. This section addresses water, wildlife, soils and other earth resources, agriculture and forestry, and wind and solar resources.

WATER RESOURCES

As an upland watershed, Marlboro has been endowed with valuable water resources that must be conserved and protected for future use to ensure maintenance of their high quality. Water is also a source of hydropower for small-scale electricity generation or other uses (see Energy section). Water resources in the Town include both groundwater and surface water. Groundwater is the water contained within surface deposits of soil, as well as within bedrock and results from the infiltration of rainwater and in some cases surface water into the soil or rock. Groundwater and surface water can be interchangeable, in that groundwater can become surface water and vice versa. Groundwater that is not used by plants or people may eventually flow into streams and ponds as springs and small unnoticeable seeps; surface water does not necessarily stay within a pond or stream, but may serve to recharge groundwater in some areas.

Surface Waters

Surface waters are significant landscape features in the Town, often influencing both the location and form of regional settlement. The Town's high surface water quality is a valuable resource: rivers and streams provide fish and wildlife habitat and help recharge the aquifers, from which a significant portion of the Town's drinking water is derived. The Town's surface waters also provide recreation, including fishing, swimming, and contemplation.

The Town contains portions of six watersheds and two lakes or ponds greater than 20 acres: South Pond, 68 acres, and Sunset Lake/North Pond, 95 acres. The watersheds are 1) the Rock River, 2) the Deerfield River, 3) the North River, 4) the Green River, 5) the Whetstone Brook, and 6) Stickney Brook.

These watersheds contain many smaller rivers and brooks, each with its own unique values and uses. Marlboro contains headwaters of several of these watersheds. The principal surface water planning issues are the protection of water quality from non-point sources of pollution and the protection of adequate riparian buffers.

The Deerfield, Green, North, and West Rivers and their tributaries provide important cold-water fish habitats. Shaded stream banks, clean gravel and rock bottoms, and clean, cool water are necessary to maintain these cold-water fisheries. These fisheries are important for both their ecological and their economic value. Sedimentation from runoff, bacteria from septic systems, clearing of stream bank vegetation, damming of rivers and streams, and lowering of in-stream flows can all have a negative impact on these important fish habitats. Wetlands and other surface waters also provide specialized habitats for fish, reptiles, and migratory birds. The Town's wetlands are vital for their abilities to recharge groundwater, regulate and filter surface water flow, store water, mitigate floods and provide fish and wildlife habitat. Consequently, they require careful protection. The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Maps show Class I and Class II wetlands. Class I wetlands are so classified through a petition process. There are currently no Class I wetlands in Marlboro. Class III wetlands are not mapped and are usually small, less than $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ acre in area.

Groundwater

Although less noticeable than surface water, groundwater is a very important part of the Town's resources. Rainwater that falls on the Marlboro area often flows fairly quickly into streams and ponds due to the shallow nature of the soils in most of the Town; however, much of the rainwater and some of the surface water eventually seeps slowly into the soil and into the bedrock through fractures. This groundwater provides drinking water for the Town through the many individual wells and springs, and it also feeds some of the streams and ponds in Marlboro. The soils and rock can serve as a filter for the water, removing some pollutants, and in some cases adding minerals.

Water Quality

The term "water quality" is a measure of the extent to which water in the Town is free of chemical and physical alterations that would render it less habitable and healthy for all the organisms that use it, ranging from insects in a stream to a person drinking groundwater from a well. Many aspects of water quality cannot be controlled, such as the naturally occurring minerals in groundwater or influx of sediment into a stream after a beaver dam breaks during a storm. However, many aspects of water quality are influenced by human activities and can be controlled to a lesser or greater degree.

Degradation of water quality can be from water pollution, or from physical alteration of groundwater or surface water areas, which end up impacting water quality. Water pollution can be bacterial (e.g., from failing septic systems or runoff of animal waste), sedimentary (e.g., dirt runoff from a road or construction site), or chemical (e.g., salt runoff from a road, agricultural chemicals, or spilling of gasoline or other fuel). Pollution can be from a point source (e.g., waste running directly into a stream from a pipe) or from a non-point source (originating over a wider area, such as salt runoff from a highway during the winter, construction activity near shore lands, effluent from failed septic systems, and dirt from roads). Physical alteration of surface water and groundwater areas can range from highly visible and obvious impacts such as dams, stream straightening, or large-scale removal of riparian (streamside) vegetation, to less visible impacts such as excess withdrawal of groundwater from a well. In general, the construction of dams on streams and rivers contributes to stream siltation, water level and flow fluctuations, changes in water temperature and impeded fish passage. Clearing of riparian vegetation can raise water temperature and increase runoff, affecting fish habitat and increasing downstream flooding risks. Riparian vegetation is also recognized as being important for removing some chemical pollutants

and sediment. Conversion of a forested hillside to field will result in increased sedimentation and water runoff, as well as in reduced ground water infiltration and filtration.

In Marlboro, one of the most widespread and potentially worrisome sources of pollution is the pollution resulting from human settlement. Each new house results in some amount of chemical, sediment and bacterial impact (e.g. spilling of fuel, oil, paint, runoff from construction sites and driveways, introduction of fertilizers and agricultural chemicals, leaching of chemicals from construction materials). Properly functioning septic systems can adequately filter out most harmful bacteria before they enter the groundwater or surface water, but they can do little or nothing to filter out many household chemicals. Failed septic systems can introduce harmful bacteria quickly into groundwater and surface water.

Water Planning Issues

The principal water planning issue must be the protection of water quality, since water quality has such a great impact on people and wildlife within and outside the Town. A secondary issue, which goes hand in hand with water quality, is the protection of the recreational resource of the streams and ponds. Although it is recognized that human activities impact water quality throughout all of Marlboro, the following areas of the Town are most at risk and must be protected by regulating, restricting, or prohibiting development or large-scale land use changes such as large forest-clearing projects:

Watersheds characterized by steep slopes (15% or more), or shallow or excessively wet soils. Development on these slopes and soils contributes to excessive erosion and stream siltation and leads to the frequent failure of septic disposal systems and the consequent flow of sewage into surface and ground waters.

Drainage areas of upland streams (as classified by the Water Resources Board) characterized by the soil conditions mentioned above. Within these areas, special attention shall be given to prevent (1) negative impacts on the health of streams, lakes and ponds, (2) soil erosion, and (3) pollution or contamination of ground and surface waters. All Marlboro streams are classified as upland streams, with Class B waters suitable for bathing, recreation, irrigation and good fish habitat.

Watersheds of public water supplies and watersheds of recreational water bodies. Sunset Lake/North Pond supplies a portion of the Town of Brattleboro's water, and the Green River, the headwaters of which are in Marlboro, is a water source for the Town of Greenfield, Massachusetts. South Pond and Sunset Lake/North Pond are recreational water bodies.

