

TOWN OF DOVER
VERMONT

TOWN PLAN

Adopted by the Board of Selectmen

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Town of Dover recognizes that growth in its population and economy is inevitable and desirable. Uncontrolled and unguided growth-related development activities, however, may result in undesirable and irreversible changes to the community's natural, social and physical environment and to the local economy. Therefore, it is in the interest of the Town of Dover that growth occurs in a reasonable and orderly fashion which minimizes the potential for adverse impacts to the community.

The Dover Town Plan identifies the means by which the Town proposes to guide its growth. The official adoption of the Plan represents a conscious community decision towards the Town's future character, its priorities for land use, and conservation of natural resources.

To guide the Town Plan update process, provide for public participation and solicit input, a number of different strategies and information sources were relied upon. At Dover Day in September 2007, the Planning Commission set up interactive booth where artists worked with participants to have their vision for the future of Dover drawn on paper. Participants were asked to share what they valued about Dover and to suggest ways to enhance the community – socially, economically, and environmentally. The River Gallery School of Art in Brattleboro arranged to have artists draw the visions. Many of the principles expressed by citizens are represented in this Town Plan. In addition, several of the drawings have been included in the Town Plan. The drawings represent individual opinions and not necessarily the goals and policies written about in the Town Plan.



Dover Day Vision Drawing: A vision for West Dover with a town park and completed Valley Trail.

Key sources of information included interviews with select town officials and volunteers, results from a Community Vision Workshop in 1999, and a 1972 report entitled *An Ecological Planning Study for Wilmington and Dover, Vermont*.

The goals, policies, and strategies expressed with this Plan reflect the wishes of Dover's residents and will be used along with the Town Plan Maps to provide guidelines to the Planning Commission and Selectboard in developing and updating local ordinances and bylaws. This Plan serves to guide the regional planning commission and state agencies in their planning efforts, assists the District Environmental Commission in judging applications submitted under Act 250, and guides those interested in developing land in the Town of Dover.

In reviewing proposals for development, the Town should consider all applicable goals and policies and should encourage the use of sound planning practices in order to ensure that the wishes of the community, as expressed in this Plan, are carried out to the extent possible.

The Dover Town Plan has been prepared under the Vermont Planning and Development Act (Chapter 117 of Title 24 V.S.A). This Plan becomes effective upon adoption by the Selectboard after required public hearings held first by the Planning Commission and then by the Selectboard. Under Vermont law, a Town Plan expires five years from the date of adoption.

1.2 Structure of Town Plan

The Town Plan is based on a set of broad goals, which help define the direction the Town will take for the next five years. These goals are defined in seven sections of the Plan: Land Use, Natural Resources, Community Facilities and Services, Housing, Transportation, Energy, and Cultural Resources. Each section contains descriptive material concerning a given topic followed by policy statements, which describe a course to be followed to achieve the goals. Strategies are how the plan will be implemented by the Town or other agencies and organizations planning for Dover's future. Each section also includes "Future Considerations." These are priority projects that the Dover Planning Commission has identified as important to moving the planning process forward in Dover. For this reason, they have been given special attention.

1.3 Interpretation of the Town Plan

Interpretation of this Town Plan and a proposed project's conformance or non-conformance to it is to be made by the Town of Dover through its Planning Commission, Selectboard, Zoning Administrator, or Development Review Board. Sections of the Town Plan that contain the language "should" are recommendations only. The language "could" or "may" are only suggestions as to the direction a project may or could take. The language "shall, will, or must" is mandatory. Nothing in this Town Plan shall commit the residents to expend funds, and no condition shall be put into a permit under this Town Plan that can cause the taxpayers to expend funds without their approval at a duly warned Town Meeting.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY PROFILE

2.1 History

Dover was settled in 1770 by Captain Abner Perry of Holliston, Massachusetts. Speculation was that the reason for the settlement was to live in an area free from the staggering taxes imposed by a government on already chartered lands to finance the revolutionary war. Religion did play a part, as the early settlers built and attended the churches of their choice.

The real history of Dover began when a Vermont Charter, signed by Governor Thomas Chittenden, head of the newly formed Vermont Republic, was granted on November 7, 1780 to William Ward of Newfane and sixty associates. This parcel of land containing about 26,464 acres was incorporated into a township named Wardsborough.

A petition to divide Wardsborough into north and south, because a “mountain near the center that makes it inconvenient for us to meet together”, was signed in Wardsborough on September 25, 1787. Finally, on October 30, 1810, the Legislature Assembly passed an Act to incorporate Wardsborough and Dover into separate towns. The petitioners had requested that the South District of Wardsborough should be called Palmyra. This was supported by the North District as well; however, the Act of Incorporation by the General Assembly stated that the South District shall be called and known by the name of Dover.

The residents of a portion of Somerset began petitioning the General Assembly around 1801, requesting to be annexed to what is now Dover. For 68 years, the residents of Dover fought this annexation, even hiring legal counsel. During this time that portion, known as ‘the Handle’, was annexed to Wilmington. In 1851, the General Assembly enacted a resolution allowing ‘the Handle’ to be annexed to Dover provided Somerset pay all of its indebtedness. The towns voted to accept the provision of the Act, but Dover continued to resist. Finally in 1869, the residents of Dover voted not to continue the fight and ‘the Handle’ was annexed to the western boundary of Dover.

During the 1800s, Dover had 10 school districts and around 360 school-age scholars.

The extensive clearing for subsistence farming reached its peak in the early 19th century. By the early 20th century, the non-viable farms were progressively abandoned and allowed to revert to forest. The resident population declined during this period due to emigration to the cities and better farming lands to the west. The many small industries that had sprung up throughout the town (i.e. gristmills, lumber mills, tanneries, cider mills, and chair factories) began to disappear.

The early 1900s brought the beginning of the tourist industry to the area. The ‘summer people’ began to come to the area. Summer residences were established on ‘the Handle’ and Cooper Hill. Many of the local residents began taking in summer boarders. People would come by train by way of Wilmington or Brattleboro to spend from one week to the whole summer at various farms throughout the town.

In 1953, Walter Schoenknecht of East Haven, Connecticut, purchased the Reuben Snow farm and turned it into the Mount Snow Ski Area. This marked the beginning of the Dover we see today. In the beginning there were only a couple of ski lodges in the area. The summer boarders became a thing of the past, and practically everyone who had a spare room or attic began taking in skiers. As the time went on, lodges and motels began to spring up as well as restaurants, stores, ski shops, and nightclubs. The early skier was often brought in to Mount Snow by sleigh or Bombardier when the road to the mountain was dirt and impassable for cars. A new access road, now Route 100, was built and paved. Vacation home development began to spring up near the base of the mountain. An airport and golf course were also built.

In the 1950s the two remaining one room schools, one in East Dover and one in West Dover were closed and a new consolidated school for grades one through six was constructed on the Common. Grades seven and eight were sent to the junior high in Brattleboro and Wilmington.

The West Dover school building was sold to the Town. A vault was constructed on the back of the building so that it could be used as a Town Clerk's office. Prior to this, the Town Clerk's Office has been maintained at the home of the Clerk. The Library moved from private homes to upstairs of the building that is now the Town Office.

In 1968, the North Branch Fire District #1 was formed. By 1971, construction had begun on the Waste Treatment Plant and sewer lines. The construction of this facility contributed greatly to the development of the area. Land that had been deemed unbuildable because it would not accept a septic system could now be used for development. The lots could be smaller, and little village-type development began to appear along the route of the sewer line. The continued expansion of the Mount Snow Ski Area was now possible.

In 1971, the school building on the Common was outgrown and a larger school, meeting the State requirements (i.e. gymnasium and library) was built at the top of the hill between East Dover and West Dover, known as the Dover School. A kindergarten was established soon thereafter. The Library moved into the old school building on the Common, and the Town Offices expanded to the second floor. During 1996, a large addition was added to the Dover School.

In the late 1960s through mid-1970, Dover's government needed to enlarge in order to keep up with its physical growth. The Town Manager system of government was established. During that period, Dover saw three different Town managers. After a bad experience, that system of government was voted out in the late 1970s. The Board of Selectmen was increased to five members and an Administrative Assistant replaced the Town Manager. At a later date, the Board of Listers and the School Board was enlarged to five members.

The Town Office building underwent extensive renovation in 1990. A basement office area and a new vault were added. Dover moved in the computer age in 1985 with the purchase of one desk-top computer. By 1997, seven computers were in use within the Town Office.

Zoning was enacted on January 31, 1967 and remained in place until 1978. After 10 years without zoning, it was re-established in 1988.

Growth also necessitated the establishment of a Police Department. It started with a grant in 1971 to support one policeman for one year. After the first year, the department was enlarged to a Police Chief and a patrolman. An addition was constructed on the back of the Town Office building to house the Police Department. By the 1990s, the Department had grown to a Police Chief, four officers, and a secretary/dispatcher. In 1995, the old West Dover Fire Station was converted into a new police station.

The Town of Dover is served by two volunteer fire departments, one in East Dover and one in West Dover. Due to rapid growth on the west side of Dover, the lack of adequate firefighting equipment, and manpower, the Town took over the West Dover Fire Department. An addition was added to the Fire House and new fire trucks and equipment were purchased. Soon the facilities were outgrown. In 1995, a new Fire House was completed across the highway from the original firehouse. The East Dover Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. has remained independent, but receives annual allocations from the Town in order to operate and update equipment.

Prior to 1967, the Town only owned a few pieces of equipment for maintaining the highway. An Allis Chalmers crawler tractor and a truck were the main pieces of equipment. The elected Road Commissioner owned the equipment needed and rented it to the Town. In July of 1967, the Town purchased a 40-acre parcel of land located mid-way between East Dover and West Dover. This purchase was mainly to solve the problems of where to locate a Town Landfill (Dump). The purchase also provided a place to build a Town Garage, thus allowing the Town to purchase its own highway maintenance equipment. By 1970, the Town had begun to acquire equipment, either by purchase or by lease purchase. By September 1972 a Town Garage had been constructed and in 1995 an addition was built. Today, the Dover Highway Department has seven full time employees and is equipped with the latest highway equipment. Dover has the reputation of having the best-maintained roads in the area.

By 1992, the Landfill which had occupied the same plot, was closed due to State regulations. In its place a Transfer Station was constructed whereby people could drive into the building and deposit their trash and recyclables in the proper containers. The years of blowing trash and wallowing in the mud were over.

