

Planning Commission Report Form for Town Plan Adoption

The Town of Sharon's Planning Commission will hold a hearing on its draft town plan on March 28, 2023 at 7 pm.

This report is required by 24 VSA section 4384 in regard to how the draft plan meets certain requirements.

How is the plan, as amended, consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of Title 24?

The draft plan has been written to address all of the goals in 24 VSA section 4302 and to be in conformance with the Regional Plan. The plan was done with public input and considered the impact of its effect on resources and the community. The draft has sections that address intermunicipal actions and is written to maintain a compact settlement pattern that would promote water quality, forests, and agriculture. The plan has policies that support childcare, needed housing, transportation, energy use, flood resilience, recreation, preservation of special areas, economic development, education of our residents, the upkeep of our buildings and property, and is based on current and expected conditions.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the probable impact on the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use?

The Plan removes principal retail as an allowable use in the Small Enterprise Area. The change will not result in significant traffic or land use pattern impacts and reflects the actual use of those lands today. This change will bring the Plan into conformance with the Regional Plan.

The plan changes the boundaries of the Forest Conservation, Rural Residential, and Village Center Future Land Use Areas. Pockets of Rural Residential Area were re-designated Forest Conservation, and the Village Center Area was expanded north on Route-132. These changes were done to reflect current uses and will not result in significant traffic or land use pattern impacts.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the long-term cost or benefit to the municipality, based upon consideration of the probable impact on (A) the municipal tax base; and (B) the need for public facilities?

The change in the Sharon Small Enterprise Area will likely result in no change in demand for additional town roads or road upgrades. No effect is anticipated on other public facilities. Given that none of the land is used for principal retail, there is no anticipated effect on the tax base.

Changes to the boundaries of the Forest Conservation, Rural Residential, and Village Center Future Land Use Areas are not anticipated to impact the municipal tax base or the need for public facilities.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the amount of vacant land which is (A) already subject to the proposed new designation; and (B) actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.

There is no vacant land in the Small Enterprise Area, which is constrained by I-89 and the White River.

Most land in the Forest Conservation Area and a significant portion of the Rural Residential Area is vacant. Changes to the boundaries of these areas still allows for anticipated development.

There is very little vacant land in the Village Center Area including the expanded boundaries because of the natural constraints of the White River, and hillsides, and the boundary formed by I-89.

The Town Plan only has effect in Act 250 as there are no land use regulations besides flood regulations.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the suitability of the area in question for the proposed purpose, after consideration of (A) appropriate alternative locations; (B) alternative uses for the area under consideration; and (C) the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated.

The plan removes principal retail as an allowable use in the Sharon Small Enterprise Area. The area is in the Regional Plan's Rural land use area, which disallows principal retail. The area is the appropriate location for the change, there are other allowed alternative uses for the area, and there is no major anticipated impact of the proposed change on similarly designated areas. The change will encourage principal retail uses formerly considering the Small Enterprise Area to locate elsewhere in town, but there is not much development pressure.

The changes to the Forest Conservation and Rural Residential Areas reflect that land which had previously been Rural Residential is largely remote, forested, steep, and conserved or in current use so it is very suitable as Forest Conservation.

The expansion of the Village Center Area reflects the current uses of that land.

If the plan would alter the designation of any land area, what is the appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability, and existing development in the area.?

There is no change in size or boundaries to the Small Enterprise Area.

The lands in the Forest Conservation Area do not represent all forest, but have been expanded to incorporate select lands formerly in Rural Residential which better fit in that designation.

The expansion of the Village Center Area reflects the current uses of that land and is appropriate in size to better reflect those uses.