

V. LAND USE

A. Introduction

Decisions regarding land use can have a significant impact on the community, affecting property values, demand for services, and quality of life. Regulation of land use has been recognized as a legitimate public concern in Vermont since at least the 1920's, when the Vermont Legislature first authorized the creation of Municipal Planning Commissions, and then passed State enabling legislation allowing municipalities to regulate land use through zoning.

The Land Use section of the Town Plan is a culmination of the goals articulated in the sections regarding historic resources, natural resources, housing, transportation, recreation, public facilities and economic development. As such, it provides the basis for the Town's land use regulations.

The Community Planning Survey undertaken in June 2010 indicated that Cabot residents highly value working farms, natural areas and historic resources and wished to protect them from adverse impacts when development occurs. (See survey results in Appendix A)

According to the Vermont Council on Rural Development, the number of farms statewide has declined by a third in the last ten years, and the wood products industry has declined by 40 percent. At the same time, small farm enterprises (with sales less than \$2,500 per year) have begun to proliferate. Many hope that new farm enterprises can form an economic nucleus for small towns like Cabot. The Vermont Food Venture Center in Hardwick is an incubator to serve farmers and food-related businesses. Examples like these lend hope to reviving and maintaining a working landscape in the region and in shaping a new local economy.

Like so many examples in the past show, the landscape is shaped by local economy. The current landscape of Vermont that has been shaped for over a century by dairy farming and provides a working landscape that is desirable to both residents and visitors. This beauty consists of the mix of woods and fields, mountains and valleys, compact villages and working farms.

The visual beauty and charm of our community and other surrounding communities is not a luxury and cannot survive as a picture postcard or museum piece. It only survives if life on and near the land is a working proposition. Fields do not stay as fields of their own accord. When a rural economy loses its vitality, fields get sold off, grow up to brush, or get sold off for building lots. Once our prime agricultural soils are split up and put to such uses, they are lost to this and future generations, and in the process, the visual beauty is lost. We begin to

look much of the rest of America that has succumbed to urban and suburban sprawl. It is often said that sprawl is quiet and insidious – you don't know you have it until it may be too late. Land is a core asset to our community. How we choose to use land and the steps we take to retain desirable characteristics of land use will make all the difference in the future.

It has become clear to Cabot Planning Commission members that land use planning and community and economic development planning are key to maintaining and enhancing the desirability of Cabot as a place to live and work. We are at a turning point with a new economy as well as continuing growth pressures, with Cabot's population doubling and housing units tripling since 1970. Traditional zoning regulations, and Cabot's current zoning regulations as an example of that, will not lead us to our vision of a retaining a working landscape if growth in population and housing continues. Some of the work reported on later in this section, regarding build-out analyses, point to some of the shortcomings.

This has led the Planning Commission to some of the newer concepts of land use development and regulation known as "Smart Growth" strategies. We are by no means experts on Smart Growth strategies, but we are convinced that Cabot as a community, can begin to gradually implement some of these strategies in planning and zoning to maintain our historic patterns of land use that so many find desirable. The Smart Growth Principles in the table below are flexible and adaptable and have been successfully applied in cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas.

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES
➤ Create mixed land uses (residential, commercial, public buildings)
➤ Take advantage of compact building design
➤ Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
➤ Create walkable neighborhoods
➤ Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
➤ Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical natural areas
➤ Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
➤ Provide a variety of transportation choices
➤ Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
➤ Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

B. Existing Conditions

Land Use/Land Cover

Historically, land use in Cabot has been predominantly agrarian. Although the number of acres actively farmed has decreased, along with the population, over the last 150+ years, Cabot’s landscape is still characterized by working farms and forested hillsides, and its village settlements are still distinct and marked by nineteenth-century residential and civic architecture.