Areas supplying significant amounts of waters which recharge underground sources of water (aquifers). Contamination of groundwater sources is a serious long-range consequence of poorly planned development on soils with inadequate capability for sewage disposal. Any number of biological or chemical contaminants, such as viruses, household poisons, insecticides and herbicides, petroleum compounds, and other toxic compounds, can be inadvertently introduced to the groundwater supply. Most current residents of Marlboro depend upon groundwater wells for their domestic water supply. The amount and quality of groundwater appears to be adequate for continued limited rural growth, but problems with supply and quality may occur when the land is used more intensively. Where feasible, a central water supply and wastewater treatment system to serve all units within a development is usually preferable to many individual wells and septic tanks.

Areas with significant water storage potential for fire protection and recreation or wildlife purposes. Because such areas are limited in Marlboro, their preservation is an important and practical objective.

Watercourses, lakes, ponds, and shorelines. These valuable scenic, recreational, wildlife and natural resources are relatively few, but they are widely used.

Wetlands, including swamps and marshes with open water or with a vegetative mat over a high water table. In addition to their value as wildlife habitat, wetlands contribute recharge waters to aquifers and serve as regulators of surface water flow. They hold great amounts of water during times of flood, and often provide a much more efficient and less expensive flood control measure than man-made dams and levees.

Flood hazard areas with a serious 100-year flood potential. These areas can be found along the Marlboro Branch and portions of the Whetstone Brook. In addition, many smaller streams have potential for local flooding, flash flooding, and washouts.

SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

Soil characteristics can create opportunities for, or physical site limitations to, a variety of land uses such as farming, forestry, mineral extraction, and land development. Prime agricultural soils are soils that are rated high for crop production potential. These soils are very limited in the Town, located primarily in the river and stream valleys. Since most primary agricultural soils are relatively flat and well drained, these soils are also very developable. Soils suitable for sand and gravel extraction are also limited within the Town. Many of the Town's soils are shallow, unstable, highly erodible, wet, or poorly drained. Any of these features alone, or in combination with steep slopes, are critical factors in determining appropriate land use in the Town. A moderate risk for earthquake activity of a moderate strength exists in southeastern Vermont. This risk is based on the historical occurrence of earthquakes nearby. Unstable soil factors can accentuate the movement and damage caused by earthquake action.

The Town has adopted regulations governing certain development on slopes of 15% or more and prohibiting certain activities on slopes of 25% or more. The Town should monitor the effectiveness of these regulations in achieving the desired protection on natural resources.

Development in the Town has traditionally been encouraged on soils suitable for in-ground sewage disposal systems. Permeable soils are often closely associated with sites having high potential for aquifer recharge, and pollution of subsurface and surface waters may result from development of these soils. The rate of flow of liquid wastes, the rate of absorption, and the location of groundwater and surface waters are all important factors for consideration in planning development on permeable soils.

WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The maintenance of wild species depends fundamentally on the maintenance of their habitats and food chains. Since larger areas of habitat often support more species and larger populations within a species, dispersed and sprawling developments should be carefully planned or, better, avoided, and large tracts of undeveloped land should be particularly encouraged. Additionally, because habitat diversity produces biotic diversity, proper forest and land management, including selective thinning and cutting of woods, planting and maintaining hedge rows and thickets, and retaining vegetative cover near streams, lakes and other wetlands, tends to increase the quality of available habitat and, therefore, plant and animal life. A mix of managed and unmanaged forests will provide the highest habitat diversity.

The mountainous, forested landscape beyond our community and commercial centers is the habitat for large mammals, including black bear, moose, deer, bobcat, fisher, coyote, otter, and beaver. Completing the forest landscape are smaller mammals, reptiles, amphibians, game birds, raptors, and many valued songbirds and insects, which are all ultimately dependent on the region's diverse forest species. The black bear is considered an indicator species for the purpose of landscape conservation. By carefully studying its needs and protecting land to help ensure its reproductive viability, other native species will also be protected.

A critical habitat issue is the maintenance of large tracts of connected forestland for the promotion and support of these species. Certain habitat is regionally significant in that it is critical for a species' ability to thrive within the area. For wintering deer, low-lying softwood stands with southern exposures provide critical shelter from deep snow and cold temperatures. Road and housing construction and other forms of development, as well as indiscriminate timber cutting and outbreaks of tree disease, reduce both the quantity and quality of deer wintering areas. Stands of mature beech and oaks, accessible wetlands, and newly regenerated soft mast areas provide important feeding habitats for the black bear.

Travel corridors supply a necessary link between feeding and breeding areas (See Natural Resources and Proposed Land Use maps.) These areas are particularly important since food sources and supplies vary from season to season and from year to year. Protecting the critical habitats and riparian corridors for large, roaming species helps to ensure the protection of habitat for other large species and smaller species alike, thus protecting important ecosystems.

The Natural and Cultural Resources Map identifies some important wildlife habitats where the potential effect of development should be considered with particular care. The western half of the Town has been identified by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife as a "bear production area". These areas are described as "remote forestland supporting relatively high densities of cub-producing females and critical habitats necessary for bear survival."

AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

Primary agricultural lands are classified by the Soil Conservation Service as Classes I - III and have the potential for supporting or contributing to a sustainable agricultural operation. They are sufficiently well drained to allow tillage and harvesting with mechanized equipment, are fertile or responsive to fertilizers, and are on slopes less than 15%. In Marlboro such lands are found in scattered small areas throughout the Town and in a significant area bordering the Marlboro Branch near the Newfane border, as well as in a broad band in the west-central portion of Marlboro (see map).

Most of the remaining lands are wooded. Great emphasis should be placed on preserving and managing these forests because they offer a vast supply of timber for lumbering and firewood, as well as basic material for such operations as sugaring and Christmas tree farming. In addition, they are responsible for a large part of the aesthetic appeal of the Town, as well as supplying excellent wildlife habitat and contributing to both the retention of ground water and control of surface erosion. Landowners should be informed about and encouraged to utilize local resource professionals in the care and management of their natural resources. These professionals include the County Forester and agents of the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Natural Resource Conservation District, the UVM Agricultural Extension service, as well as private forestry and agricultural consultants. One extremely valuable tool in conserving resource production land is offered by the Use Value Appraisal Program, already utilized by many Marlboro landowners.. Enrolled land must be under a management plan and is taxed at its use value, rather than its "highest and best use" value. The resulting reduction in property taxes may be significant. More permanent conservation of land is available to landowners through donation, sale, or bargain sale of land or development rights to a qualified nonprofit organization, such as the Vermont Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, or the Trust for Public Land. Other owners may wish to conserve undeveloped lands in a more "wild" state, without engaging in active management. (See, for example, the North East Wilderness Trust.)

The increasing threat from exotic pests and vegetative imports such as Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Longhorned Beetle, Loosestrife and Japanese Knotweed, calls for conservation plans to educate, monitor, and address any signs of these or other invasive species that might threaten the integrity of the Marlboro biota.

