

Thetford Planning Commission

Public Comments, Future of Thetford Villages

December 6, 2011

NAME	Comment	Response
Marty Jacobs	<p>what is the vision? Can't evaluate contrasting statements w/o knowing. Need to reach out and work on vision statement, find the common ground. Can see pros/cons to all. How to reach? Go out where they are.</p> <p>See Orton Family Foundation, network analysis article.</p> <p>Go to groups that exist (PTO, Academy Trustees, church groups...).</p> <p>What are the time constraints? (Depends)</p>	<p>Kevin O'Hara: hard to knock on every door, we're open to possibilities, to get within our time constraints</p>
Donn Downey	<p>What is it that you, personally, want? What does a village look like?</p> <p>Advantage not to have a vision statement, fun to say what we want.</p> <p>I want to see more stuff going on in the Village. Businesses, people, municipal services will drive energy and create hub of activity rather than collection of bedrooms.</p>	
Li Shen	<p>has written vision; meet more of their own needs in food, energy, builgin materials (short of fridges, ..). We should have small facilities w/renewal energy for villages. For small businesses, more skill sets, trades, crafts – more than one occupation, economic acitivity; ability to grow food is important in villages as well as the rural areas (lawns with vegetables, orchards), farming sh be respected as a career, pillar of a community, not an aside; walkability –covered. Should be encouraged to develop density because already on best ag land, shouldn't expand the centers. Expand in creative ways, in-fill wherever possible. Would foster more social networking, other values. Should have flexible permitting to allow business development within homes.</p> <p>quiet or noisy? Case by case basis.</p>	
Jennifer Davies	<p>Calming traffic, is important for livability, should lower speed limit, town can influence even though State controls. If want businesses & people, businesses need to meld with people living there, shouldn't be too noisy, outside of regular hours, should go along with how we live.</p> <p>Don't think should stay the way they are, Post Mills is too noisy, accidents because of high speed. Sidewalks or wider roads would be helpful.</p>	
Kimberly Kol	<p>Not sure what I want, attention to how they look visually. Thetford is beautiful, but ET office, less beautiful.</p> <p>Architecturally, how welcoming it is – Town Garage, not beautiful, has an impact on how people feel.</p>	
Jane Francisco	<p>agrees with comment on importance of visual, Villages have character, should be preserved, along with open spaces. Use care, preserve what we have, although change inevitable.</p> <p>What is village character? Clustered together, they are close; they need not to sprawl to retain their identity. Preservation of the architecture, retain character.</p>	
Eric Pyle	<p>Encourage businesses that will serve people at home, resources that make home business more desirable, enjoyable, local services, reduce need to go into city centers, at least for small things. More people working from home, even in not in village, village makes sense for</p>	<p>Stuart Blood: discussion of broadband raised similar points,</p>

	business to support home workers. Encourage people to work at home, less commuting, more vital town. (Additional business type?) Village store, reduces travel.	increase vitality.
Patrick Kearney	Number of different village centers – good, or, a problem? It is atypical. How does that effect how we move forward?	
Jim Zien	How many houses in each village are full year or seasonal? Businesses will go where there is support. Increase number of FT residents – unless full year, almost hopeless to have business sustained. Under populated for the number of structures. Can't encourage small business, they will follow business – unless huge tax breaks. Encouraging small business meaningless, will follow population.	Chris Sergeant: 911 data will supply
Stuart Blood	Large number of villages, provide opportunity to in-fill in 5 different centers, incentives to concentrate in 5 centers, not just 1 or 2, so can protect ag land outside the villages. Consider types of incentives of in-filling – municipal water and sewer, makes it less expensive to develop in the village.	
Donn Downey	2,800 over 5+ villages. Norwich has less than 4000, with one village. 5 places to in-fill – spread too thin? Single sustainable community, would have to focus on one, two village. Don't mean to triage, but might need to focus on 1-2 of these 5.	
Sally Duston	Some business would serve greater area (Pompy mills serves greater area – low impact, employer, serves greater area). How would you put a business like that in Thetford Center, where would it go? Use existing structures, or, take field and build and lose the land?	Kevin O'Hara: Mill started small and grew
Kimberly Kol	Diversity – could offer options, but maybe less choice is okay for some things	
Chris Sergeant TRORC	Hamlet vs village: hamlet is smaller, used to be many, historically. Other areas get more built up, these are “villages”. Bradford – had a place named a hamlet, a “know it when you see it”.	Liora Alschuler: could be clustered residences
Kevin O'Hara	beauty, architecture: we have steered clear of that, as problematic	
Kimberly Kol	is fraught; know it is difficult, worth discussion; perhaps more applicable to commercial development.	
Wayne Parks	have we heard about Post Offices – talk about eliminating them? All that's left in North Thetford	
Donn Downey	North Thetford was slated for closure.	
Sally Duston	What about an Inn? We don't have any – Lake House Inn, Stone House Inn, no longer operating. Inns along river had a special, you could canoe from Inn to Inn. Nice destination sort of thing. Real estate agent – inquiries from people who want to move in and know if land can sustain food for small commercial ventures. Cedar Circle & Cross Roads – good examples.	Kevin O'Hara: piece of cake, are permitted
Jennifer Davies	Aesthetics – public water supplies, becomes possible to have condominiums, aesthetically, should look like it belongs in the village, not change the feel of the village – may be difficult to zone. That's what happens with public water.	
Wayne Parks	Hard to put zoning that restricts architectural style, what might help, in planning process, if citizens could be involved in DRB hearings, could be considered by developer. Why did the inns close? (Kevin O'Hara: not enough business, and a difficult business; how to encourage Thetford as destination – how to do? Trails, vitality...)	Have to pay attention and participate.;