Today, agriculture and forestry figure significantly in the Town’s land use: in 2010, a total of 13,087 acres in Cabot were enrolled in the “Current Use” program, representing approximately 53% of the total area of the Town. Although land currently enrolled in the current use program does not ensure that this land will not be developed with other uses in the future, 2,033 acres of land in Cabot are permanently preserved through easements held by the Vermont Land Trust. (See Maps 1 and 2 in Appendix B)

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission has mapped land use and land cover throughout the town of Cabot, as shown on Map 1 “Land Use/Land Cover” in Appendix B. (*Mapping based on satellite imagery, not on classification of uses in Town Grand List*). The percentage of land area in Cabot in various land uses is shown in Table V-1 below.

**Table V-1
Land Use/Land Cover**

Land Use/Land Cover Class	Acres	Percent of Total Land Area
Agriculture and Open Land	4,856	19.8%
Forested/Shrub Land	18,015	73.3%
Public/Service	23	0.1%
Residential	742	3.0%
Commercial/Industrial	29	0.1%
Surface Water	896	3.6%
Total Acres	24,561	100%

As shown above, agriculture/open land and forested land together comprise approximately 93% of the land area in Town.

Natural Features

Cabot’s natural features affect the extent to which land can sustain future development. In some cases natural features such as steep slopes, the presence of bedrock, or wetlands, make development unlikely due to practical building constraints. Other features, such as prime

agricultural soils, pastureland, or forests may not pose practical difficulties to development, but the loss of these areas to uses that are not directly related to farming or forestry would significantly alter the Town's character and the ability to sustain farming operations in the future. (See the Natural Resources section of this Plan for a more detailed description of Cabot's natural features, including steep slopes, wetlands, stream corridors, and agricultural soils. See the Economic Development section of this Plan for a discussion of the role of agriculture and food system development in Cabot's economic development.)

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources in Cabot include historic buildings located throughout the Town and concentrated around the Common in the downtown area; views from public roads and lands of wooded hillsides, cultivated fields, and distant mountain ranges, including the Green Mountains; and scenic vistas visible from the vantage point of private lands. Scenic resources contribute significantly to the character of Cabot.

Recreational use of open lands

Open and forested lands in town provide recreational opportunities, particularly in the winter months when farming and forestry operations are limited. Through permission secured from a number of private property-owners for seasonal use through farm fields and wooded areas, Cabot's recreation committee has delineated and maintained a winter trail system, used for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. (See also the "Recreation" subsection of the "Facilities, Utilities and Services" section IX of this Plan.)

Development Patterns

Although a majority (approximately 86%) of all housing developed in Cabot since 2003 has been outside the historic village areas, this has not yet significantly altered Cabot's predominantly rural character. Cabot has, for the most part, retained its pattern of compact village settlements surrounded by large tracts of forested and open land.

The compact development along the corridor of Route 215 in the areas of Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village still defines the center of civic and commercial activity in Town. The focal point in Cabot Village is the Common, around which is clustered the buildings of the Cabot School, the Cabot Historical Society, the United Church of Cabot, and residential and commercial structures, all of which comprise the State-Register listed Cabot Village Historic District (see Historic Resources section of Plan). Lower Cabot Village, also listed on the State Register as a distinct historic district, is centered on the intersection of Route 215 and Sawmill Road. The Lower Cabot Village Store (currently vacant) and the Cabot Greenhouse and Nursery are among the few structures that have been used for commercial uses in recent years along this stretch of Route 215.

Dense residential development exists along the shores of Joe’s Pond, in the northeastern part of Cabot. About 53 residences are located on approximately 28 acres of lakeshore in Cabot, and take access from West Shore Road. Although this lakefront area was originally a community of summer camps, in recent years the houses have become year-round residences, and many have been substantially renovated and enlarged.

State Route 2 passes through the southeast portion of Town. The land along this corridor has remained largely undeveloped, and lies adjacent to significant environmental features including Molly’s Pond, the Marshfield Reservoir (Molly’s Falls Pond), wetlands and watercourses, and forested and agricultural land.

Housing development that has occurred in the rural areas of town since 2003 has not resulted in the development of new subdivision roads, and all were built on either existing lots or on lots created through minor subdivisions (less than five lots). This new housing development has been scattered throughout town, and no new loci of development, either residential or commercial, have emerged. Two recent approvals of Planned Unit Developments in Town will result in common access driveways to serve these developments.