WIND AND SOLAR RESOURCES

Wind and solar energy are abundant, renewable, and nonpolluting energy resources. Conversion of wind power and solar radiation to electricity will reduce our dependence on nonrenewable energy resources and decrease air and water pollution that results from the use of conventional energy sources. Distributed small wind energy systems will also enhance the reliability and quality of the power grid, reduce peak power demands, and help diversify the State's energy supply portfolio. Small wind energy systems and use of solar panels also make the electricity supply market more competitive by promoting customer choice.

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

See Energy Section (p. 29) for a discussion on applicability of wind and solar resources to Marlboro.

EARTH RESOURCES: GRAVEL, SAND, AND MINERAL DEPOSITS

Activities involving the extraction, exploration or processing of earth resources, by their very nature, disturb the natural landscape and utility of the site. The Town's interest in regulating such activities is to ensure that they will be carried out with a minimum of environmental and scenic damage, nuisance to neighbors, expense to the Town or additional cost to the owners. The need to preserve local resources for local use must be recognized. Finally, an assurance must be provided that at the conclusion of the activities the site will be restored to a condition free of public hazards, scenically acceptable and suitable for subsequent use for other purposes.

The areas containing earth resources of potential commercial significance in Marlboro are small and scattered.

NATURAL RESOURCES : POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

Water Resources Policies:

1. Maintain or enhance existing chemical, physical, and biological quality of the region's surface waters.
2. Support identification, recognition, and appropriate management of waters with exceptional natural, ecological, recreational, cultural or scenic values. Ensure that the management of these waters maintains the beneficial values and uses these waters provide.
3. Support surface water classification and management strategies that will effectively maintain or enhance existing water quality.
4. Maintain water flows in streams at levels that will support a full range of in-stream uses and values.
5. Maintain undisturbed buffers of vegetation along watercourses, lakes, ponds and wetlands to protect shorelines, to minimize effects of erosion, sedimentation and other sources of pollution, to maintain scenic and recreational values, and to preserve riparian corridors as links between upland habitat areas.

6. Maintain wetlands in their natural condition by ensuring that vegetative buffers consistent with state standards are established along wetland boundaries to protect the beneficial functions of the wetlands. Wetlands mapping prepared by the National Wetlands Inventory, showing Class I and II wetlands, is available in digital GIS format for the town. The limited number of wetlands in Marlboro should be protected from development, and should not be drained for development purposes or significantly altered in any way unless there is a long-term public benefit that heavily outweighs the irretrievable loss of resource value.
7. All necessary steps must be taken to ensure that existing wells and water supplies be protected from any adverse consequences of development.
8. Development should be planned, designed and operated to minimize water consumption to conserve water and to minimize demand for public water supply, and to lengthen the life of waste disposal systems.
9. Lands within flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas shall be limited to agricultural and open-space use whenever feasible. When these uses are not feasible, ensure that the location and design of development in flood and fluvial hazard erosion areas does not impede the flow of floodwaters or endanger the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Only those forms of development that will not restrict or divert the flow of floodwaters or endanger the health, safety, and welfare of the public or of other landowners during periods of flooding shall be permitted.
10. Identify and address any adverse environmental impacts of development proposals that could alter a stream channel or its floodplain.
11. Minor streams subject to flash flooding or serious washouts shall be considered flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas, although it may not be practical to delineate the precise limits of the 100-year flood on available contour maps.
12. Structural measures to control downstream flooding, for example the dams proposed for the Whetstone Brook Watershed in 1975, shall not be constructed in or allowed to flood any part of the Town of Marlboro. The Town should participate in regional study efforts on this, or other, Marlboro watersheds.
13. Where practical, watercourses, lakes, ponds, shorelines and existing public access shall be retained and maintained in a natural state.
14. Advocate that recreation, road maintenance practices, and development activities be conducted in accordance with respective "Best Management Practices," to reduce sedimentation, chemical pollution, and disturbance to surface waters.
15. Logging operations shall conform to the recently updated State Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs) especially as regards cutting near shorelines and stream banks. Logging debris must be removed from watercourses.
16. Farms and other agricultural enterprises shall conform to Acceptable Agricultural Practices (AAPs) regarding the use and storage of manure, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.
17. Prevent non-point source pollution by ensuring that on-site septic systems are properly designed and permitted by the state.
18. Marlboro shall discourage development in areas that require the use of highly technical sewage disposal systems or methods that may partially or totally fail due to their unproven, sensitive, or management-intensive nature. This includes, but is not limited to, spray-dispersal effluent control systems.
19. Town officials should cooperate with the State in enforcing water quality, health and wetland regulations.

20. Landowners whose waste disposal systems do not comply with current Town or State standards or whose systems fail frequently should alleviate the problem voluntarily rather than delay until required to do so by legal order.

Soils and Topography Policies:

1. Avoid development on wet soils because it can cause basement flooding and failure of footings, foundations, underground piping, and septic systems. Road construction on wet sites can be damaging and prohibitively expensive. Drainage of excessively wet soils is often not an acceptable solution because of expense, rate of failure, and potential for environmental damage.
2. Avoid development on mucks, clays, silts, and other unstable soils that offer poor support for foundations or footings and are subject to slippage. Require extensive site investigation to determine suitability for any development on unstable soils.

Earth Resources Policies:

1. Any proposal for extraction or processing of earth resources must include a plan for site rehabilitation. The Development Review Board may also recommend that the District Environmental Commission require extractors or processors to pay for any technical assistance or legal fees the Town might need when considering any project.
2. Commercial extraction or processing of earth resources shall be done according to a site plan and a conditional use permit from the DRB. Extraction or processing of earth resources shall be carried out in a manner which respects the rural character of the town and its community values. This extraction or processing shall not unreasonably inconvenience neighboring property owners and residents, or burden municipal services and facilities; nor shall this extraction or processing have a damaging environmental impact. Accordingly, the DRB shall require any extractor or processor to show that the project poses no threat of contamination to streams, aquifers, and neighboring wells. The DRB will also require the extractor or processor to show that the project poses no threat of contamination due to equipment fueling and maintenance, chemicals associated with the industrial process, or any by-products of the extraction or processing.
3. When considering any earth resources project the DRB shall evaluate impacts on the Town with respect to: dust and noise, traffic safety on Town roads, safe access by commercial vehicles to the site, screening and fencing of the site, the effects of heavy trucks on Town roads and bridges, schedules of operation and equipment usage, total duration of the project, and rehabilitation of the site.

Agricultural and Forest Resources Policies:

1. Individual landowners are urged to take whatever steps are necessary to conserve and care for forestland, including enrollment in the Use Value Appraisal Program.
2. As a rule, primary agricultural lands should be devoted to farming or to uses which will maintain the potential of such lands for agricultural use.
3. The Town should support the concept of the Use Value Appraisal Program and should implement any other programs which facilitate farmland and woodland preservation.
4. Logging operations shall conform to the State Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs) especially as regards cutting near shorelines and stream banks. Logging debris must be removed from watercourses.
5. Farms and other agricultural enterprises shall conform to Acceptable Agricultural Practices (AAPs) regarding the use and storage of manure, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.