In 1971, Mount Snow was sold, thus starting an era of financial decline for the ski area, eventually leading to bankruptcy. The Sherburne Corporation purchased Mount Snow in 1977 and began pouring money into the mountain's facilities. Snowmaking and uphill capacity were increased. These years saw a tremendous increase in the tourist trade, bringing with it an advent of condominium and private home developments. Between 1980 and 1988, massive construction of these vacation dwellings took place and real estate prices soared. Small shopping plazas, a movie theater, gas station and a twenty-four hour convenience store came into being.

Mount Snow established its now famous Golf School in the late 1970s. The move was on to become a year-round resort. Bus tours were solicited by many of the lodges.

The early 1990s saw the national economy weakening. Over-development of condominiums and vacation homes left many speculators with unsold properties. Many development projects were foreclosed or forced into bankruptcy, along with initially-owned vacation homes and condominium units. Real estate prices began to drop. By 1995, things had begun to pick up

again. After three years of leasing, Mount Snow purchased Haystack Ski Area in Wilmington. A pipeline was installed to increase snowmaking.

In 1996, Mount Snow was sold to American Skiing Company, which seemed to stimulate the local economy. The new owners brought plans to upgrade the ski area. The Grand Summit Hotel and Conference Center was constructed during this time.

Peak Resorts acquired Mount Snow in 2007. Amongst the new ownership's plans are upgrading snowmaking technology and base lodge facilities.

2.2 Topography

The Town of Dover is in the center of southern Vermont, approximately equidistant from the boundaries of New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. The entire Town is 22,912 acres and covers 35.8 square miles. It is characterized by high, mountainous terrain. Significant topographic characteristics of Dover include a mountain ridge that runs north to south across the western border of the community. A second ridge runs down the center of the community from the north, geographically separating the west half of Dover from the east half. These ranges have elevations reaching over 2,500 feet and are characterized by many fragile, thin soils and significantly steep slopes.

Roughly two-thirds of the Town lies in the southern end of the Green Mountains. Elevations range from 3,556 at Mount Pisgah (Mount Snow) to 2,350 feet at the Cooper Hill Inn, to 1,060 feet at the East Dover Fire Department, to 1,958 feet at the Mount Snow airport. The North Branch of the Deerfield River and its tributaries drain through the West Dover valley, while streams flowing through East Dover make up a portion of the headwaters of the Rock River, flowing down to the West River watershed. The eastern one-third of the Town slopes to the east forming a valley with a number of streams, the largest of which is the Rock River, which flows into Newfane at East Dover. This is at an elevation of 1,000 feet, the lowest in Town.

2.3 Geology and Ecology

Dover consists of tilted metamorphic rock, mostly gneiss and schist. The area was heavily glaciated up to 10,000 years ago, leaving deposits of boulders, gravel, sand and clays in the valleys, with exposed bedrock in the higher areas, now covered with a thin layer of topsoil. Aside from small veins of high-grade iron ore, mined briefly over a century ago, and occasional limestone outcropping, there are no mineral resources in Dover other than glacial deposits of sand and gravel.

The major soil association found in Dover is Houghtonville-Rawsonville-Mundel. These soils are comprised of deep, loamy glacial till and support a forest vegetation of northern hardwoods. In a few gently sloping to moderately steep areas, for example in the eastern one-third of the Town, lands have been cleared and are suited for farming. In most areas, however, these soils are not suited to cultivate crops and hay because of stones and boulders on the surface. The potential productivity for trees on these soils ranges from moderate to very high, depending on the species. In very steep areas, slope limits the use of these soils as sites for dwelling and for septic system absorption fields. Depth of bedrock and seasonal high water table may also limit the development potential of these soils.

Dover’s high elevation results in a relatively harsh climate with cold winters and heavy snowfall. When Dover was settled, the landscape was forested with both evergreen and deciduous trees. The forests were extensively lumbered and cleared for subsistence farming in the 1800’s, creating habitat for deer and smaller forest edge animals. In the 1900’s, second growth forests replaced the original forests and much of the once-cleared land. Beaver, martin, and wild turkey have been introduced and have successfully established themselves.

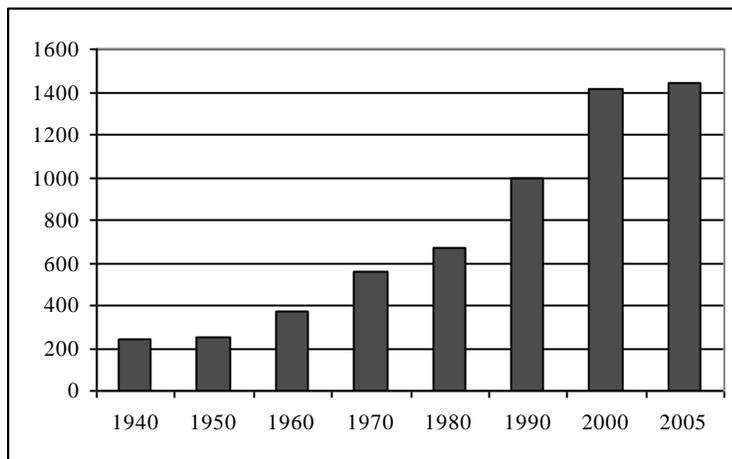
The North Branch of the Deerfield River flows in a shallow, broad course meandering through West Dover’s former agricultural and forestlands. The tributaries of the river that originate in Dover are Blue Brook, Ellis Brook, Cheney Brook, Negus Brook, and Cold Brook. Some of these tributaries contain unaltered, natural segments that cascade over steep terrain. There are various wetlands and other water-related natural features associated with this drainage basin.

2.4 Population

Resident Population Trends

Dover’s year-round resident population is clearly growing (see Figure 2-1). From 1970 to 1980, Dover’s population increased by 20 percent and from 1980 to 1990, the community experienced a 49.3 percent change. From 1990 to 2000, the rate of growth remained high at 41.9 percent over the decade. From 2000 to 2005 the growth rate equaled 2.5 percent, indicating that the growth may be slowing.

Figure 2-1: Year Round Resident Population, 1940-2005



Source: US Census

As indicated in Table 2-1, Dover’s growth has surpassed the neighboring towns as well as Windham County and the State of Vermont by a large margin. From 1990 to 2000, Dover grew faster than Windham County or the State.

Table 2-1: Population Trends, 1970-2000

	1970	1980	1990	2000	Rate of Growth 1990-2000
Dover	555	666	994	1,410	41.9

Newfane	900	1,129	1,555	1,680	8.0
Wilmington	1,586	1,808	1,968	2,225	13.1
Marlboro	592	695	924	978	5.8
Wardsboro	391	505	654	854	30.6
Windham Co.	33,476	36,933	41,588	44,216	6.3
Vermont	444,732	511,456	562,758	608,827	8.2

Source: US Census

Population projections prepared by the Vermont Department of Health estimate that Dover will continue to grow but at a more moderate rate than the town had experienced in the latter part of the twentieth century. Dover’s population is expected to grow to 1,706 residents by 2010 and to 2,028 residents by 2020.

Seasonal Population

In resort communities, it is important to recognize the consequences of a visitor population. Dover’s population varies significantly from season to season. Once primarily a winter resort town, Dover has experienced an increase in the number of visitors during the summer and fall. The high proportion of vacation units in Dover (approximately 75%) provides a measure of seasonal population flux. In addition, there are approximately 3,600 commercial lodging beds.

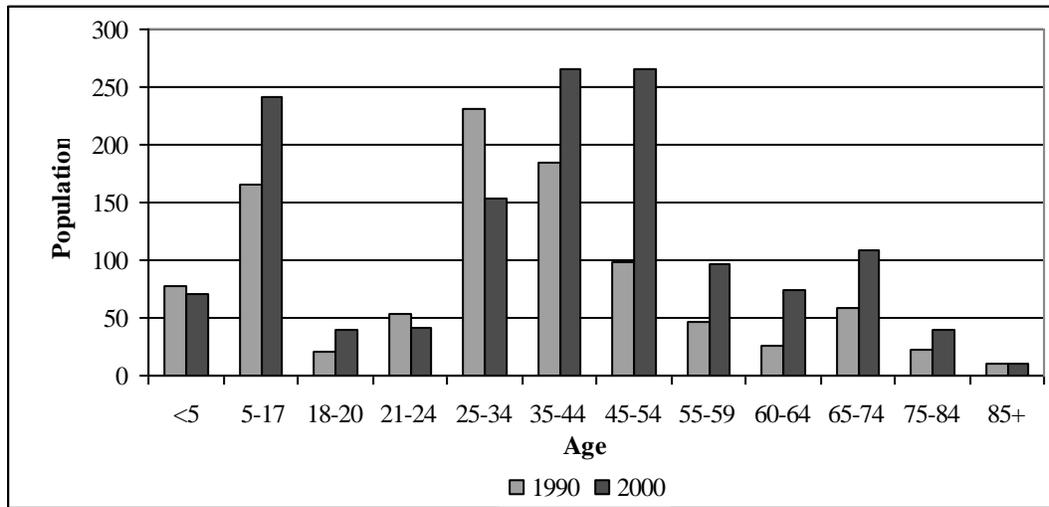
Age Distribution

According to the 2000 US Census, the median age population in Vermont is increasing. In Dover the median age was 41.3 in 2000 compared to the State’s median age of 37.7 for Vermont.

Table 1-2 shows the current distribution of Dover residents by age. The following observations can be made from the data:

- There has been a significant increase in the population of people who likely enter retirement within the next ten years (those ages 45-59).
- There has been a decrease in the number of people entering the working population (late teens, early twenties).
- The senior population (those over 65) is growing.
- The school age population (5-17) experienced a large increase between 1990 and 2000.

Figure 2-2: Population by Age Cohort



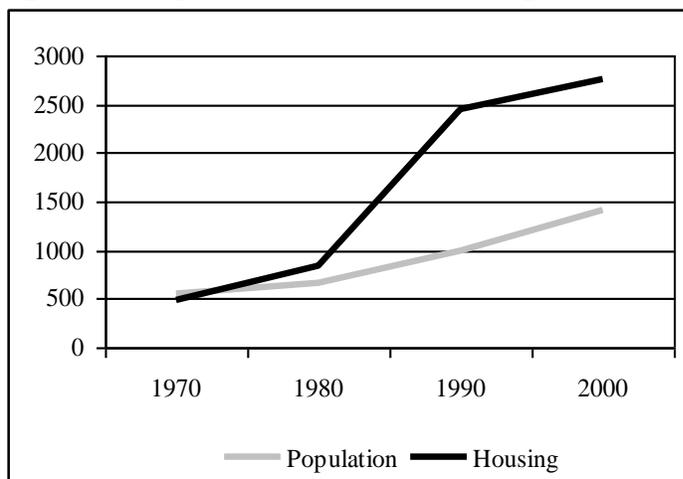
Source: US Census

2.5 Housing

Housing Growth

Dover’s housing stock has changed dramatically over the past 30 years. The 1980s saw a rapid growth of condominium development around Mount Snow. Since 1990, the rate of development has slowed. Figure 2-3 presents historic data on housing unit growth in Dover as compared to the population growth. Between 1970 and 1980, the total number of housing units grew at a significantly high rate in Dover. Between 1980 and 1990, housing unit growth nearly tripled. This housing growth can be attributed to Dover’s vacation home growth and permanent population increase documented for 1980 to 1990.