Existing Utilities Affecting Land Use

The Town of Cabot has a sewer system with a wastewater treatment facility located on Sawmill Road, and a public water system supplied by two public wells. Currently, the wastewater system infrastructure exists along the corridor that extends from Upper Cabot Village on the north to Lower Cabot on the south, including Main Street (Rt. 215), and portions of Danville Hill Road, South Walden Road, Elm Street, Glinka Road and Sawmill Road. The public water infrastructure exists in the same general area, although it does not extend as far north or south along Route 215 (see Map 3 in Appendix B).

The presence of public water and sewer systems allow for denser development, including residential, civic and commercial uses, in the areas of Town served by these utilities. The two public wells, one on Danville Hill Road and the other on Route 215 North (Bond Hill), are located on the northern and northeastern boundaries of the water and sewer systems. Each well has a delineated Source Protection Area, within which land uses need to be regulated so as not to pose a risk of contamination to these important groundwater recharge areas. (See Map 2 for delineation of Source Protection Areas)

The wastewater treatment system is currently operating at approximately 50% capacity. The development of an allocation schedule for the uncommitted reserve capacity, as provided for in the Town’s wastewater ordinance, would help assure that the remaining wastewater capacity was not used by exclusively one use, and would support the balanced growth of commercial, residential, and civic uses in the village center.

C. Existing Local Land Use Regulations and Planning Considerations

Cabot's existing zoning predates the last Town Plan of 2003, although a considerable amount of work was done since 2003 towards the drafting of revised land use regulations based on the 2003 Plan.

Below is a brief description of the key provisions of the Town's existing land use regulations, and descriptions of each of the zoning districts, along with planning considerations for each of the zoning districts.

Site Plan Review

All structures and uses except for one and two-family dwellings and agricultural uses, and enclosed accessory uses associated with them, require site plan approval by the Cabot Planning Commission. While the regulations specify what should be shown on the site plan, they do not currently specify standards to be met through the site plan design.

Conditional Use Review

Any use which is identified as a "conditional use" in a particular zoning district is required to obtain approval by the Cabot Board of Adjustment. The zoning regulations include general and specific standards to be considered in the review of such applications.

Planned Residential Developments

Planned residential developments (PRDs), are permitted in all districts except the Shoreland district. This provision of the Cabot land use regulations allows the Planning Commission to modify general requirements of the zoning district related to lot size and setbacks, in order to better preserve open space and facilitate better planning. Dwelling units are permitted to be single family or multi-family within these developments.

Flood Hazard Area

The Cabot Zoning bylaws include an emergency piece of legislation enacted in March 2010 for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and ensuring that residents and businesses in Cabot would still be eligible for flood insurance. The ordinance specifically prohibits all new principal structures, "critical facilities," and storage and junk yards in the flood hazard area boundaries, and prohibits accessory structures in the floodway.

Zoning Districts

The Town currently has four zoning districts: the Medium Density Developed District, the Undeveloped Village District, Low Density Residential and Agricultural District, and the Shoreland District.

Medium Density Developed District

The boundaries of this district, as shown on the Current Zoning Map, are defined by the land that is less than 300 feet from the edge of the highway right of way of Route 215 in what was formerly the incorporated Village of Cabot and extending south into Lower Cabot. This district also encompasses a short stretch along US Route 2 from the intersection of Route 2 with Houghton Road extending to a point just east of the intersection of Route 2 with the western terminus of Old Route 2, and also encompasses a portion of Old Route 2 and Ennis Road (see Map 5 “Current Zoning” in Appendix B).

This district permits residential uses, one and two-family dwellings and multi-family elderly housing, along with various commercial and civic uses. Other defined uses, including restaurant and retail stores, require the issuance of a conditional use permit by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The minimum lot area in this zoning district varies according to the use and ranges from 12,500 square feet required for an elderly housing development to 40,000 square feet (about one acre) for Group Services.

The “Build Out and Village Sampling Report” prepared by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission at the request of the Cabot Planning Commission indicates that the average existing lot size in the “Upper Village” area of the Medium Density zoning district is 0.5 acres, with the median lot size being 0.4 acres. In the “Lower Village” the average lot size is 0.81 acres, with the median being 0.58 acres.