Wildlife Policies:

1. Within significant wildlife habitats and along wildlife corridors, as identified on the Natural and Cultural Resources Map, development shall be regulated to minimize its impact on such habitats. Mapped habitats and corridors may be subject to modification based on additional data collection and interpretation.
2. Habitats which support endangered or rare species of wild fauna or flora should not be used or developed in a manner that will destroy, diminish or imperil those species.
3. Areas with premium stands of normal vegetation, with unusual plant communities or other habitat, or of unusual wildlife significance (e.g., deer wintering areas, where bear are common, or where rattlesnakes hibernate) must be protected.
4. Protect natural areas, fragile areas, and critical plant and animal habitats, especially those of state and regional significance.
5. Protect habitats of threatened, endangered, and economically significant species and important ecosystems; and maintain or enhance the habitat needs and travel corridors required by our region's larger mammals. Protect these areas from indiscriminate publicity by mapping them in very general terms.
6. Protect natural and fragile areas from development. When development is proposed near a natural or fragile area, a buffer strip designed in consultation with the appropriate state agency must be designated and maintained between the development and natural or fragile area.
7. Support state, federal, private, and conservation group acquisition of land and/or conservation easements or other instruments (means) to protect critical wildlife habitats and encourage designation of State Natural and Fragile Areas for significant features and resources.
8. Encourage private and public landowners to recognize the importance of protecting, maintaining and enhancing fish and wildlife habitats and ecosystems by supporting a variety of community, regional and state programs and incentives.

NATURAL RESOURCES ACTION STEPS:**Water Resources:**

1. Work cooperatively with neighboring towns and other groups on watershed planning initiatives such as: the state's rotational watershed evaluation, the state's basin planning initiative, the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, stream habitat restoration projects, and water quality monitoring. Support remedial action to improve water quality for waters that have been determined to be threatened or impaired.
2. Determine whether existing or proposed water classification of the Town's surface waters adequately protects surface water values and uses. Review and comment on any proposal for a new classification system. In particular, consider whether the Town should seek Class A designation for any surface waters that qualify.
3. Support review of water bodies to determine appropriate classification of waters.
4. Implement monitoring and management actions that will best maintain water quality, special designations, and/or classifications.
5. Conduct an inventory of wetlands.
6. Develop standards for stormwater management for inclusion in Site Plan Review in Zoning.

7. Monitor the effectiveness of newly-adopted surface water protection standards, and consider whether certain wetlands should be given similar protection.
8. Establish a fund to provide small low-interest loans or grants for the repair of failed septic systems.
9. Determine potential development impacts resulting from changes to Agency of Natural Resources on-site septic regulations. Strengthen local regulations where appropriate.

Soil Topography

1. Monitor effectiveness of recently adopted “steep slope” regulations designed to avoid environmental damage, including negative consequences associated with erosion.
2. Consider whether additional measures are required to minimize areas of earth disturbance, grading and vegetation clearing on slopes over 15% and avoid intensive development in areas dominated by slopes exceeding 25%, especially where steep slopes occur with shallow soils.

Wildlife:

1. Work with the Marlboro Conservation Commission, town residents, the Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCD), and state officials to identify and map information related to fish and wildlife habitats, Natural Heritage areas, natural and fragile areas, and wildlife crossings.
2. Work with state and federal agencies to coordinate the development of fish and wildlife management plans with the Town.
3. Draft new land use districts/areas for inclusion in the Town Zoning Ordinance.
4. Work with local landowners in affected areas.

Protection of Water Supply:

1. Enforce the Marlboro Health Ordinance to prevent groundwater contamination from old and poorly designed septic systems.
2. Continue to identify and classify water resources in an ongoing and sustained effort.
3. Protect groundwater from all pollutants through an ongoing citizen education effort and through local regulations.

H. LAND USE

In Marlboro, a number of factors must be taken into account when planning for the future use of land and the conservation of natural resources. A plan based on one factor, or one set of factors, alone will not serve as a respectable or meaningful guide for the future. Because Marlboro is still relatively undeveloped, with most of its land in resource-related or low-intensity uses of various kinds, the Town has a unique opportunity to influence the future pattern of land use and settlement.

The Town of Marlboro is fortunate to have a wealth of valuable natural resources. The extensive forested lands, river valleys, upland headwaters of streams, ponds, gorges, waterfalls, and wetlands provide an ecosystem that sustains numerous plant and animal species, in addition to supporting human habitation. This interconnected ecosystem of humans, animals, plants, earth, air, and water can be sustained through careful resource use and preservation.

As the Town's future rests in large part on its natural and cultural resource values, lands identified as having significant resource value or potential should be planned for land uses and densities of development compatible with accepted principles of resource conservation.

SEPTIC SYSTEM SUITABILITY

In 2007 The State Agency of Natural Resources approved new rules and regulations governing on-site wastewater disposal. These changes permit new technologies that allow development in areas previously considered unbuildable. Therefore, the Town can no longer rely on limited septic suitability as a de facto land-use policy for the town. Rather, the residents of Marlboro must be pro-active in planning and zoning to secure their vision for the town's future. In addition, the state has assumed responsibility for the septic permitting process. The town no longer reviews septic design or grants septic permits, although the town continues to have an abiding interest in the septic design choices made by landowners and residents and in the proper maintenance of all installed systems.

The predominant characteristics of Marlboro soils, and those of steeper lands in general, present difficulties for the design, construction, maintenance, and proper operation of conventional on-site disposal systems. Although alternative methods of human waste disposal (e.g., composting toilets) are available, they do not replace the conventional sewage disposal system, as the need to dispose of gray water from showers and sinks still exists. It will therefore continue to be necessary to emphasize the need for limitations and controls on leaching systems on lands deemed to be too wet, shallow or steep to properly contain and treat effluent from these systems.

LAND USE INVENTORY AND DESCRIPTION

Current land use was analyzed and the following characteristics of the Town's settlement pattern were determined:

- Residential land use, excluding Marlboro College, is predominantly single-family, both permanent residences and vacation homes. Many home occupations and cottage industries are associated with these residences;
- Commercial and industrial land use is very limited in its spatial impact and is mostly located along Route 9;
- Lands in public or quasi-public ownership are relatively minor compared to several Windham County towns;
- Institutional use (Marlboro College campus), because of its intensity and impact, is significant but represents less than 1% of Marlboro lands;
- Agricultural land use, excluding kitchen gardens and pasturage for domestic animals, represents a small acreage of Marlboro lands, a drastic decline since the beginning of the 20th century, comparable to the trend in agricultural use in many southern Vermont hill towns;
- Forest-related land use is very significant and includes the non-commercial forestlands, which are logged periodically.
- Large tracts of undeveloped land exist away from road access.