Jim Zien	Think about our assets – that can be engaged more actively – several libraries, open relatively few hours per week; have Parish Players, Cong Church w/public programming. Rather than try to become Lyme, Norwich (D&W), Town has power to better support and underwrite (not just \$) these organizations that provide services. Look at what we have and build it up. Underwrite/support? Money into marketing, direct use by the Town of these facilities, so people get to know them, create low-cost publicity, promotion, ways to literally put on map.	
Donn Downey	nothing on town website now, but could be done with new site, lists of businesses; will make	
Wayne Parks	we have a business directory	
Jane Francisco	Speed of cars, trucks, level of congestion, Thetford Hill with schools, lot of traffic between 2-3, 4 PM, in AM. Many drive individually, too bad don't car pool, buses under-used?	Traffic from interstate
Jim Zien	Post offices, wait on Feds; Garage an eye-sore; what if we said we want one central PO, in a complex with other things. Don't really have 5 villages, have 5 areas with concentration of buildings. If we wanted to have a central PO, gain market value of something used town wide. Bring David Clem in to discuss what would be a town-wide draw.	
Libby Chapin	agree to try to save the character of the villages; preserve what we have not lose that; too much land being developed, wouldn't want to see that. Understand wanting to grow the villages, want to preserve what we have, the open spaces. Denser population could preserve open space, although if in village center, might not want that. Would like each village to have a really beautiful spot to come to.	
Li Shen	Would be hard to move the town garage given issues with relocation the garage, given issues with the recycling center, although like the idea of a central facility that would be a draw.	
Peter Blodgett	Community kitchen, meals for/by seniors, oddfellows hall in Post Mills, has kitchen, might handle butchery, has scale, fits place. Peabody trustees would like to move library across from the church, create play space. Could put basement, make it a more useable community space if insulated. Look at town as necklace of villages, need to expand trail network. Villages worked better before automobile than they do now, if we think beyond automobile might work better. create culture where okay to walk to/from school. Parking for Parish Players, grass area, xx hall might be a public use building. PO on thetford hill built with excess capacity for when others close. Can't get permission to move library (want to literally move building).	
Jim Zien	What is State doing w/Thetford Hill State Park?	Donn will ask. Thinks they would like to have someone take it over.
Libby Chapin	What's up with the PM mill?	
Patrick Kearney	Traffic in villages – can't put raised bumps in VT. Against the law. Applies only to State Hwy?	
Dean Whitlock	Police discourage speed bumps because they cause accidents, if not noticed and hit at high speed.	
Patrick	Widening roads, sidewalks: wide roads speed up traffic.	

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Jennifer Davies	Trees near road slows traffic, according to some.	
Jim Zien	244 improved, therefore faster	
Patrick Kearney	113 was dirt until 1957; take it back to dirt until can be fixed properly; may be easier to repair than asphalt	
Liora Alschuler	Is East Thetford viable to be built out? Kimberly Kol: easier to get people to come to; perceived as closer, even though equidistant to I-91. Jane Francisco: does make sense, already started in that direction.	
Dean Whitlock	If town continues to grow, more land will be broken up for house, fewer farms, less woods, unless we encourage more development of residences in villages, hamlets. We'll be stuck with sprawl unless we encourage villages to be more dense. Zoning won't prevent subdivision, even with current incentives. What is best way to encourage? Mixed use, apartments, but people want homes. Can build duplex, but do people want them? What if we had more houses in current villages?	
Jennifer Davies	Could make dense housing appealing, with some design effort. Town could illustrate, to make livable.	
Donn Downey	We haven't had 10-15 unit subdivisions. Concept of cluster development great, but we haven't had demand. Tough to encourage through zoning, because not enough demand. Village density – depends on 2, 3 landowners who might allow their land to be developed, not many opportunities. More a market function than zoning.	
Chris Sergeant TRORC	Thetford did good job, but not many Towns have seen PUDs, more common in Chittenden.	
Jim Zien	What sites? Not many. (Mill, auction, railroad station)	
Sally Duston	Train – would be great to use to go to Norwich, WRJ. Exists, not used. We don't do much with the River, have a boat landing. An attribute that exists, connected to East and North Thetford.	
Peter Blodgett	A ferry boat, bicycles come, pedal the boat to Hanover. Exercise, view, conversation. (Who pedals upstream?) Chairlift from Thetford Ctr to Thetford Hill? If bicycle powered...	
Jim Zien	X-C ski & running center at the State Park.	
Patrick Kearney	Kingdom Trails in East Burke – landowners is precedent.	
Liora Alschuler	have VAST trails	
Li Shen	back roads are also a good walking network	
David Fisk (summary of a letter)	Keep villages attractive and liveable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce traffic speed & noise using speed limits and traffic calming. E.g., Norwich has 25 MPH on rte 5 in village, while Post Mills has 35 and 40 on rte 113 through village. - Build sidewalks or widen roads with well marked wide shoulders (easier for winter road maintenance, too) - Limit village business types to those that won't drive out the neighbors with noise, odors, dust, etc. - Bury power and communication lines. 	