Figure 2-3: Population Growth vs. Housing Growth in Dover



Source: VT Housing Data Center and US Census Bureau

Housing Stock

Table 2-2 summarizes Dover’s housing stock in comparison to Windham County and the state. Dover’s housing units are almost . Corresponding to the housing boom of the 1980s, Dover’s housing stock is quite young compared with other Vermont towns. The median year that the housing structures were built in Dover is 1984, compared to 1969 in Windham County.

Table 2-2: Housing Units in Structure, 2000

	Dover	Windham County	Vermont
1-unit, detached	47%	64%	66%
1-unit, attached	40%	6%	3%
2-units	3%	6%	7%
3 or 4 units	2%	7%	6%
5 to 9 units	3%	5%	5%
10 to 19 units	2%	2%	2%
20 to 49 units	1%	2%	1%
50 or more units	0%	1%	1%
Mobile homes	1%	7%	8%
Boats, RV, van, etc.	0%	0%	0%

Source: US Census

Occupancy Status

In the 2000 US Census, 74.4% of Dover’s 2,749 housing units were reported to be used for seasonal or recreational use only. Only 448 units were reported to be occupied at the time the Census was taken. Table 2-3 provides information on occupancy status and ownership trends.

Seasonal housing is subject to many factors such as market forces and tax policies, which make accurate projections difficult to predict. Although outstanding permits and sewage allocations exist, the current economic conditions have significantly slowed new housing starts.

Table 2-3: Housing Unit by Type

Unit type	1990	2000	Growth 1990-2000
seasonal	1,697	2,044	20%
owner occupied	252	448	78%
renter occupied	138	163	18%
vacant	363	94	-74%
total units	2,450	2,749	12%

Source: US Census

2.6 Income

Median household incomes in Dover have risen over the period from 1990 to 2000 and are higher than that of neighboring towns, Windham County, and State of Vermont (Table 2-4). However, there are indications of a growing disparity in incomes in Dover. The percentage of people below the poverty level increased from 7% in 1990 to 10% in 2000 and is higher than the State average of 9%.

Table 2-4: Median Household Income

Town/Area	1990 ¹	2000	Percent Change
Dover	\$40,798	\$49,688	21.8
Marlboro	\$39,428	\$41,129	4.3
Wardsboro	\$35,783	\$35,000	-2.2
Wilmington	\$36,014	\$37,396	3.8
Newfane	\$42,075	\$45,735	8.7
Windham County	\$36,583	\$38,204	4.4
State of Vermont	\$39,251	\$40,856	4.1

¹The 1990 median household income has been adjusted according to the Consumer Price Index

Source: US Census

2.7 Employment Characteristics

Dover’s economic base strongly relies on the recreation industry with the majority of employers associated with development and tourism. According to the 2000 US Census, the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food service industries employed the largest the largest percentage of employed workers who reside in Dover (Table 2-5). There has been a decrease in the employed Dover residents who work in the land based (agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining), construction, and finance, insurance and real estate, rental and leasing industries. According to the 2000 Census statistics, 51% of Dover’s resident workforce works in Dover.

Table 2-5: Employment by Industry of Dover Residents, Age 16 and Older

Industry			% Employed	% Employed
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining	22	8	4%	1%
Construction	71	53	13%	6%
Manufacturing	13	24	3%	3%
Transportation and warehousing, & other public utilities	22	32	4%	4%
Wholesale trade	2	7	0%	1%
Retail trade	93	96	17%	12%
Information and communication	14	17	3%	2%
Finance, insurance and real estate, rental and leasing	62	60	12%	7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food	117	265	22%	33%
Educational, health and social services	64	125	12%	15%
Other professional services	12	68	2%	8%
Other services	24	41	4%	5%
Public administration	22	26	4%	3%
total employed	538	822	100%	100%

Source: US Census

Mount Snow is the largest employer in the Deerfield Valley. They currently employ 505 full-time staff during the winter season and 240 full-time, year round workers. According to the Vermont Department of Labor, the average wage paid in Dover in 2005 was \$21,208.

2.8 Economic Conditions

During the past 10 years there has been a decline in economic growth in the Deerfield Valley. According to information provided by Mount Snow, the largest employer in town, the resort averaged 509,000 skier visits from 1996 to 2001. From 2002-2007, the resort averaged 453,000 skier visits, a decline of 11%. This decline has had a corollary effect on businesses that rely on tourism. Mt. Snow reported that in the 2000/01 ski season (November – March), the towns of Dover and Wilmington collected a total of \$22,044,688 in taxable food and beverage and lodging receipts. In the 2005/06 ski season, that number was \$20,798,653, a decline of 5.7% (when adjusting the 2000/01 figure to 2006 dollars using the Consumer Price Index, the decline is 17.1%). Retail sales followed the same pattern, with a 5.7% drop in sales for Dover and Wilmington from 2001 to 2006 (17.1% when adjusted). It is interesting to note that during this same period, Vermont saw an increase of 27.7% in retail sales (12.1% when adjusted).

CHAPTER 3

LAND USE

3.1 Existing Land Use

Dover is a community that has experienced several dramatic development growth periods over the last 30 years. Much of this growth took place during a time when no zoning regulations were in place, and as such, development has spread out in a manner that does not always reflect the best use of land given its resource values. Some large lots have been subdivided into smaller lots for residential use at densities that are higher than can be accommodated, given the characteristics of the land. Some development has taken place on land originally having important economic and scenic resource values that contributed to maintaining the traditional Vermont character.

Land use and settlement patterns have been significantly influenced by the presence of Mount Snow. Most of the residential development that has occurred over the last 30 years is a response to the demand of housing and services by resort users. Much of the commercial development stretches along a 2½ mile portion of Route 100, creating a condition that may be described as sprawl.

The Existing Land Use map shows land use of individual parcels as it exists in Dover in 2008 (this map is different from the Proposed Land Use map, which shows a generalized land use vision of areas across Town as envisioned in the future, most likely to be achieved through the Town's Zoning Bylaw). Using a parcel map as the basis, the existing land use categories were initially derived from land use categories used by the listers and then refined using additional GIS-based information. An attempt has been made to further define the land use categories in terms of intensity, which is based largely on parcel size. This helps establish the pattern of the type, intensity, and spatial distribution of the use of each parcel of land in Dover. Additional information regarding public ownership, conservation easements, and whether or not a parcel is enrolled in Vermont's Use Value Appraisal program is included on the map. A more detailed description of the existing land uses is as follows:

1. **Residential Development** represents one of the largest uses of land in Dover. There a variety of lot sizes, ranging from small lots of less than an acre to large lots of greater than 27 acres. . Housing units scattered throughout the town, with large lot, low-density development in East Dover. Dense development, a large amount of which is multi-family units (approximately 8% of the total housing stock) is concentrated in West Dover and was developed to be in close proximity to Mount Snow.
2. **Commercial Development** is, for the most part, concentrated along Route 100 and in and around the base of Mount Snow. The commercial uses in Dover consist of a mix of retail, personal and professional services, restaurants and lodging. Dover's commercial uses are primarily automobile-dependent.
3. **Industrial/Utility Development** in Dover is limited. Current industrial/utility uses include the Mount Snow Airport, Fire District spray fields, and telephone and power utility buildings.

4. **Public Services/Cultural** uses include such facilities as the Town Hall, Town Office, fire stations, transfer station, school, churches, library, and cemeteries. Such facilities tend to be located in or just outside of the village areas. These uses tend to be static in a town.
6. **Openland** covers a vast area of land in Dover. These openlands are primarily forested and serve many purposes, including a scenic backdrop, source for wood products, habitat for wildlife, game for hunting, maple products, and recreation. Much of the forestland is held by the Green Mountain National Forest and additional lands fall within the proclamation boundary that establishes lands that the Forest Service would like to acquire in the future. There are several parcels under conservation easements held by the Vermont Land Trust or the Trust for Public Lands. The Town Forest is located in the north central portion of the community. The balance of forestland is in private, non-industrial ownership.

3.2 Prospective Land Use

Prospective land use is very much determined by the pattern of existing land uses – and any human or physical constraints that make development environmentally or economically prohibitive. In order to encourage a pattern of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development that conforms to the goals and policies outlined in the Town Plan, the following land use classification has been developed to guide growth and development in Dover.

Resource Reserve and Conservation District

Resource Reserve and Conservation lands are so designated because of their special and unique value to the public and to the region's ecosystems. Lands within this district primarily include land over 2,500 feet, publicly-owned lands (either town or federal), steep slopes, and wetlands. There are also some lands in the district that are already developed as low-density residential. These have been included because of the important wildlife functions of the land.

The purpose of the Resource Reserve and Conservation District is to maintain large, contiguous blocks of forestland for the purposes of encouraging forest stewardship, protecting environmentally sensitive areas, allowing animals to access suitable habitat to meet their needs, and continuing to provide attractive areas for recreational use such as: hunting, fishing, hiking and horseback riding.

Permitted uses are restricted to forestry and open space public recreational uses. Very low density (27 acre minimum lot size) residential development with a limited number of accessory uses, camps, campgrounds, kennels, and ski facilities are conditionally permitted in the District.

Productive Residential District

The Productive Residential District is comprised of lands that are outside the Resource Reserve and Conservation District and the more densely settled Residential, Commercial, and Village Districts. These are areas that are easily accessible by the existing road network and still maintain the rural character of Dover that is characterized by extensive woodlands, some agricultural land, and low density residential development. These areas can support limited growth due to the topography and soil conditions while preserving the rural landscape and scenic and natural resources.

There are two purposes of the Productive Residential District. The first is to recognize and provide for the continuation of lands that have economic value when in productive use for agriculture or forestry. The second purpose is to preserve the rural character of Dover while accommodating low density (5 acre minimum lot size) residential development that avoids the need for public water or sewer supplies.