Much of the remaining land can be considered as transitional, held for speculation or long-term investment, or potentially available for development of various kinds (depending, of course, on the personal objectives of landowners and their financial ability to hold large parcels over a long period of time without an economic return). Meanwhile, this remaining land provides perhaps the most important recreational and scenic resource in the Town, as it is commonly used for hunting and fishing, hiking, and other outdoor activities. It is important to be aware of the amount and status of this transitional land potentially available for development over the next five to 30 years.

PATTERN OF LAND USE AND SETTLEMENT

Marlboro is characterized by a centrally located historic village surrounded by predominantly low-intensity rural residential development, scattered along winding secondary roads, most of which are narrow, unpaved, and often highly scenic. With a few exceptions, the off-road back-lands have remained predominantly undeveloped since the middle of the nineteenth century.

The village itself has functioned as a center of Town government, public services, and community affairs related to the Marlboro Meeting House. The Whetstone Inn is currently the only commercial influence. Town services requiring additional space and commercial facilities requiring traffic flow have located along Route 9, and are now part of the larger village district. This is the area recommended for more concentrated development.

Marlboro Historic Village is characterized by several structures with high visual architectural or scenic value. These are the Marlboro Meeting House, Whetstone Inn, Town House, Mather House, Thompson House, Kuhn House, Ephraim Newton House, and Houghton Schoolhouse. Other more modern or more modest structures in the Village conform to the orderly, neo-classical design standard set by the structures mentioned above. The form of the historic village does not follow a particular architectural pattern, but is derived from the intersection of Town roads and the influence of topography. Its form can be described as "organic" in that it was not the product of early town planning but the result of the social and economic patterns and necessities of a rural farming village.

Without a strong social and economic nucleus for settlement, and no town plan guidance, residential development has been scattered at very low densities primarily along Town and State-aid roads (Classes 2 and 3). Outside the village, the dispersed character of settlement has precluded the formation of closely-knit neighborhood groupings, with the Church Hollow plan as the only exception.

The Hogback Mountain area contains both commercial road frontage along route 9 and the recently-acquired Hogback Mountain Conservation Area.

The most intensive use of land in Town is found at Marlboro College, located two miles south of the village, and is a good example of how land development can generate impacts that transcend property boundaries. The College has a small enrollment and it is a residential institution, yet most employees and others with connections to the College live off-campus. Some of the increased need for Town services can be traced to growth at the College.

CONSEQUENCES OF DISPERSED SETTLEMENT

Although most townspeople appear to favor continuation of the familiar random settlement pattern, the Town should be aware of the potential consequences of this pattern, and lack of zoning restraints (almost all areas are currently residentially zoned one house in two acres). Given continued pressures for even modest growth, settlement along Class 2 and Class 3 roads may eventually resemble a pattern of rural sprawl, detracting from rather than enhancing the desired scenic rural character. Along several Town roads, this situation is already occurring.

More importantly, over a period of time, dispersed linear settlement tends to become strip development, which adds to traffic congestion, overtaxes Town roads and services, and contributes to water supply and sewage disposal problems and other undesirable conditions. In this regard, it is necessary to distinguish between the commercial and residential varieties of strip development, as each presents different problems and solutions.

Commercial strip development, characterized by a number of unrelated commercial structures, access roads, parking lots, and service areas along one or both sides of a through way, is relatively easy to control through zoning regulations and site development standards. Once the potential for strip development has been recognized, such practical controls can be applied and more desirable forms of commercial development can be encouraged.

In Marlboro historically, rugged topography has tended to discourage residential strips along most roads. On the other hand, dispersed development tends to seek out the best available, most accessible sites for low-density settlement. Eventually this may result in greater pressure for intensive development of more marginal sites such as ridgelines that would require large expenditures of public and private funds for the provision of necessary facilities and services.

Measures that should be considered to control residential strip development include the following: planned unit developments that include areas of land kept open; concentrated settlement encouraged in certain districts, additional frontage and setback standards for lots along scenic roads, and encouragement of shared access roads to serve small subdivisions and residential clusters. Individual private roads from new housing increase costs to individuals.

In January 2007, the Ancient Roads Committee was formed to analyze all roads that had been laid out and not discontinued in Marlboro. One road identified was changed from a pent road to a trail, now called South Pond Trail.

LAND USE CLASSIFICATION

Marlboro lands are classified into Shoreland, Conservation Priority, Agricultural/Forest Production, Rural Residential, Civic/Cultural/Business Village, Historic Village, Commercial, and Educational. It should be noted that the Proposed Land Use Map is not a regulatory device, except for its possible application under Criterion 10 in the Act 250 review process; its implementation requires further definition, adjustment, and clarification as the Town applies its Zoning and Subdivision regulations and other means for reaching its objectives.

Random location of commercial or industrial uses in all areas should be discouraged. Where these uses are allowed, they should be carefully controlled to avoid strip development, unreasonable burdens on town roads and services, and other adverse impacts.

A brief explanation of the criteria, purposes, and suggested development guidelines for each land use area follows.

Shoreland (SL) - defined as lands within a 300-foot wide buffer around Sunset Lake, South Pond, Hidden Lake, and Marlboro Millpond. Within these areas, standards should be formulated and applied to protect the shore lands from inappropriate development, which would damage or detract from resource values.

Conservation Priority (CONS) – defined as those large and/or contiguous blocks of essentially undeveloped land areas that are the most important portions of town to protect for perpetuation and enhancement of water resources, wildlife habitat, and other resources, such as open space, and trails for recreation. The resources are to be preserved for their inherent values to the maximum extent feasible. Such assets include, but are not limited to:

- Headwaters, wetlands, streams, and ponds, etc. (see *Water Planning Issues* in this Plan's Natural Resources section)
- Wildlife habitat/occurrences and connecting corridors, especially riparian corridors
- Significant natural communities

- Outstanding Resources Waters, water supply Source Protection Areas (SPAs)

Within these areas development is discouraged, and any development that does occur should be cited to protect the resource values of the land. These are areas that may be suitable for no active land management. If there is to be new development, it shall be at low densities. Recreational opportunities/potential should be valued and protected. Areas include both current Resource Production and Resource Conservation zones.

Agricultural/Forest Production (AGR/F)–defined as those areas where resources such as valuable agricultural and forestry soils and the crops or forests grown upon them are present in character and quantities suitable for significant productive use or extraction, but must be protected from incompatible development to preserve the resources for future use. The assets to be protected include, but are not limited to:

- Soils for agricultural and forestry uses
- Minerals for extraction
- Stands of timber, sugarbush, etc.

Development in these areas shall be planned to ensure continued ability to utilize resources and shall be at low density, and not infringe upon Acceptable Agricultural Practices and forestry Acceptable Management Practices. Density of new development should allow, encourage, and facilitate enrollment in the Use Value Appraisal (UVA) program, which requires a minimum of 25 acres, in addition to a two-acre homestead site. Areas include current Resource Production and Residential zones.