Undeveloped Village District

This district extends beyond the 300 feet adjacent to the roadways, extending into the area of the former incorporated Village of Cabot (see Map 5). This district permits uses similar to the Medium Density Developed District, with slight variations on the types of uses permitted by conditional use permit.

The minimum lot size in this district ranges from 1 acre for residential uses to 2 acres for commercial uses and group services.

Planning considerations for the *Medium Density Developed District* and the *Undeveloped Village District*: Included in the State of Vermont’s substantive planning goals is the

directive that development be planned so as to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact village centers surrounded by rural countryside. To accomplish this, new residential and commercial development should be encouraged near community centers, economic development should be employed to revitalize existing village centers, and public investments in infrastructure should reinforce the planned growth patterns of the area.

The areas of Cabot currently within the “Medium Density Developed District” and the “Undeveloped Village District” include the areas surrounding the historic village center and the area known as “Lower Cabot Village.” While the area surrounding the common and Town Hall is the main commercial and civic hub, lower Cabot Village has historically been a smaller commercial hub, and has the potential for additional commercial and residential development.

A newly designated “Village Center District” should be considered in these general areas by taking into consideration the locations currently served by public water and sewer, those areas where it would be desirable to extend public water and sewer in the future, as well as the location of existing land uses and natural features.

Vermont statutes define "village center" as the “traditional center of the community, typically comprised of a cohesive core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets.” The state statute at section 4414 (1) (A) provides direction regarding the establishment of boundaries, requirements and review standards for village center districts with objectives relating to mixed uses, density of residential development, connectivity, multi-modal transportation facilities, public open space and landmarks, and other features that form a cohesive and vital village core. The statute notes that municipalities “may adopt a manual of graphic or written design guidelines to assist applicants in the preparation of development applications” for use in village center districts.

Design guidelines may be used alone, or may be considered a first step towards the establishment of a formal Design Review District as provided for in section 4414 (1) (E) of the state statute. This section of the state statute provides that:

A design review district may be created for any area containing structures of historical, architectural, or cultural merit, and other areas in which there is a concentration of community interest and participation such as a central business district, civic center, or a similar grouping or focus of activities... Within such a designated design review district, no structure may be erected, reconstructed, substantially altered, restored, moved, demolished, or changed in use or type of occupancy without approval of the plans by the appropriate municipal panel. A design review board may be appointed by the legislative

body of the municipality, in accordance with section 4433 of this title, to advise any appropriate municipal panel.

Smart growth principles, which could be promoted by design guidelines, work particularly well for both an aging population and for children. Design guidelines in this district can help ensure that new development accommodates both strollers and wheelchairs, supports walking rather than driving, and fosters connectivity to new and existing public parking areas and public transportation options, while protecting the character of the historic village center areas.

Design standards can also be achieved more indirectly through the dimensional and density standards¹ of the village center district. The new district regulations should take into consideration the existing pattern of development, including lot sizes and setbacks, and the goals of encouraging increased residential density and economic revitalization in these areas.

It is acknowledged that since the Winooski River and its tributaries run through the center of the “Village Center District,” the associated flood hazard area will continue to pose development constraints within this district (see delineation of flood hazard areas on Map 6). In order to give the most flexibility in siting new development, while still retaining traditional building patterns, the elimination of a minimum lot size, coupled with the establishment of a maximum density (number of residential units per acre), and the re-evaluation of minimum setbacks and maximum lot coverage will be considered. The lot size “sampling” and build-out analyses conducted by The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission at the request of the Cabot Planning Commission will help to guide the revision of the boundaries and dimensional and density standards for a new “Village Center” district.

Permitted and conditional uses in the district should contribute to the continued development of these areas as centers of civic and commercial life. The district regulations should reflect the goals developed by the Planning Commission (with the input of Town residents) of protecting natural resources, fostering economic development, and encouraging new retail businesses.