Agriculture, forestry, low-density (5 acre minimum lot size) residential development, and limited low-intensity commercial uses (e.g. Bed and Breakfasts, campgrounds, country stores, cultural facilities, schools, snowmaking facilities, and veterinary clinics) are appropriate in the district.

Village District

The Village Districts are comprised of areas that provide the best example of traditional Vermont settlement pattern. The existing villages are West Dover and East Dover. These areas have relatively moderate densities of use residential, civic, and small-scale commercial uses and are characterized by older historic buildings or newer buildings with traditional/historic designs and architectural features. Lot sizes are generally less than one acre. Development density in both West Dover and East Dover Village is limited by a lack of a centralized water supply, and in East Dover, a centralized wastewater system.



Vision for Dover’s two villages – On the left, a vision for East Dover includes a café. On the right, a vision for West Dover Village is to keep the historical charm and create a downtown with multi-story buildings aligning on Route 100.

The purpose of the Village District is to continue the historic development centers of Dover by encouraging compact, mixed use development. The goal is to encourage a compact pattern of development in the Village

Appropriate uses in the Village District include residential dwellings, civic uses, personal services, professional offices, and small-scale commercial. Lot sizes should be one acre or less so long as the capacity of the soil to handle wastewater is not exceeded and the required well isolation distances can be met.

Residential District

The Residential District is comprised of lands that have already been committed to residential development. Much of the land in the Residential District has been subdivided into large housing developments. There are four Residential Districts: 1) surrounding West Dover Village; 2)

adjacent to East Dover Village; 3) an area off Dover Hill Road that includes developments off Heritage Road, Antler Loop, and Schoolhouse Road; and 4) an area off Valley View Road that includes developments off Village Loop and Ellis Brook Road. These districts are located near existing village areas and services are readily accessible by the Town's existing road system.

The purpose of the Residential District is to preserve areas of Town that are suitable for one and two-family dwellings and to assure those who build houses in these areas that they may continue to dwell in their surrounding, free from the distraction of business, traffic noise and odor. The Residential District includes areas with smaller lot size and lesser frontage than other areas of town suitable for residential development.

Primary uses in the Residential District include single-family and two-family dwellings. Home occupations and home businesses, subject to appropriate standards, and other normal customary accessory uses shall also be permitted.

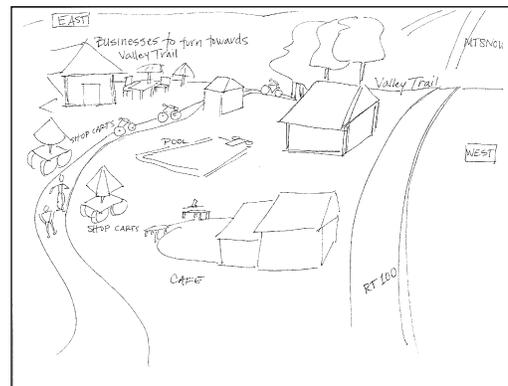
Planned Commercial District

The Planned Commercial District encompasses lands along Route 100 that have experienced substantial commercial development.

The purpose of the Planned Commercial District is to serve local and tourist commercial needs in an area with convenient access by:

- Allowing a mixture of complimentary land uses that includes housing, retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses to create economic and social vitality and to encourage the linking of trips;
- Developing commercial and mixed-use areas that are safe, comfortable and attractive to pedestrians;
- Providing flexibility in the siting and design of new developments and redevelopment to anticipate changes in the marketplace;
- Encouraging efficient land use by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land that is needed for surface parking; and
- Maintaining mobility along the corridor.

A wide range of uses should be permitted in the commercial district including retail stores, gas stations, restaurants, lodging facilities, and a range of professional, service, and recreational uses. Site planning is critical to the achieving the purposes of the Planned Commercial District. Pedestrian sidewalks along the roadway and between the businesses will enhance pedestrian safety and help reduce trips along Route 100. Access management will minimize traffic congestion and safety hazards. Special attention should be given to building design so that commercial development is attractive, well-planned, and fosters a community identity.



A vision for the Valley Trail to be a widely used path with businesses easily accessible to the Trail.

Light Industrial District

The Light Industrial District includes areas with a concentration of existing industrial and warehousing uses such as, Mount Snow Airport, the transfer station, North Branch Fire District's spray fields and immediate areas adjacent thereto. It is the most intensive land use category.

The purpose of the Light Industrial District is to provide areas for light industry such as warehousing, manufacturing, and related operations that have a non-objectionable effect on the surrounding area and the community as a whole. The intent is to reserve these areas exclusively for light industrial and related purposes.

Primary uses in the Light Industrial District should include the following and similar uses: light industrial and manufacturing uses, and storage. Residential uses are not encouraged. As these districts are relatively small and surrounded by residential areas, it is critical that screening be provided to avoid adverse impacts on neighboring properties.

Resort Center District

The Resort Center District is comprised of lands that have already been committed to resort-related residential and commercial development. This district is comprised of the Mount Snow base area as well as some land extending from Snow Vida south to Carinthia.

The purpose of the Resort Development District is to provide for tourist, resort development in the form of single family and multifamily units intended for use as resort lodging as well as motels and hotels. The Resort Center District also provides for commercial recreation facilities and for commercial development aimed at serving the transient visitor. The commercial development is meant to primarily service the market created by the needs and desires of the tourist population accessing the resort area.

Primary uses in the Resort Center District include a broad range of residential, non-residential, and lodging uses. Compact development is desired in this area to protect open spaces and to prevent a linear pattern of development.

Vacation Overlay District

The Vacation Overlay District includes several resort-related residential developments including Greenspring, Timber Creek, and Boulder Ridge.

The purpose of the Vacation Overlay District is to provide for tourist, resort development in the form of single family and multifamily units in close proximity to Mount Snow but at a lower density than in the Resort District.

Residential uses should be at a density of one unit per half (1/2) acre while commercial uses should be at a density of one unit per two acres.

Other Land Use Concerns

The Town, throughout various elements of this Town Plan, identifies a variety of natural resources and areas of environmental concern, including: floodplain areas, wildlife corridors, and wetlands. The density and impact of existing and potential development, in and around each of these areas, are the primary issues concerning these resources.

Dover’s Floodplain Zones are based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) *Flood Insurance Rate Maps*. There are approximately 71 buildings¹ within FEMA-designated “A” zones, primarily along the Deerfield River. Development in Special Flood Hazards must meet additional standards to ensure that the development is protected against flood damage.

Dover has a landscape-scale Sensitive Wildlife Resource Overlay District designated within the community. This overlay is designed to protect black bear migration areas where the bear are known to travel between their dens and food sources. The Zoning Bylaw mandates review by the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife District Biologist and encourages clustering development within the overlay to promote additional open space and habitat.

Future Consideration

The most pressing land use issue facing Dover is the area along Route 100 from West Dover Village north to the area around Tannery Road. This is an area of linear commercial development, characterized by large parking lots, limited landscaping and pedestrian access with significant structural setbacks, thus facilitating increased automobile trips and dependency. Improvements that could be made to this area include landscaping, the addition of sidewalks and pedestrian connections between businesses, reduction in curb cuts and traffic management. Creating a Master Plan for this area will serve to address a broad range of issues affecting the existing concentration of businesses along this corridor.

3.3 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1: To preserve Dover’s villages.

Policy 1.1 Support the continuation of existing land uses in the Village Zoning Districts.

Strategies

- a. Continue to allow a diversity of uses in village areas, including:
 - Town offices, meeting house, town green, post office, schools, public library and places of worship.
 - Small retail establishments such as country/general stores, cafés or galleries.
 - Single and multi-family residential houses on small lots, settled with a network of connecting roads in close proximity to the village center.

Policy 1.2 Protect the historic character and amenity of the village through appropriate architectural design, layout and scale of public, commercial and residential structures and related infrastructure.

Strategies

- a. Work with the Historical Society to identify, designate and preserve historic architectural and consider writing regulations for a Historic District in the Zoning Bylaw.

¹ This was calculated using E-911 data and combining condominium units into one building.

Goal 2: To ensure that Dover is well served by attractive commercial districts in appropriate locations that meet the day-to-day needs of its residents and visitors.

Policy 2.1 Ensure that development in the Village District and Planned Commercial District contributes to the evolution of a pedestrian-based commercial center.

Strategies

- a. Develop a Route 100 Master Plan to address the character and form of development and redevelopment activities along Route 100 with the goal of transforming it from an automobile dependent corridor to an area that capitalizes on the recreational, scenic, transportation, and employment resources and mitigates weaknesses in the existing development. This Plan should address:
 - Changing the development pattern from linear to nodal;
 - Traffic circulation;
 - Sidewalks, pathways, and public transit;
 - Location of parking lots,
 - Building design; and
 - Infrastructure.
- b. Incorporate access management standards in the Zoning Bylaw for use during Site Plan review.

Policy 2.2 Design buildings to a human scale for aesthetic appeal, pedestrian comfort and compatibility with other land uses.

Strategies

- a. Consider adopting design standards in the Planned Commercial District.
- b. Investigate performance-based zoning standards in the Planned Commercial and Village Districts to provide flexibility in housing density, lot coverage, yard setbacks, and landscaping.
- c. Direct public investment to enhance and maintain streetscapes along Route 100.

Goal 3: To encourage the continued availability of appropriate land for agriculture, forestry and recreation.

Policy 3.1 Maintain the Resource Reserve and Conservation District as an area primarily for natural habitat, forestry, and recreation.

Strategies

- a. Maintain an overall density of one unit per 27 acres.
- b. Continue to provide for the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District include lands in the Resource Reserve and Conservation District as sending areas.

Policy 3.2 Encourage long-term management of agricultural and forest lands for uses that promote sustained yield of crops and timber products.

Strategies

- a. Explore ways to fund land conservation in Dover.
- b. Review and revise as necessary the management plan for the Dover Town Forest.

Policy 3.3 Encourage the maintenance of open land in order to provide a diversity of habitat, protection of sensitive areas, and maintenance of rural character.

Strategies

- a. Consider adopting Subdivision Regulations to control the way that land is divided to accommodate land uses and supporting infrastructure.
- b. Continue to require review by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife District Biologist of all development located in the Sensitive Wildlife Area Overlay District.

Goal 4: To achieve a balance between development activities, preservation of natural resources, and open space in Dover.

Policy 4.1 Require that development projects integrate natural features and resources into the site design so that the losses are minimized.