Rural Residential (RUR) - defined as lands which are already committed to rural residential development or which appear capable of accommodating the expected growth for Marlboro. In general, these lands are characterized by close accessibility to public highways, whether or not already committed to development, and appear generally suitable for residential and home enterprises.

The Rural Residential area should be used to accommodate growth of permanent and vacation homes and home enterprises in Marlboro. But the development of these areas should not unnecessarily damage resource values as shown on the Natural and Cultural Resources Map, and should not interfere with viewsheds and critical wildlife corridors. This area should be zoned to include mixed use of varying densities and encourage clustered planned development.

The town should consider whether to create a higher-density Residential zone and a lower-density Rural zone within the RUR.

Civic/Cultural/Business Village (VIL) – defined as lands surrounding the existing historic district, and its corridor approaches. Due to Marlboro’s topography and road system, activities traditionally concentrated in a village district are best suited along a number of road corridors surrounding the historic village district. The purpose of the Civic/Cultural/Business Village District is to support the traditional role of the village as the focus of the Town’s economic, cultural and social activities and to provide for residential and related development compatible with the needs of the village.

The area should optimally include current and future community structures such as the Town school, fire station, library, public works garage, cemetery, recycling center, community center, town park, and recreation facility, with parking and connecting walking and biking pathways. Homes should be placed on lots with a small maximum frontage, clustered along existing roadways with posted and enforced restricted speed limits.

As with the RUR zone, the development of structures in these areas should not unnecessarily damage resource values as shown on the Natural and Cultural Resources Map, and should not interfere with viewsheds and critical wildlife corridors.

Historic Village (HiVIL) - defined as the historic Marlboro Village. The Historic Village should be maintained as a rural community of high scenic and historic value. Where appropriate, development within the Historic District should be carefully considered through a design review process, conditioned in such a way as to protect buildings and sites of architectural and historic value. In addition, any development should be planned to enhance the historic character and to avoid traffic congestion, difficulties with water supply and sewage disposal, or any other undesirable consequences. Maintaining the aesthetic integrity of the Historic Village should include a program for the eradication of invasive plant species.

Commercial (COM) - defined as delineated lands on both sides of Route 9. This area has been selected to accommodate planned commercial growth, taking into consideration the scenic areas along route 9 (for example former Hogback Ski facility). Minimizing the negative effects of strip development is highly recommended, and may require that the town adopt procedures for design review to protect wildlife, scenic, and other resources.

Educational (EDU) - defined as lands of Marlboro College Campus as presently defined in the zoning regulation (it does not include additional land that has been acquired by the College). Expansion of institutional facilities and structures, such as dormitories, classrooms, and other such uses for instructional, administrative, or related educational purposes should be confined to this area. Within this area, site plan review should be required and municipal health regulations should be applied, but strict use or density standards need not be formulated for such time as this area is under the direct control of the College and is used for legitimate educational purposes. Other appropriate residential, commercial, and recreational uses should be permitted in this area.

Outside this area, the College should be required to conform to the zoning and subdivision standards for any parcel of land upon which it may choose to build.

OTHER LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

The Natural and Cultural Resources map, the Water Resources map, and the Proposed Land Use Map identify certain important planning and design concerns which should be reflected in Zoning and Subdivision standards and considered by landowners in their own planning.

Flood Hazard Areas: Lands with a major flood hazard potential are identified on the Water Resources map. The zoning regulations shall specify review procedures, permitted uses, and performance standards for development in flood hazard areas.

Riparian Corridors and Stream Buffers: Corridors of varying width have been mapped on each side of intermittent and permanent streams, defined by the zoning standards. These corridors are intended to recognize the physical and scenic quality of streams and small ponds in Marlboro, the value of these riparian areas as both habitat and travel corridors, and the potential for flash-flooding and localized flooding of many of these streams. The purpose is also to promote the establishment of heavily vegetated areas of native vegetation and trees in order to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff, reduce sedimentation, and increase infiltration and base flows in the town's streams and ponds. The corridors and buffers should be between 50 and 200 feet horizontal distance of the high water mark elevation of the streams.

As a general rule, septic tanks and leaching fields should be located at least 100' from the stream bank or pond shore to minimize potential for water pollution. This standard is routinely applied by the District Environmental Commission and the Agency of Natural Resources for projects in their respective jurisdictions, and it should be applied in municipal health regulations and zoning regulations. Removal of vegetation along stream banks or pond shores should be minimized. Except in cases of hardship or special topographic or design considerations, all structures should be set back at least 50' from the mean high water mark of the stream.

Sunset Lake/North Pond Watershed: This watershed is an important part of the public water supply for the Town of Brattleboro, as well as an attractive and popular fishing and boating area. It is identified on the Water Resources map. The watershed should be carefully regulated to maintain low-density development and high standards for sewage disposal systems.

Scenic Resources: Several landscapes and views of unusually high quality are identified on the Natural and Cultural Resources map and should be protected from development that interferes with their enjoyment by the public or that would be incompatible with maintenance of scenic values. Conservation of scenic resources may have to take precedence over development in these areas. See Land Use Policy 11. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- View generally northwest and south from Hogback Mountain (Rt. 9 overlook).
- View generally north and east from Rt. 9 in the vicinity of the "Cape" (approximately 3/4 mile west of intersection with Higley Hill Road).
- View generally southeast from Higley Hill Road at the Whitney Farm; view generally northeast from the upper end of Higley Hill Road.
- View generally east from Lyman Hill and Town Hill.
- Views east and northeast from the Upper Dover Road.
- View generally south from Marlboro College on South Road.
- View generally south towards the Adams Farm on Butterfield Road.
- South Pond, Hidden Lake, Sunset Lake and portions of their watersheds visible from their shorelines.
- Marlboro Mill Pond Weir on Town Road 20 and the impoundment and low hills to the west.

Critical Wildlife/Conservation Corridors Certain areas along or crossing roads that provide critical linkage of open space for wildlife travel corridors have been tentatively identified and are indicated on the Land Use map. Natural vegetation should be left intact along the corridors, and manmade barriers avoided.

A "Tracking Project" proposed by the Conservation Commission will further study and document these and other wildlife corridors, collect sightings from the community, and make corridor and core site visits over the next few years. Since a corridor is lost forever when inappropriate development occurs, the DRB should exercise care to protect these temporary corridors in the interim.

Core conservation areas can only offer their full potential if they are connected to other wild areas in surrounding towns, and if possible to the Green Mountain National Forest. Regional meetings of local Conservation Commissions should be encouraged to address this issue.

Affordable Housing Overlay: The Planning Commission should develop an overlay to indicate areas considered advantageous for affordable housing cluster development, for use by the DRB. These are lands that could support high-density housing (PUDs), have the potential for project water and septic systems, and are accessible to public transportation (MOOVER).

