

From: Cornwall Planning Commission
To: Residents of Cornwall
Re: Town Plan Amendments: Population; Housing; and Forest Integrity

Hello Neighbors,

The Planning Commission has been continuing its work on several amendments to the Town Plan as part of its recently received Municipal Planning Grant. The goal of the grant is to update the Town Plan for required approval by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission. The current draft sections available for public review involve the updating of the Population and Housing sections as well as the addition of the Forest Integrity section.

A Public Information Meeting will be held at 7PM on March 23 to discuss these topics.

Population

The revised “Cornwall Today” Population section has been updated with the latest general population figures available from the 2020 Census. A brief discussion of population growth factors considers how local factors play into Cornwall’s ability to attract new townspeople.

Housing

The revised “Cornwall Today” Housing Section has been updated principally to bring current the housing data from the 2010 data used in the existing version of the Town Plan. This section now incorporates and discusses data based on the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates 2015-2019, the 2021 Cornwall Grand List and the 2021 Addison County Regional Planning Commission draft updates to the regional plan, which new data is largely consistent with historical trends. It also acknowledges the relatively new use of homes for short-term term rental housing and broadens the scope of the Town’s housing goals to include workforce housing.

Forest Integrity

Vermont Act 171 encourages municipalities to address the conservation of forest blocks, wildlife habitat, and habitat connectors, as well as to support local forest products businesses, in their town plans. The statute states that “Vermont’s forestlands should be managed so as to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors.”

The draft Forest Integrity section of the Town Plan provides an overview of the concept; a summary description of many of Cornwall’s important natural resources in terms of forest blocks and wildlife corridors; and goals and recommendations to maintain and improve Forest Integrity in Cornwall.

While the amount of forested land in Cornwall has increased since the late 19th century, forest fragmentation remains a significant threat to the town’s natural heritage because of our pattern of development. The introduction of this section into the Town Plan is an effort to highlight this issue and provide the community with resources to guide the responsible development of Cornwall for the future.