Additional standards regarding permitted uses and development may be needed for the areas that fall within the source protection areas of the Danville Hill Well and the Bond Hill Well, located in the northern part of the existing “Medium Density Developed District.” This may be accomplished through the creation of a source protection overlay district.

¹ Common dimensional and density standards include: minimum lot size; maximum use density; minimum frontage; minimum front, side, and rear setbacks; maximum height; and maximum building or lot coverage.

Areas currently zoned “Undeveloped Village District” that are outside of the area served by public sewer and water and which have land characteristics not suitable to denser development could be incorporated into the adjacent “Low Density Residential and Agricultural District.”

Since the area along Route 2 and that is currently zoned “Medium Density Developed District” does not contain existing commercial uses or dense residential uses, is not served by public water or sewer, and is not a location where the encouragement of new commercial or dense residential development is warranted, this area will not be included in the new “Village Center District,” and will be incorporated into the adjacent Low Density Residential and Agricultural District. (See Map 6).

State statutes, including those pertaining to municipal housing codes and recent revisions to the definition and regulation of salvage yards, will provide guidance for local regulations. In addition, the requirement for a “certificate of zoning compliance” prior to the use or occupancy of any land or structure for which a zoning permit has been issued, would be an aid to uniform enforcement of the local regulations.

Prior to proposing a change in zoning districts, it is strongly recommended that the Town, through the Cabot Planning Commission, engage the community in the development of a Cabot Village Revitalization Plan – that addresses a whole range of issues, including:

- The potential for future development and the most feasible locations given various constraints and conditions such as flood plain, topography, existing development, existing roads, and existing public infrastructure (water and sewer)
- Possibilities for a mix of housing types as well as mixed use buildings (commercial and residential)
- Opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access
- Opportunities for modifying traffic patterns and implementing traffic calming methods
- Enhancing public parking and public transportation
- Methods to improve the attractiveness of the village
- Best uses for vacant or underutilized buildings

The planning process should have a major public input in all phases and architectural depictions of the future possibilities for the village, addressing the above-mentioned issues.

Shoreland District

This district encompasses land within 800 feet of the shores of lakes or ponds greater than 20 acres, which includes Coits Pond, West Hill Pond, Molly's Falls Pond, Molly's Pond, and Joe's Pond. Non-residential uses in this district are limited to agriculture, forestry, and recreational or water-dependent uses. The minimum lot size is one acre for residential uses and 2 acres for non-residential uses.

Planning Considerations: Guidelines for the siting of structures within this district, and dimensional standards such as maximum building height and lot coverage, will need to be re-examined to assure that the goals of maintaining high water quality, maintaining vegetative buffers along shorelines, retaining scenic views, and improving public access are realized.

It is noted that the areas currently included in the "Shoreland District" classification vary greatly in regard to existing development and resource value (see discussion of these resources in Section II of this Plan, "Natural Resources"). While existing development on the shore of Joe's Pond is quite dense (almost 2 units per acre), residential development around other water bodies in Town are considerably less dense. The varying recreational and natural resource value of lands around these water bodies should be acknowledged and varying levels of review should be considered through the creation of more than one category of Shoreland District (e.g., "Shoreland District I," "Shoreland District II," etc.). Dimensional and density standards would be tailored to protect the unique features of the resource, and residential density and/or maximum lot size would vary in each district.

Low Density Residential and Agricultural District

The vast majority of Cabot's land area, 21,682 acres, is in this zoning classification. This district encompasses most of the farmland and forested areas in the Town of Cabot, as well as scattered residential development and a few commercial uses.

A variety of residential and non-residential uses are permitted, with most commercial uses requiring a conditional use permit. Notably, under current zoning "bank, financial institution" is the only commercial use unrelated to a residence, recreation or agricultural use that is permitted as-of-right in this district. The minimum lot size currently permitted in this district is 2 acres. However, the existing average lot size in this district is 31 acres, and the median lot size is 14 acres. The current residential density in this district is approximately one dwelling unit per 42 acres of land.