LAND USE: POLICIES & ACTION STEPS:Land Use Policies:

1. The capability of the land and its natural resource potential shall provide the basis for judging how the lands of Marlboro shall be used to accommodate its projected population, and needs for facilities and services. In making a determination as to where development may be satisfactorily located, appropriate maps, field tests and visits may be necessary.
2. Development shall be limited, restricted, or prohibited on lands where soil conditions and topography may cause failure of waste disposal systems, where development activity may cause pollution or contamination of ground or surface waters, or where waste disposal systems will cause a major increase in water contributed to a watershed.
3. While areas for future development should be reasonably related to the existing road network, residential and commercial strip development is discouraged. Instead, development should be clustered on appropriate sites to avoid the excessive impacts of the delivery of services to dispersed areas.
4. New development should be reasonably related to the existing settlement pattern, the locations of public services, utilities, and commercial facilities, and the existing road network. With careful planning, the Town can accommodate its projected population for the foreseeable future within its traditional pattern of rural settlement, modified where appropriate by encouraging small residential or mixed-use groupings as alternatives to dispersed development, sprawl, or strip development.
5. Until advanced methods of sewage disposal have been developed, adequately tested, evaluated, and proven within reasonable limits, development shall be planned at densities which will avoid the need for private or municipal sewage disposal plants.
6. Within the limits of land capability, and within the policies of this Plan regarding resource development and conservation, a diversity of land uses shall be encouraged that maintain the character of a rural town.
7. To safeguard public investment, lands adjacent to public or quasi-public facilities, services, or lands shall be planned and used in a manner that will not jeopardize or interfere with the public's use or enjoyment of or access to the facility, service or lands. These include but are not limited to highways, Town-owned buildings such as the Town office building, Town House, fire station, school, Town garage, cemeteries, Town Park, Marlboro Meeting House, Historical Society and institutions.
8. The use of lands adjacent to Town boundaries should be coordinated with the Town Plans of neighboring towns.
9. On-premise signs shall be regulated to minimize conflict with the scenic character of the area, to avoid confusion, and to prevent unsafe conditions.
10. Land and water areas of high outdoor recreational potential shall be protected from inappropriate development. Access to such lands should not be unnecessarily restricted. New development should be planned to minimize its effects on the land's potential for hunting, fishing, hiking and other outdoor activities.

LAND USE ACTION STEPS**Conservation Priority:**

1. Marlboro established a Conservation Commission to help plan for the future of Marlboro's natural resource and recreation lands. The creation of a Conservation Commission helped Marlboro to establish community responsibility for its natural resources. The powers and duties of the Conservation Commission include, but are not limited to, compiling an inventory of the Town's

natural resources, receiving gifts of land for conservation purposes, assisting the Planning Commission on natural resource issues, working with landowners who wish to conserve all or a portion of their land, investigating the establishment of separate zoning districts such as Conservation or Agricultural/Forest Production with lower building densities, and encouraging the public's understanding of its local environment (Reference: 24 VSA Chapter 118).

2. Investigate and review techniques to preserve the scenic nature of Marlboro's landscapes.
3. Update the inventory and mapping of critical natural resources and wildlife habitat areas so they can be protected from future development.
4. Conduct an inventory of wildlife corridors that can be used to overlay existing land use maps and to create guidelines for identified critical areas

Agricultural/Forest Production

1. The Town encourages enrollment in Vermont's Use Value Appraisal Program which enables landowners to choose agriculture or forestry as long term uses of their property. This results in a significant tax savings for the landowner. The Program encourages the maintenance of undeveloped land for farming, forestry and recreation. As of 2007, approximately 11,257 acres were enrolled in the Program, including 10,557 acres of forest lands and 517 acres of agricultural lands, with the balance being non-productive acreage in both categories.
2. Towns may also provide property tax relief for qualifying farm, forest, and open space landowners by adopting local tax stabilization programs to reduce local property tax burden.

Rural Residential

1. The Town should consider whether to create a higher-density Residential zone and a lower-density Rural zone within the Rural Residential District.

Village Center (both Civic center and Historic districts):

1. Investigate options for solutions to failed septic systems in the village.
2. Explore possibility of creating walking trails to connect various Town facilities, Molly State Park, and the Hogback Mountain Conservation Area.
3. Explore possibility of limiting highway speed on roads going through Civic/Cultural/Business and Historic Village Districts.

Commercial

1. To minimize strip development and traffic congestion, commercial uses shall be encouraged to share access and parking facilities, required to maintain buffers between commercial and non-commercial lots and the highway, and required to provide landscaping and planting in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

Educational

1. Explore with Marlboro College the possibility of providing zoning that permits congregate housing, possibly assisted living, within this district for individuals interested in participating in various educational and cultural programs.

IV. COMPATIBILITY WITH TOWN PLANS AND WINDHAM REGIONAL PLAN

Marlboro shares boundaries with Brattleboro, Halifax, Newfane, Dummerston, Wilmington, Guilford, and Dover. The status of Town Plans for these towns is:

- Brattleboro--Town Plan was readopted on February 19, 2013
- Halifax—Town Plan was readopted on March 2, 2010
- Dummerston--Town Plan was readopted on Sept 22, 2010
- Newfane--Town Plan expired Sept 13, 2011
- Wilmington--Town Plan was adopted on Sept 15, 2010
- Guilford—Town Plan was adopted June 28, 2010
- Dover--Town Plan was adopted on October 7, 2008

The Marlboro Town Plan is compatible with the policies and programs as set forth in the Town Plans of all towns listed above.

Compatibility of Town Plans refers to more than adjacent land uses at town borders; it can include use of shared resources, for example, rivers, roads, and community facilities such as solid waste, recreation, and fire and police protection. The Marlboro Planning Commission believes the most pressing compatibility issues with its neighbors are 1) watershed protection, 2) the use of Marlboro's roads and bridges to meet regional transportation needs, 3) future planning for Route 9 and Interstate 91, 4) commercial development at Hogback Mountain and, in general, along Route 9, and 5) coordinated growth center planning with Brattleboro and area towns. The Town of Marlboro should encourage Brattleboro and Wilmington/Dover and other Windham County towns to work to maintain traditional settlement patterns by revitalizing existing downtown business, commercial, and residential areas, and by discouraging urban and rural sprawl along major highways.

In the next five years, Marlboro will work with its neighbors to actively deal with these issues and any other appropriate issues. Additionally, as Town Plans come up for renewal and adoption, the Marlboro Planning Commission and Marlboro representatives to the Windham Regional Commission will take an active role in their review and approval.

The Regional Plan is intended to provide guidelines for the planning and coordination of economic development and resource protection, which will, in accordance with present and future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the Region. As proposed, the Marlboro Town Plan is compatible with the policies and programs as set forth in the Windham Regional Plan, which was adopted on October 24, 2006. The Marlboro Town Plan when implemented will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the Windham Regional Plan.