Strategies

- a. Revise site plan review standards to ensure that overall site design is consistent with the purpose and character of the district within which a development is located. Standards and conditions should emphasize those considerations related to the internal layout of the site, the physical design, and the functional integration of the site with surrounding properties and uses.
- b. Develop standards in the Zoning Bylaw that prohibit development on slopes greater than 25 percent.

Policy 4.2 Provide for effective land development opportunities while allowing for innovative land solutions in the Zoning Bylaw.

Strategies

- a. Continue to provide for flexibility in the Zoning Bylaw for the provision of Affordable Housing.
- b. For Planned Developments, include standards for residential density bonuses above the limit otherwise established in the Zoning Bylaw in exchange for the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands and open space. The maximum density bonus should not exceed 25% of the limit otherwise established by the land use category.

CHAPTER 4

NATURAL RESOURCES

4.1 Air Resources

Dover's air quality is generally good and among its most attractive and valued assets. In some cases however, the potential for air pollution is high. Local threats to air quality include combustion by-products from wood stoves, fireplaces, and vehicular exhaust. The Deerfield Valley's air quality is also affected by pollutants from distant sources, including acid precipitation originating in other states. These can damage poorly buffered soils and water resources as well as plant and animal life. Careless forestry and waste management practices are also potential threats to air quality.

Outdoor wood furnaces or boilers are gaining popularity across the country as a home heating method. These are free-standing combustion units located outside the home or structure that is to be heated. When used properly these systems can be a clean and economical way to heat a house and water. Nonetheless, concerns over the safety and environmental impacts of these heating devices, particularly the production of offensive odors and potential health effects of uncontrolled emissions exist. The State of Vermont does have regulations pertaining to these systems. Among the provisions are the fact that they must be located at least 200 feet from neighboring residences and that the stack on the furnace must be higher than the roof line if the furnace is between 200 and 500 feet from the nearest neighboring home.² The State regulations also permit towns to have their own ordinances regulating outdoor wood furnaces.

4.2 Water Resources

Groundwater

Groundwater provides the primary supply of potable water in Dover. Bedrock fractures, saturated sand and gravel deposits, and springs are the most common sources of groundwater. Groundwater in rock fractures is highly susceptible to contamination because any pollution contained in water does not get a chance to be filtered. Once contamination occurs, control and abatement are extremely difficult.

There are approximately 49 small-scale public water systems permitted in Dover. A public water system can either be a Public community system which serves residents on a year round basis or Public Non-Community which serve non-residential groups of people. Dover has a high number of transient non-community water systems that serve restaurants and motels. There are also a high number of non-transient non-community water systems that serve condominium developments. Public water supplies are regulated by VT DEC, as required by the US EPA.

Each public water system has an accompanying source protection area. The current Vermont Water Supply Rule defines a source protection area as the surface and subsurface area through which contaminants are likely to move toward and reach a collection point that supplies a public water system. Within the 200-foot radius of this primary collection area, contamination impacts

² Vermont Air Pollution Regulation, section 5-204, Outdoor Waterstoves (September 1997).

are likely to be immediate and certain. Beyond that radius, source protection areas are tested and mapped to determine further sources of probably and possible contamination. Where there has been no mapping the DEC assumes a circular area with a 3,000-foot radius around the water source. Jurisdiction over the protection of public water supply sources rests with DEC.

Threats to groundwater and wells include stormwater runoff, road salt, contaminated runoff from paved areas, underground storage tanks and failing septic systems. Another threat is when water is pumped at rates exceeding the aquifer's capacity resulting in yields that do not adequately meet the needs of users.

There is a rising concern over the continued availability of groundwater. Development threatens both the quality and quantity of water. As more wells are drilled, the impact on existing wells has become apparent. Act 250 requires applicants to evaluate the proposed impact to other wells within a distance of 1,000 feet. Since many wells share common aquifers, the impact of a new well can occur well past the 1,000 feet. There have been a number of reported cases of well depletion in which property owners have had to dig new wells. This is of particular concern in the vicinity of Mount Snow.

Surface Waters

The predominant rivers and streams are the North Branch of the Deerfield River and its tributaries and the Rock River and its tributaries. The North Branch of the Deerfield River generally runs parallel to Route 100. The Rock River originates in the Dover Town Forest, flows through Newfane and joins the West River. The headwaters area, including the cascades, is recognized as a particularly significant natural area.

Vermont is required to monitor surface water quality under Section 305(b) of the Federal Clean Water Act. The most recent report, dated April 2006, shows that while the majority of surface waters in Dover are in good condition, there are three exceptions. Iron Stream, a tributary to Tannery Brook, has high levels of iron that impair aquatic life. The source is subject to ongoing assessment by the State of Vermont. Storm water runoff and erosion from construction activities and land development have impaired the Deerfield River from Tannery Brook Road to 0.2 miles above Snow Lake. This presents both aesthetic and aquatic life support issues for the river. Finally, the Deerfield River in the vicinity of West Dover Village has high levels of *E.Coli* from an unknown source. Further assessment is needed to determine the cause(s) and source(s).

Vermont has adopted a basin planning approach to protecting, restoring or enhancing water resources. Lands within Dover drain into both the West River Watershed (Basin 11) and the Deerfield River Watershed (Basin 12). The Basin Management Plan for Basin 11 is currently in draft stages. The Plan inventories uses and problems, identifies strategies to remedy problems, and assigns Water Management Types to maintain or attain desired water quality. Issues such as water quality, erosion control, stormwater runoff, deforestation and buffer loss, and flow regulation and flood control are addressed within the basin planning process. To date, there has been no activity on a Basin Management Plan for the Deerfield Basin.

Floodplains

Floodplains are relatively flat areas adjacent to a stream or river that experience occasional or periodic flooding. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped flood hazard

areas, areas with a one percent chance of flooding in any given year. These areas include the North Branch of the Deerfield River from Snow Lake south, Blue Brook, Cold Brook, Ellis Brook and portions of the Rock River. The official Flood Hazard Maps are available at the Town Offices.

The Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and has adopted and enforces a Flood Hazard Bylaw. By doing so, property owners in Dover are able to obtain federal insured flood insurance at affordable rates and flood disaster assistance. The Flood Hazard Bylaw regulates development within the FEMA-defined flood hazard areas by imposing design standards that are intended to minimize property damage during flood events.

4.3 Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are frequently inundated by surface or ground water to support vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands take such diverse forms as marshes, swamps, sloughs, potholes, fens, river and lake overflows, mud flats, bogs, vernal pools, and ponds. It is well recognized that wetlands provide important habitat for certain species of wildlife, filter pollutants from runoff, and provide flood storage.

The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Maps show approximately 97 different wetlands in Dover comprising approximately 260 acres. To date, a comprehensive field study of wetlands in Dover has not been performed. DEC's *Vermont Wetland Rules* categorizes wetlands as Class I, II, or III. Class I wetland areas are those that are exceptional or irreplaceable in contribution so they merit the highest level of protection (100-foot buffer zone). There are presently no Class I wetlands in Dover. Class II wetland areas are those wetland acres which are found to be significant enough to merit some protection (50-foot buffer zones). Class III wetland areas are those wetlands that have not been determined to be sufficiently significant enough to merit any protection. However, these wetlands may be protected by other federal, state, or local regulations. Class I and II wetlands (referred to as significant wetlands) are protected by the *Vermont Wetland Rules* and require conditional use review by the Vermont Wetlands Office prior to development. Tannery Wildlife refuge monitors and protects the wetland area draining into the North Branch from Tannery Road to Snow Lake.

Wetland Functions and Values

from the *Vermont Wetland Rules*

- water storage for flood water and storm runoff
- surface and groundwater protection
- fisheries habitat
- wildlife and migratory bird habitat
- hydrophytic vegetation habitat
- threatened and endangered species habitat
- education and research in natural sciences
- recreational value and economic benefits
- open space and aesthetics
- erosion control

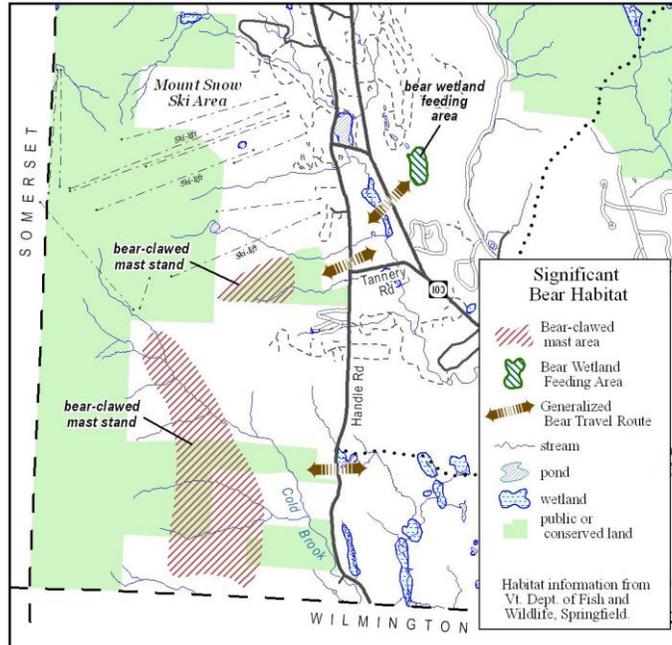
Regulatory methods of protecting wetlands from pollution and destruction include requirements for erosion and sedimentation control plans and enforcement of those plans, minimum setbacks for buildings and septic system leachfields, and minimum vegetative buffer requirements. Currently, Dover relies on the state's regulations to protect wetlands.

4.4 Wildlife Resources

Wildlife Habitat

There are several documented bear habitat areas in Dover that are important to ensuring a viable bear population in Vermont (see Figure 4-1). During late spring and summer, bear are known to feed on lower elevation vegetation and in wetlands. Wetlands near Handle Road and the North Branch of the Deerfield River corridor are important bear feeding areas. Bear also feed on Jack-in-the-Pulpit and skunk cabbage, both of which have been found in Dover. There is an important Beech tree stand located in between Mount Snow and Haystack Mountain. Beech nuts are one of the most important food sources for bears in the early spring. The Town places a high priority on protecting these important habitats and have created a Sensitive Habitat Overlay District to require development proposals be reviewed by the District Wildlife Biologist from the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife in order to minimize and mitigate the impacts of development on these critical wildlife resources.

Figure 4-1: Significant Bear Habitat



The Town places a high priority on protecting these important habitats and have created a Sensitive Habitat Overlay District to require development proposals be reviewed by the District Wildlife Biologist from the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife in order to minimize and mitigate the impacts of development on these critical wildlife resources.