Planning Considerations: A re-examination of the permitted and conditional uses within this district, as well as permitted residential density, is necessary to ensure that the land use regulations do not present barriers to the agricultural use of the land into the future, and that the district regulations reflect the goals developed by the Planning Commission of preserving

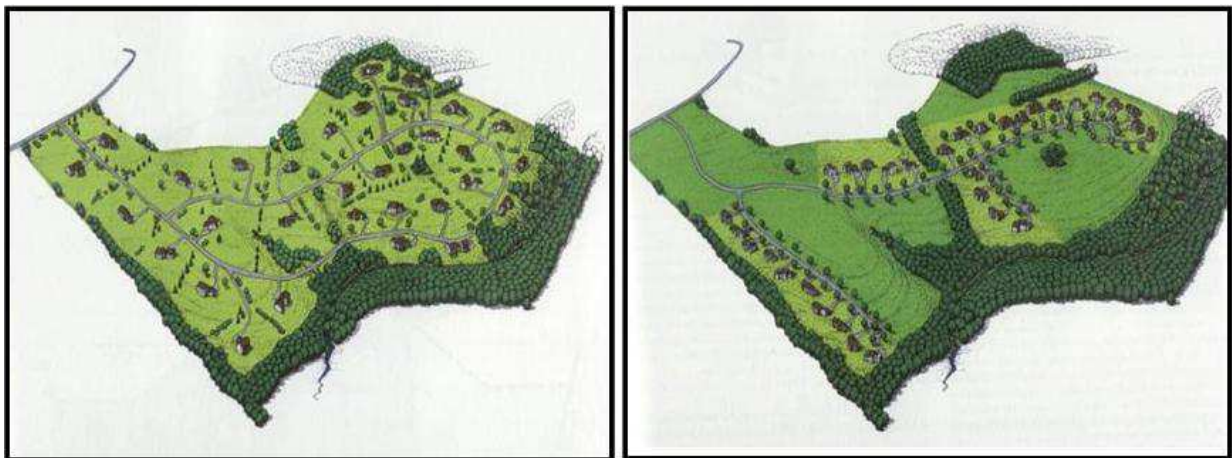
working farmland, protecting natural resources, and fostering economic sustainability, which is closely aligned with agricultural use of the land.

All land uses permitted as-of-right should be directly tied to agriculture, forestry and/ or residential use, and all conditional uses should be demonstrated to be compatible and/or linked to these aforementioned uses.

While agricultural operations often require tracts of at least 10 contiguous acres, the area needed for a residence does not need to exceed about one acre (in areas not serviced by public water and sewer. In order to conserve agricultural land resources while permitting the creation of house lots, the establishment of a lower maximum residential density in this district (e.g., one unit per 3 to 10 acres), coupled with a smaller minimum lot size (e.g., 40,000 square feet), will help facilitate this. In order to discourage the siting of new houses in locations that hinder the best utilization of the land for agriculture or forestry uses, subdivision regulations will be developed to set clear standards for siting of house lots, the location of building envelopes for residences, and the conservation of land containing agricultural and natural resources.

In addition, the mandatory use of the planned unit development provision for major subdivisions in this district, and the inclusion of a specified percentage of land to be conserved (e.g. 60%), will help to achieve the land use goals of preserving important natural and agricultural resources while permitting residential growth.

Below is an illustration of how land can be conserved using the provisions of planned unit development. The housing density (number of house lots) is the same in both examples, but the layout on the right conserves more forest and open space.



(Photo source: www.resourcefulcommunities.org)

Since the current boundaries of the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District include lands of varying degrees of value for agricultural and forestry uses (as well as wildlife habitat) it is useful to identify critically important agricultural and natural resource lands using available data on agricultural soils and other natural resources, in order to establish resource protection districts that warrant even lower residential densities (e.g., one unit per 10 acres or more) and heightened protection through land use regulations. The establishment of an “Agricultural Overlay District” based on the presence of agricultural soils is recommended, and further study of significant forested areas may warrant the future establishment of a “Forest Reserve District.” The depiction of prime agricultural soils on Maps 2 and 6 in Appendix B include both Prime Farmland (meets national standard for prime) and Statewide Important Farmland (meets Vermont standard for prime). It is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed fiber, forage, and oilseed crops.