As defined in the law, for one plan to be "compatible with" another, the plan in question, as implemented, will not significantly reduce the desired effect of the implementation of the other plan. (For complete definition see 24 VSA S. 4302 (f))

V. METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Effective implementation of this Plan will require careful consideration and action by the townspeople, the Selectboard, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, and other local organizations. As the Town continues to grow and to face new challenges, it is clear that a coordinated program and serious

study of alternatives is needed if we are to guide these forces in a way that best benefits the citizens of Marlboro as a whole.

The policies and action steps set forth throughout this plan represent the best efforts of all involved to lay out a shared vision for the future of Marlboro, and they set forth the steps needed to implementation this plan. At the same time we acknowledge that planning will always be a work in progress. In addition to the element-specific actions contained in the plan, use of some of the following tools and techniques will also contribute to the successful implementation of the planning program:

Capital Planning:

1. Prepare and adopt a capital budget and program which includes capital expenses anticipated within a five-year period. Items to be included are: fire and police protection, public education, community life, land acquisition, necessary municipal buildings and additions (including septic systems), any items which may be required for compliance with regional or State programs, and Town roads and bridges. By doing so, the Town will have a better opportunity to plan for and phase in its major capital expenses and avoid sudden increases in the annual budgets.

Land Use Regulations:

Zoning, subdivision, and health regulations administered and enforced at the local level are most effective when specifically directed to public health and safety, the prohibition of unsuitable uses, and the protection of water quality and highly valuable natural and cultural resources. When revising regulations, the Planning Commission should consider traditional settlement patterns, the concept of limited and cautious growth, and proceed with respect for the natural environment and rural character of Marlboro.

1. Amend zoning and subdivision regulations as necessary to ensure that allowable patterns of land use and density are compatible with identified natural, cultural, scenic and recreational resources, and with the wishes of the people of the Town.
2. Continue to work with landowners to modify existing zoning districts and to establish additional zoning districts such as Civic/Cultural/Business Village. Every effort shall be made to ensure that proposals are based on the wishes of the people who live in these neighborhoods or areas.
3. Continue to ensure an efficient local permitting process.
4. Consider adoption of a building code, if deemed necessary by the amount and quality of development in the Town.
5. Update and amend the Marlboro Road Specifications taking into consideration the objectives of this Plan.

Land Acquisition:

1. Acquisition of development rights, the purchase or lease of land or attainment by gift are all methods available to Towns. These means are the most certain methods for protecting and assuring access and enjoyment of valuable recreational and scenic lands.
2. Landowners can also negotiate conservation agreements with organizations such as the Vermont Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy, to protect productive agricultural and forestlands, wildlife habitat, natural areas, or public recreation lands. As of 2013 approximately 3,210 acres were being managed for conservation in plans worked out with the Vermont Land Trust.

Growth Moratorium:

1. If at any time growth in Marlboro threatens to outpace the capability of the Town to maintain an acceptable level of community facilities and services funded by a tax structure and rate deemed reasonable by Town citizens and officials, or is perceived to be increasing at a rate that diminishes the

intent of this Plan or the effectiveness of the Zoning regulations, a limit on the total number of zoning permits issued per year or a temporary moratorium on permits may be implemented by the Planning Commission and promulgated as an Interim Bylaw as provided in 24 VSA 4410.

VI. TOWN PLAN MAPS AND EXPLANATIONS

A portfolio of large-scale maps is available for examination at the Marlboro Town Office. Full color maps may also be viewed and downloaded as PDFs from the maps page of the Town of Marlboro's website, online at <http://marlboro.vt.us/region/maps>. These maps were prepared by the staff of the Windham Regional Commission under direction of the Marlboro Planning Commission. Smaller scale maps are attached as part of this Plan.

The maps were prepared to show where and how Town Plan policies should influence future land use and development in Marlboro. Together with Town Plan policies, these maps will be used by the Planning Commission as a guide for appropriate by-laws and other measures necessary to implement this Plan.

The Planning Commission recognizes that these maps may be subject to inaccuracy and misleading interpretation when applied to small parcels of land. If this is kept in mind by landowners, these maps will be useful when making preliminary decisions about the use of land, its potential for development, and problems that call for more detailed site survey and studies. These maps, however, should not be depended upon as the only basis for investment and development decisions. The Planning Commission and the Windham Regional Commission disclaim any liability for losses incurred through inappropriate or improper use of these maps.

MAP 1 : NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This map identifies natural and cultural resource areas and sites in Marlboro, which should be protected from development that threatens their value or their continued use, access, and enjoyment by the public.

Surface Waters - including all wetlands, streams, ponds, and lakes.

Scenic Areas – including viewpoints of scenic landscapes as identified by the Marlboro Planning Commission.

Historic Sites and Structures - including twelve that were identified by the Planning Commission and/or the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation as having significant local historical value, and as deserving protection, maintenance, or renovation.

Threatened/Endangered Plants - including sites identified near South Pond and Sunset Lake.

Deer Wintering Areas - areas identified and mapped by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife in 1997.

Public or Conserved Land - including areas that have conservation easements attached to the land that limit future development, but allow a full range of agricultural, forestry and open space uses. The easements are monitored and enforced by the Vermont Land Trust.

Wildlife Crossings – including locations where wildlife cross major roads such as Route 9 and South Road, as identified by the Marlboro Conservation Commission through a combination of map analysis and field observation.

Bear Habitat in Southeastern Vermont – showing that large portions of Marlboro could be considered bear production habitat, due to their relatively undeveloped status. This general overview of bear habitat was generated from data included on the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife’s habitat maps.

MAP 2 : WATER RESOURCES

This map includes water related resource areas, such as wetlands, shoreland areas, surface water buffers, and flood hazard areas. It also indicates which streams are perennial and which are intermittent.

Surface Water Source Protection Area – includes the Sunset Lake watershed, which is part of the public water supply for the Town of Brattleboro.

MAP 3 : COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION

This map includes Marlboro's network of roads, community buildings and facilities, cemeteries, educational institutions, and recreational sites. It also shows the route followed by public transportation, namely Deerfield Valley Transit Authority’s MOOver bus, which connects Marlboro to stops in Wilmington and Brattleboro.

MAP 4 : EXISTING LAND USE

This map shows existing land use with the following categories: surface waters, roads, forested lands, agricultural/open meadowlands, public or conserved parcels, properties in the Use Value Appraisal Program, and structures (residential, commercial, and public).

MAP 5: PROPOSED LAND USE MAP

This map sets forth a land classification system for the Town of Marlboro, which reflects Town Plan policies, recognizes existing land use patterns, and considers the present and proposed road system within the Town. The Proposed Land Use Map, in conjunction with the text describing Marlboro's land use classification (see Land Use section), presents a generalized picture of the Town, as it should develop in accordance with sound planning policies.

In addition to classifying Marlboro lands, the Proposed Land Use Map identifies certain important planning and design concerns such as shoreland areas and Conservation Area connections. These types of areas should be protected in zoning and subdivision regulations or by non-regulatory means, and considered by landowners in their own planning.