In addition to large forested blocks, other important wildlife habitat areas include the floodplains and woodland areas adjacent to portions of the Deerfield River. Although the undeveloped land adjacent to the river is sometimes narrow, this area serves as an important wildlife corridor that links various types of habitat together. The Tannery Wildlife Refuge is an important part of this wildlife corridor. Located at the corner of Handle Road and Tannery Road, the refuge is comprised of 42 acres of donated land for conservation purposes.

The extensive forest edges in Dover provide deer habitat and a number of small deer wintering areas. Wintering areas are usually comprised of hemlock or pine tree stands and can be utilized by generations of deer over many decades if appropriate habitat conditions are maintained. The Department of Fish and Wildlife mapped deer wintering areas using aerial photography, infrared aerial photos and ground confirmation. Many of these documented areas are in poor condition. The mapping of these wintering areas needs updating. The Dover Conservation Commission, formed at Town Meeting in 2007, has been working on a natural resource inventory. Particular attention is being given to updating deer yard data.

Another important habitat area is a winter bat hibernaculum located on Mount Snow. Located in a former mine, the hibernaculum provides constant temperature and protection for winter hibernation. These areas are important for the continuation of the bat population and it is critical that winter access to the cave be closed off in order to protect the hibernating bats. The Dover Conservation Commission is working with Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to survey and

evaluate the hibernaculum and document the bat species. According to Vermont Fish and Wildlife's 2004 publication *Conserving Vermont Natural Heritage*, there are nine bat species in Vermont. The Indiana bat and the small-footed bat are protected by the Vermont State Endangered Species Law and are listed as Endangered and Threatened respectively.

Wildlife Species

The black bear is native to Vermont and primarily found in remote, forested habitat. The black bear population in Dover is unique because the bears are trying to live around extensive land development. The result is that bears are somewhat dependent on humans for food. There have been high incidences of encounters between bears and humans along the Route 100 corridor. To decrease these encounters, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Biologists recommend that bird feeders only be placed outdoors from December 1 to April 1.

Bicknell's thrush is one of eastern North American's most at-risk song birds. This breeding bird is has been found at high elevations within the Green Mountain National Forest, including on Mount Snow. Threats to the bird population come from the degradation of bird habitat from both acid rainfall and habitat fragmentation. The bird is included on the Audubon Society's Watch List, which identifies declining bird populations.

Native brook trout were once abundant in most of Dover's streams. Extensive lumbering in the last century has impaired or destroyed this fish habitat. Some trout still survive in many streams along with warmer water fishes in the lower stream portions. Erosion and siltation of streams on the high and steep slopes where development is occurring are an increasing threat to this habitat. Brown trout and rainbow trout are known to inhabit and spawn in the North Branch and in Beaver Brook.

Bear, bobcat and abundant varying hare and fox populations have always been and continue to be present. Beaver and marten, introduced in the past, have successfully established themselves. Ruffed grouse and woodcock can be found in wetland areas. Wild turkey and coyotes are also common.

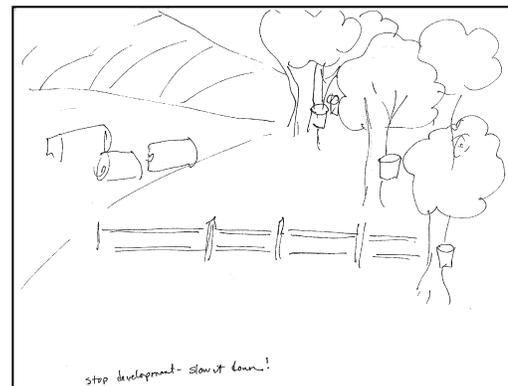
4.5 Rare Species

The Large-leaved sandwort (*Moehringia macrophylla*) has been documented in East Dover. This is a small perennial herb whose eastern range in North America is from Labrador to New England. There have been 17 occurrences in New England with 12 being documented in Vermont. In general, the Large-leaved sandwort is associated with serpentine habitats that receive little human disturbance. Development, logging, road and power line management, canopy closure and invasive species can threaten Large-leaved sandwort populations in New England.

4.6 Open Space Resources

Agricultural Lands

Although most of the valleys and lower hills were once cleared for subsistence farming, prime agricultural soils



A vision for maintaining the rural countryside

are present in few areas and many old farms have been reverted to forest. On the lower slopes of East Dover farming is still practiced, with operations primarily in beef cattle, beefalo, maple sugaring and hay crops. Dover's agricultural resources are valuable and need protection. The presence of working farms and fields with wooded hillsides enhance the aesthetics of the Town and encourage visitor enjoyment on which the economy depends.

Forestland

Forestland is the most prominent landscape feature in Dover. About two-thirds of Dover is forested. Dover's forestland is primarily the northern hardwood forest. Beech, birch, and maple trees are the typical trees found in the northern hardwood forest. In the higher elevations, spruce and fir are common.

The Green Mountain National Forest has considerable land holdings in Dover. The western boundary is part of the Green Mountain National Forest and has been designated primarily for recreation use. The National Forest Proclamation Boundary extends further into Dover and includes land still in private ownership.

Forests contribute significantly to the natural beauty and rural character of Dover while also serving as buffers between developed areas. Forestlands provide open space for passive recreation and for other outdoor activities. Depending on the types of trees available, forests also serve as an important source of materials for wood products, firewood, sap for maple syrup and other products. In addition, forests provide critical habitat for a diversity of wildlife.

Forest management is important to the environmental and economic well-being of Dover's forests. Responsible harvesting of forest resources will support the local economy and provide access to local forest products. Considerable care should be taken during both commercial timber cuts and cuts to create open space for development to ensure the conservation of soils by mitigating erosion. Because large forested tracts are another aspect of the rural character of the community, visible clear cuts, either for commercial harvests or for development, should be carefully avoided or buffered.

Vermont's Use Value Appraisal Program (commonly referred to as "Current Use") is currently the strongest incentive for maintaining large blocks of private forest land. In order to provide greater tax equity for forest and agriculture landowners as well as to encourage long-term productive use of Vermont's agricultural and forest land, the program allows farm and forest lands to be taxed on their resource production rather than their value for development purposes. Forest parcels enrolled in the program must have a minimum of 25 contiguous acres to enroll in the program (not counting the 2 acres surrounding any dwelling). The forest land is required to be managed according to the provisions of a 10 year forest management plan that is approved by the County Forester. Agricultural land has a different set of eligibility requirements that are similar to the forest requirements. While Use Value Appraisal reduces the burden for landowners, land can be taken out of the program with payment of a penalty. Therefore, it does not provide absolute assurance of continued open space.

Dover is expected to remain primarily forested because there is a large amount of land already conserved and much of the forested land in is on steep, fragile soil that is unsuitable for development or clearing. The challenge will be to target conservation efforts to prevent forest fragmentation. Many of the large forested areas are located in the Conservation Zoning District

adopted in 2007 where low development densities of not less than one unit per 27 acres are now required. In addition, a Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District, also adopted in 2007, was developed to help retain the rural character of Dover.

Natural and Fragile Areas

Fragile and natural areas comprise some of the irreplaceable habitats, ecosystems and natural features found as a part of Dover's heritage. While no systematic inventory has been prepared, there are some significant areas in the Town. For example, there is unique sugar maple stand given its elevation in the Dover Town Forest.

Other areas of land which are unsuitable for development include wetlands, areas of steep slopes and high elevation lands. Dover's wetlands, as discussed above, provide wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge and flood control. All lands above 2,500 feet and steep slopes over 25 percent grades are fragile areas, often consisting of thin soils overlaying ledges of bedrock. They are susceptible to erosion and high rates of runoff, particularly when cleared for development. Generally, steep slopes should not be developed. Clearing for agricultural, forestry, and ski area activities should be conducted with careful attention to erosion control and stormwater management.

Open Space Protection

Dover contains a wide variety of conservation and publicly owned open space lands. These parcels are widely distributed throughout Town. The map shows the following types of land:

- Land owned by the Town of Dover with management responsibilities;
- Land owned by the Green Mountain National Forest
- Significant easement areas managed by the Vermont Land Trust or Trust for Public Land;

4.6 Earth and Mineral Resources

Earth and mineral resources in Dover are limited. Limestone and iron were mined in the past but scant quantities make this no longer feasible. Some sand and gravel deposits are still actively used. The Town relies on sources outside its boundaries for sand and gravel resources on road maintenance and construction projects.

Future Considerations

1. Ground Water Study

Without good maps of the location of important groundwater, it is difficult to plan for long-term protection of the resource and ensure long-term reliability of the resource. Dover should request surficial and aquifer mapping from the Vermont Geological Survey to aid in groundwater protection and planning.

2. Wetlands Inventory

The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps are incomplete because they were made using aerial photography at a very small scale. A more detailed inventory will more accurately reveal the wetland areas and boundaries in Dover. The Conservation Commission should undertake an

inventory of wetlands and evaluate the various functions of the wetland areas. Data from the inventory should be used to create wetland buffer requirements in the Dover Zoning Bylaw.

3. Open Space Plan

An Open Space Plan will identify priority conservation areas in Dover and target conservation efforts to areas that will provide the maximum amount of public benefit. An Open Space Plan can include an inventory and map of open space resources and lands as well as short-term and long-term conservation priorities.

4.7 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1: To maintain and protect natural resources including clean drinking water supplies, clean air, surface water quality, wetlands, large forested areas, open fields, wildlife and their habitat areas.

Policy 1.1 Reduce the harmful effects of poor air quality on human health.

Strategies

- a. Educate the public on the benefits of public transportation, encourage its use and explore other options for reducing transportation emissions.
- b. Study the issue of whether outdoor wood furnaces should be regulated and, if recommended, propose either an ordinance or performance standards for adoption.

Policy 1.2 Maintain or enhance the chemical, physical and biological quality Dover's surface waters.

Strategies

- a. Support surface water classification and management strategies that will maintain or enhance existing water quality.
- b. Use road maintenance methods and materials that will maintain or improve water quality, such as those described in the *Vermont Better Backroads Manual*.
- c. Limit development in designated floodplains. Continue to administer and enforce the standards in the Flood Hazard Area Regulations in the Dover Zoning Bylaw. Update as necessary to maintain eligibility in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- d. Encourage the State to undertake Basin Planning on Basin 12.

Policy 1.3 Manage future demands to ensure that existing and realistically future water supplies will be adequate.

Strategies

- a. Undertake an in-depth groundwater and aquifer study to evaluate groundwater recharge potential, groundwater levels, groundwater availability, surficial material thickness, and areas of concern for naturally-occurring contaminants.