Other Planning Considerations for All Districts

The development and adoption of subdivision regulations will help to assure that future development occurs in a way that achieves the land use goals in each of the districts. These regulations should include standards to best utilize existing infrastructure and to avoid impacts to natural and historic features, and should include standards for the identification of open space to be preserved. Features that should be considered in the design of subdivisions include agricultural lands, forested areas, scenic resources, steep slopes, wetlands and water bodies, historic resources, trails, hedgerows, and stone walls. Buffers from wetlands and surface waters should be incorporated into subdivision design standards.

It is proposed that all of the provisions articulated in Cabot’s existing Flood Hazard Area ordinance be reconfigured as a “Flood Hazard Overlay District,” for ease of implementation and enforcement. As an overlay district, the underlying district regulations would still be in effect, except where the Flood Hazard Overlay was more restrictive.

D. Buildout Analysis

At the request of the Cabot Planning Commission, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) prepared the “Town of Cabot Buildout and Village Sampling Report” which provides projections of the way in which the Town of Cabot may be ultimately built-out under the existing local land use regulations. (See complete report in Appendix C) At the Cabot Planning Commission’s direction, CVRPC prepared three scenarios: Buildout 1, which identified the projected maximum buildout in both residential units and commercial floor area under Cabot’s existing zoning regulations; Buildout 2, which removed land areas containing features that would typically pose development constraints, such as steep slopes, flood zones, State and municipally-owned land, and wetlands and water bodies along with their 50-foot

buffer areas; and Buildout 3 which removed from potential development all the constraints identified in Buildout 2, as well as lands that were both identified as “agricultural/open lands” on the Cabot “Land Use/Land Cover” map and which contained prime agricultural soils, as defined by the State of Vermont. (See Maps 7a – 7c, Appendix B.)

The “Town of Cabot Buildout and Village Sampling Report” shows that under the Town’s existing zoning regulations, and removing from potential development only those areas permanently preserved through easements held by the Vermont Land Trust, (Buildout 1) the Town could eventually be developed with 9,462 dwelling units, with 8,181 of these units occurring in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District. To put that into perspective, according to the 2010 Census Cabot currently has approximately 771 dwelling units throughout the Town.

In Buildout 2, the number of potential dwelling units dropped to 7,755, with 6,829 of the units occurring in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural district. In Buildout 3, the projected residential build out was 6,601 units throughout the town, with 5,765 of the units occurring in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District.

Although removing sensitive environmental features from the third build-out scenario reduced the potential build-out by a few thousand housing units, there is still the potential for 5,765 new housing units in the Low Density Residential Agricultural District. Although this may take many years to happen, or may never happen, under current zoning conditions it could happen.

E. Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal	Implementation Strategy	Key implementer(s)	Future Measures of Progress
<p>V.1 Encourage future residential and commercial development to locate in Cabot’s existing residential and commercial development nodes: Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village.</p>	<p>V.1(a) Prior to proposing changes to village zoning districts, develop a Village Vitalization Plan.</p> <p>V.1(b) Prepare and adopt an allocation schedule on a yearly basis for the uncommitted reserve capacity of the</p>	<p>Planning Commission, Selectboard, UDAG, Cabot Worx</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Village Vitalization Plan developed</p> <p>Allocation schedule adopted</p>

	<p>wastewater system.</p> <p>V.1(c) Ensure that the development within the Village does not negatively impact the public water supply by establishing a Source Protection Overlay District that encompasses the wellhead protection areas.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Overlay District regulations drafted</p>
<p>V.2 Preserve existing Town green/common as the visual centerpiece of community life and commercial development in Cabot, and encourage preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures in Cabot Village and Lower Cabot Village.</p>	<p>.”</p> <p>V.2(a) Seek Village Center Designation as a way to create economic incentives for commercial redevelopment and revitalization in the downtown areas.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Economic Development Committee</p>	<p>Discussions commence with stakeholders</p>
<p>V.3 Land is used and developed in a way that retains working farms and productive forest land as major land uses in the Town, and protects natural, historic and scenic resources.</p>	<p>V.3(a) Consider establishing a lower maximum residential density and a lower minimum house lot size in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural District so as not to impede the continued and additional development of farming/ animal husbandry and forestry uses.</p> <p>V.3(b) Inventory and map critically important</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/</p> <p>Planning Commission, with assistance of Vermont</p>	<p>Land characterized as agricultural and forested would continue to predominate over residential and commercial uses in Town</p> <p>Inventory created</p>

	<p>agricultural, open and forested land in Town to serve as an information base in the review of site plans and subdivisions, and in land conservation decisions.</p> <p>V.3(c) Create an Agricultural Overlay District based on the location of prime Vermont agricultural soils, with lower maximum density provisions and heightened review standards.</p> <p>V.3(d) Strengthen PRD/PUD regulations to specify a percentage of land to be conserved as part of the development (e.g., 60%); and to provide for buffer areas between residential development and adjacent residential and agricultural uses.</p> <p>V.3(e) Adopt Subdivision regulations to better guide land use development throughout town.</p> <p>V.3(f) Educate land owners about options regarding conservation easements – coordinate with statewide database of farmland.</p>	<p>Land Trust and CVRPC</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p> <p>Planning Commission/State and Regional agencies and non-profits (e.g., Vermont Land Trust)</p>	<p>District regulations drafted</p> <p>PUD regulations revised</p> <p>Subdivision regulations adopted</p> <p>Acreage permanently conserved through easements increases.</p>
V.4 Encourage new development in areas served by existing	V.4(a) Revise existing performance standards for uses in all districts (section 3.15 of Cabot	Planning Commission/ Selectboard	Regulations revised

<p>infrastructure, including utilities and roads, while ensuring that the uses and the rate and scale of development is in keeping with Cabot's existing character, and that property values are preserved.</p>	<p>Zoning ordinance) and create specific standards for the siting of residences in the Low Density Residential and Agricultural and Shoreland Districts.</p> <p>V.4(b) Modify regulations for signs , as necessary, to preserve community character.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Regulations revised</p>
<p>V.5 Promote pedestrian access for all development in village centers.</p>	<p>V.5(a) Develop a capital improvement plan that includes the development of new sidewalks/paths.</p> <p>V.5(b) Seek grant funds to accomplish pedestrian infrastructure improvements.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/UDAG Committee/Cabot Worx</p> <p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/UDAG Committee/Cabot Worx</p>	<p>Plan created, improvements to infrastructure made in accordance with plan</p> <p>Grants secured</p>
<p>V.6 Retain important scenic resources.</p>	<p>V.6(a) Prepare an inventory of scenic views, vistas and roads in Town and map them to serve as an information base in the review of site plans and subdivisions, and in land conservation decisions.</p> <p>V.6(b) Examine existing land use regulations, including those regarding telecommunication facilities, to ensure that the siting of structures avoids, to the extent practicable, adverse impacts to scenic views.</p>	<p>Planning Commission</p> <p>Planning Commission</p>	<p>Inventory created</p> <p>Review completed</p>

<p>V.7 The land use goals articulated in this Plan are forwarded by administering the Town's Land Use Regulations in a fair and consistent manner.</p>	<p>V.7(a) Review the land use regulations to ensure that regulations clearly state all referenced provisions of the State enabling legislation (for example, procedures for the appeal of decisions) and that they incorporate fire safety, building maintenance, and other safety measures.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard/Town Zoning Administrator/Zoning Board of Adjustment</p>	<p>Revisions to land use regulations completed</p>
	<p>V.7(b) Establish the requirement for a Certificate of Zoning Compliance to ensure these safety and use standards have been met, and that the regulations are consistently enforced.</p>	<p>Selectboard/Zoning Administrator</p>	<p>Provision included in Town Zoning regulations</p>
	<p>V.7(c) Include language in the zoning regulations that sets clear standards for temporary structures and uses of land.</p>	<p>Planning Commission/ Selectboard</p>	<p>Zoning regulations revised</p>