Policy 1.4 Treat stormwater runoff to remove contaminants before they discharge to ground or surface waters.

Strategies:

- a. Continue to require erosion control measures be implemented whenever soils are disturbed.
- b. Work with property owners to manage storm water runoff from parking lots and driveways.

Policy 1.5 Retain wetland areas in their natural state for wildlife habitat protection, as retention areas of surface runoff, and for recreational and resource values.

Strategies

- a. Conduct field studies to identify and better understand wetlands.

Goal 2: To protect and enhance the ecological integrity of Dover's diverse wildlife species and their habitats.

Policy 2.1 Maintain existing populations and species diversity.

Strategies

- a. Condition new development in a way that prevents loss or degradation of critical wildlife habitat.
- b. Continue to require that the Department of Environmental Conservation District Biologist review any proposal for development in the Sensitive Wildlife Habitat Overlay District.

Policy 2.2 Conserve bat hibernaculum in Dover.

Strategies

- a. Survey and evaluate the bat hibernaculum on Mount Snow and other areas.
- b. Discourage winter access to the bat hibernaculum by gating the entrance to the cave.

Goal 3: To preserve the rural character by protecting large blocks of contiguous forestland, fields, and other open space from development and by promoting sustainable forestry, agricultural and other resources.

Policy 3.1 Enhance the economic viability of agriculture and forestry activity in Windham.

Strategies

- a. Maintain the Conservation Zoning District to protect large tracts of land.
- b. Work with the Vermont Land Trust, or other appropriate non-profit organizations to encourage the voluntary protection of productive agricultural, wetlands, conservation and forest lands. Techniques such as conservation easements or donation of land should be explored.
- c. Encourage participation in the Vermont Land Use Appraisal Program to support the viability and maintenance of farm and forest land.

Policy 3.2 Protect Dover’s fragile features and open spaces.

Strategies

- a. Revise the Zoning Bylaw to prohibit development on slopes with a grade in excess of 25% (excluding facilities necessary for the operation of downhill skiing)
- b. Maintain the Sensitive Wildlife Overlay District and the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District.
- c. Create an Open Space Plan and support and encourage land conservation organizations to work with the Town to identify and preserve lands identified in the plan as conservation priorities.

Policy 3.3 Carefully review and regulate earth and mineral resource extractions to make maximum use of the Town’s resources over time and minimize damage to natural and scenic resources.

Strategies

- a. Continue to require conditional use review for soil, sand, and gravel extractions.
- b. Require all proposals for earth and mineral extraction include a site rehabilitation plan that ensures the possibility of future use of the land.

CHAPTER 5 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

5.1 Town Government Administration

Dover is governed by a five member Selectboard which is elected by voters at the annual Town Meeting. The Board is assisted by an Administrative Assistant who carries out many of the day-to-day functions of the Town. Also elected at Town Meeting are the Town Treasurer, Town Clerk, Auditors, Listers, Constables, School Directors, Library Trustees and others.

The Selectboard appoints the members of the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Road Commissioner, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, Health Officer, Zoning Administrator, and others.

5.2 Town Facilities

Town Office

The Town Office is located on Route 100. The Town Office houses the several departments including the Town Clerk, Treasurer, Board of Selectman's Administrative Assistant, Zoning/Sign/Health/Septic Administrator, and the Board of Lister's. The upstairs meeting room is used for various board and commission meetings.



A vision for a public park next to the Town Offices.

The most pressing problem at the Town Office is storage space. The Town is presently converting a Lister's office into a file room to keep up with the requirements to store information. The Town is also looking into scanning documents onto CDs as a way to reduce paper.

Town Hall

Situated on the Dover Common, the Dover Town Hall serves as a function hall for various events. The Town Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Town Hall is currently under a no-drinking order from the State. The building shares a well with the library and a child care facility that has been found to have high chloride levels. Testing at the library and child care facility have shown high levels of lead and copper. The Town is actively addressing this issue and has secured a loan from the State to upgrade the pipes from copper piping to plastic piping. As of January 2007, a consultant has been selected to perform the work and will be proceeding in the near future.

Highway Department

The Highway Department is located off of Dover Hill Road. It houses the town highway maintenance equipment. A covered salt shed is also located on the property. The facility is currently in need of a working generator. The current generator provides only enough power to provide fuel for the trucks. A larger salt shed would also be a desirable addition to the facility.

5.3 Educational Services

Elementary education in Dover (pre-K through 6) is provided at the Dover Elementary School. Total enrollment based on 2006/2007 figures for the school is 83 students. The school has adequate capacity as it built for approximately 250 students. School enrollment over the past 10 years has fluctuated from the 2006/2007 low of 83 to 110 in 1996/1997.

Students from Dover have the choice of attending any local secondary school (grades 7-12) in adjacent towns (Brattleboro Union High School, Twin Valley High School, and Leland & Gray Union High School) or an approved private school. Tuition at a private school is paid by the Town at the State approved average tuition rate; the student must pay the difference between the State figure and the private school's tuition. In the 2006/2007 school year, there were 65 secondary students.

An elementary school board consisting of five directors oversees the Dover Elementary School. They are elected by ballot at Dover's School District Meeting held at the time of the annual Town Meeting. The Windham Central Supervisory Union provides administrative, curriculum, and personnel support for a number of school districts, including Dover.

In 1999, for the purposes of providing an equalized financing system of education, the legislature enacted Act 60. This law established a statewide property tax that was equal among all towns. The Town received an equalized amount of money from the State for every student they enrolled. State officials based the state block grant formula on two variables: equalized pupils (not an actual headcount) and compared it to the statewide average.

In 2003, the Vermont legislature passed Act 68, which contained substantial changes to Act 60. Act 68 repealed the property sharing pool where per pupil spending links to the town's tax rates. Towns split the grand list between residential properties (houses, mobile homes, or farms) and non-residential property, such as commercial, industrial, camps, vacation homes, open land (not used as a primary residence for more than six months of each year). Under Act 68, non-residential property is subject to a higher statewide education property tax rate than residential properties. These changes to the financing system began to take effect with the 2004-05 school year and taxpayers' summer 2004 tax bills.

Education costs in Dover have been increasing. The reasons for this are similar to those that affect school districts all over Vermont which include increases in government mandates regarding the type and quality of education, salaries and accompanying benefits, high school tuition, costs of special education programs, transportation, and operation and maintenance costs. In addition, the current Education Funding System is a complicated issue that has affected Dover and other schools across Vermont.

Adult education opportunities for Dover residents are available regionally. The Community College of Vermont has a learning center in Brattleboro that offers associate degrees, career-related certificates, and credit and non-credit training programs.

5.4 Childcare

The availability of safe and affordable child care services is important both to local residents and to the Town's economy. Child day care facilities serving a limited number of full and part-time children are allowed in all districts where single family homes are permitted, in accordance with Vermont state law. Facilities serving a larger number of children are allowed with Development Review Board approval in all districts.

For over 30 years, Kids in the Country Child Care and Preschool has been serving the needs of Dover families. What began as the first licensed child care program in the Deerfield Valley has grown into a center that incorporates a pre-school, an after-school program and an infant/toddler room. Using grant funding from the Child Care Services Division of the Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, the center was able to expand its programs to children age 6 weeks to 2 years old. The after-school program serves children ages 6 to 12.

There are numerous registered home day care providers and licensed early education programs offered in Dover. Additional information on these child care facilities as well as information on services for families, providers, employers, and people interested in opening a new facility can be found through the Child Development Division of the Vermont Department for Children and Families (Agency of Human Services) and the Windham Child Care Association located in Brattleboro.

Child care programs' hours of operation often do not meet the needs of parents working non-traditional or mixed shifts. Only 17% of licensed child care centers in the State are open before 7 am and only 3% after 6 pm. Overnight and weekend care is offered by only 10% statewide.³ According to the *Windham County, Vermont Child Care Needs Assessment* (2002), most child care centers in Windham County follow an 8 am to 5 pm schedule. Given the high number of hospitality jobs in Dover, there may be an unmet need for an evening child care program.

5.5 Library

The Dover Free Library, founded in 1913, is located in a former Brick School on the Dover Common. Since occupying the building in 1972, several additions have been constructed. In 1987 a two-room addition added to the back of the building and in 2002, a Children's Room was added. The Community Room can accommodate up to 60 people and can be used for cultural, recreational, or educational programs.

The library is currently staffed by a Director, Library Assistant, and Children's Librarian. It is open 28 hours a week. The library is guided by a volunteer Board of Trustees and funded by the Town. The Friends of the Library does special fundraising to supplement the budget.

The Library's circulation numbers for 2005-2006 totaled 15,648 items including books and other items such as CDs, magazines, DVDs, videos, and tapes. There are public internet access stations and "wi-fi" is available for laptops. The Library offers extensive public programs including preschool story time, book discussions, garden tours, family films, speakers, and displays by local artisans.

³ Vermont Child Care: A Study of Wages, Credentials, Benefits and Market Rates, 2001. Vermont Child Care Services Division

5.6 Wastewater Disposal

The North Branch Fire District #1 supplies sewage treatment to a portion of Dover. The Fire District functions as an independent municipality, governed by the Prudential Committee whose members are elected annually by all registered voters in the District. The Committee is responsible for the management of the sewage disposal facility, allocation of gallonage and setting of fees and taxes for its support.

Located on Dorr Fitch Road, the sewage treatment plant provides secondary treatment for wastewater generated by much of the commercial and vacation housing in West Dover. The plant was built between 1972 and 1975. Treated effluent is disposed of by over-land spray onto lands owned by the North Branch Fire District #1. Biosolids are shipped during the winter months for incineration at a landfill, and during the summer months are spread onto land owned by the Fire District.

The sewage system is based on user fees with the fees going towards operational costs. Connections are made within the service area upon payment of a connection fee, which is used for capital budgeting. All users within 250 feet are required to hook into the system unless they can provide documentation from a licensed site designer or engineer that their septic system is working properly.

The amount of sewage the treatment plant processes varies seasonally. Based on restrictions for the spray fields, the total capacity of the plant is .475 million gallons per day (mgd). At peak (holiday week during the winter), the plant processes about 1 mgd. The plant is able to process more than the total capacity of the spray fields because there are two holding ponds. Typical disposal during the summer is between 204,750 and 237,833 gallons per day.

The Fire District recently purchased a little over 20 acres in neighboring Wilmington to create a subsurface effluent disposal system. The project is in planning stages and groundwater monitoring was completed during 2007. If permitted by the State, this Pilot Program would allow the prior property owner to use heavy equipment to hay the field above the subsurface disposal system. The North Branch Fire District is upgrading existing lines and ditches so that they are above ground water level and working with Efficiency Vermont to improve energy efficiency.

Areas not currently served by the District use individual, on-site septic systems as the principal means of wastewater disposal. These systems limit the growth to lots that are of a sufficient size to allow both a well and septic. On July 1, 2007, the State of Vermont became the sole administrator of on-site septic systems and potable water supplies and is responsible for issuing permits.

5.7 Public Safety

Health and Emergency Services

Dover currently depends on organizations located inside and outside of the community to provide necessary health care and emergency services. There are medical professionals located

throughout the Deerfield Valley. Deerfield Valley Health Center in Wilmington and Mountain Sports Medicine, located at the base of Mount Snow was purchased by Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in 2007, and re-established as Base Camp RapidCare. It will be open during the ski season and during special events to service resort visitors' injuries and illnesses.

Hospitals serving Dover residents are Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital in Brattleboro, and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington. Some people travel to Hanover, NH and Albany, NY for major medical and surgical needs.

Deerfield Valley Rescue, Inc. (DVR) provides 24 hour ambulance coverage to Dover, Wilmington, Searsburg, and Marlboro. DVR is staffed by two full-time paid staff members and volunteers trained in emergency care and transport. They have one ambulance stationed in West Dover. DVR is funded through a combination of subscription services, billing for services rendered, and donations. The East Dover Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. also provides emergency care to East Dover residents and assists DVR with its volunteer rescue squad emergency care attendants.

Police Department

The Dover Police Department is a full-time department with a central station located on Route 100. The department consists of a Police Chief, Sergeant, Investigator, 2 full-time Police Officers, 1 part-time Police Officer, and a Dispatcher/Office Manager. Vermont State Police and other law enforcement agencies assist in providing law enforcement coverage in Dover.

Fire Departments

The Town is served by two fire departments: East Dover Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. and the West Dover Fire Department. Both departments participate in a mutual aid program, making personnel and equipment available to neighboring towns in the event of a shortage.

Many of the larger residential and commercial development in Town have installed water systems for fire protection. In areas that are not served by any water system, the fire department must obtain water from surface waters. In some locations, water sources and dry hydrants have been installed.

5.8 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling

Dover is a member of the Windham Solid Waste Management District. The purpose of the District is to provide for the effective and efficient management of solid waste generated by its eighteen member municipalities and their residents. Membership in the District establishes a guaranteed waste disposal option for the Town. Each member-town has a representative to the District.

A transfer station and recycling bins, located on Landfill Road, are maintained for use by Dover's property owners and residents. A Solid Waste Ordinance adopted in 1992 directs the Town to charge for the use of the transfer station. Current rates for household trash are \$2.00 per bag with a valid transfer sticker (\$4.00 without a valid sticker). There is a bulk rate fee as well as fees to dispose of miscellaneous items. Citizens 62 and older can get a free transfer station pass.

5.9 Communications

- Telephone Service: Dover's local distance telephone service is currently provided by Verizon. A variety of providers are available for long distance service.

In February 2008, the Vermont Public Service Board approved the sale of Verizon's landline business to FairPoint Communications.

- Wireless Telephone: Wireless telephone services are limited in the Deerfield Valley. Service is available along portions of the Route 100 corridor. Spotty service is available in other areas of town. Verizon is currently installing a cellular tower on Mount Snow. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 preserved state and local regulatory authority for the placement, construction or modification of wireless facilities. In response to this Act, Dover adopted a telecommunications ordinance. As of 2007, wireless service was unavailable in many parts of Dover and signal quality is unreliable in others.
- Internet Access and Broadband: Dial-up Internet services are available through a variety of local and national providers. Duncan Cable offers broadband Internet services to residents within their service territory in West Dover.

As presented to the Vermont Public Service Board, FairPoint Communications is expected to extend broadband availability to over 80 percent of Verizon's current customers by 2010 as well as ensuring that half of its local exchanges will have 100 percent coverage.

- Cable Television: Cable Television Service is available to some residents of West Dover through Duncan Cable, which offers over 70 channels.

There have been efforts in other parts of Vermont to create regional fiber-optic networks, bringing high-speed internet access, television, and phone service to every home that currently has a phone or electric pole. In comparison with other technologies (DSL, cable, satellite), fiber is the fastest technology available, allowing for identical upload and download speeds. There are currently no efforts underway in the Windham region, however, a regional network could help improve communication services in Dover.

5.10 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1 To provide a cost efficient system of community services, facilities and utilities to meet present and future demands of Dover.

Policy 1.1 Provide efficient, effective, and convenient town governance.

Strategies

- a. Promote volunteerism and recruit to fill vacancies on Town committees as appropriate.

- b. Continue to evaluate and strengthen local government with technical assistance from appropriate state and regional agencies.
- c. Take advantage of municipal, state, and federal grants, as a means to finance town projects.
- d. Upgrade the generator and salt shed at the Town Highway building.

Policy 1.2 Provide high quality education while keeping within the financial capability of the Town.

Strategies

- a. Continue to plan for Dover School's long-term capital needs in order to keep tax rates and expenditures even.
- b. Monitor population and school enrollment trends to address future needs in an efficient manner.
- c. Rely on the School Board for leadership in efficiently developing and maintaining the highest quality educational opportunities consistent with the financial capabilities of the community.
- d. Support the revision of the current state education aid formula to place less emphasis on property wealth.

Policy 1.3 Protect water supplies by promoting reliable wastewater disposal.

Strategies

- a. Within the service area of North Branch Fire District #1, encourage the use of municipal wastewater disposal over the use of individual, private on-site septic systems.
- b. Support the expansion and upgrades planned to the North Branch Fire District #1 facility.
- c. Require construction of new on-site wastewater disposal to be in conformance with state regulations. Direct inquiring property owners to contact the permitting specialist at the Department of Environmental Conservation.
- d. Continue to prevent contamination of groundwater and local streams and dispose of sludge materials in conformance with State Regulations.

Policy 1.4 Support the provision of local library service, community reading programs, and information services to all residents.

Strategies

- a. Continue appropriations to the Dover Free Library in order to meet local need.

Policy 1.5 Maintain a quality level of police, fire, and ambulance services

Strategies

- a. Continue to provide financial support to both fire departments so that an effective fire protection and fire prevention system can be maintained.
- b. During site plan review require that all new development provide adequate water availability and additional equipment or infrastructure needed for effective fire protection.
- c. Ensure adequate police services for the town by periodically reviewing the police protection available to residents.

Policy 1.6 Maintain a certified solid waste transfer and recycling facility for use by Dover residents and non-residents.

Strategies

- a. Continue to participate in the Windham Solid Waste Management District.
- b. Support local recycling efforts by promoting use of the recycling bins at the town transfer station.

Policy 1.7 Promote the development of state of the art communication facilities of all types to meet the long-range needs of the community and for economic development.

Strategies

- a. Require that all applicants for cellular telecommunication towers comply with all Federal, State and Town ordinances, bylaws, and/or regulations.
- b. Review new local models for telecommunication ordinances as they become available.
- c. Establish public and private partnerships in pursuit of expanding telecommunications infrastructure and applications.

Goal 2 To enable safe and affordable child care.

Policy 2.1 Support the provision of safe and affordable child care.

Strategies

- a. Continue to allow state registered or licensed child care facilities serving 6 or fewer children as a permitted use of a single-family home in accordance with state law.
- b. Monitor the adequacy and demand of child care services, including the need for evening care.

CHAPTER 6

HOUSING

6.1 Existing Conditions

The Community Profile chapter highlights important housing trends in Dover. Some key figures from the 2000 US Census include:

- Housing growth has far surpassed population growth
- Seventy-four percent (74%) of Dover's housing units are seasonal homes
- Half of all the housing units in Dover were built after 1984

There is a diversity of housing types and living options in Dover. This diversity is not evenly distributed throughout Town, but is distributed in a logical fashion based on the Zoning Bylaw. Housing types and density vary considerably based on the suitability of the land for development, proximity to major transportation corridors and the sewer. In general, there is a progression towards less dense development proceeding further away from Mount Snow.

Most of the multi-family housing units in Dover are located around the Route 100 corridor and are used as seasonal housing. Multi-family housing has primarily been developed as Planned Unit Developments containing townhouses, condominiums, or garden style units, sometimes with on-site recreational facilities.

The eastern and northeastern portions of Town are Dover's most rural areas comprised of mostly low-density residential development. Much of the area is located in the Conservation Zoning District which was adopted in 2007. The minimum lot size for this district is 27 acres. Multi-family development is not permitted in this area.

A number of recent local regulatory changes have been passed in the hopes of influencing housing development including revisions to minimum lot sizes, permitting accessory dwelling units in all zoning districts, Planned Unit Development, Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District in which the receiving area can get a density bonus, and various provisions designed to create more affordable housing units in the Affordable Housing Article in the Zoning Bylaw.

6.2 Housing Affordability

Traditionally, housing is considered affordable when a household spends no more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing. Housing costs for renters include rent and utilities (including heat, hot water, trash disposal, and electricity). Housing costs for homeowners include mortgage principal and interest, property taxes, property insurance and utilities. Since affordability is determined by monthly costs, interest rates, the age of the home, and maintenance costs are factored into the overall costs.

The hourly wage a household must earn in order to afford a rental unit at US Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Fair Market Rent and only pay 30% of its income towards housing costs varies depending on the number of bedrooms in a unit. HUD's 2008 median rent for a two

bedroom unit in Windham County⁴ is \$873, requiring a renter to earn an hourly wage of \$16.79 (assuming a 40 hour work week) to afford. This would equal an annual income of \$34,920. In Dover, rents are likely to be higher than in other Windham County towns because of the demand for seasonal rents in the winter. Table 6-1 helps put the affordability gap for rental units in perspective.

Table 6-1: Occupational Wage Estimates for the Southern Balance of Vermont, May 2006

Occupation	Mean Hourly Wage	Mean Annual Wage
Ski Patrol/other Recreational Protective Service	\$11.51	\$23,940
Cooks, Restaurant	\$11.62	\$24,170
Maids and Housekeeping Workers	\$10.55	\$21,950
Child Care Workers	\$9.82	\$20,420
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$14.63	\$30,440
Construction Laborers	\$12.71	\$26,430
Police and Sheriff Patrol Officers	\$16.20	\$33,700
Postal Service Mail Carriers	\$19.92	\$41,440

Source: Vermont Department of Labor (<http://www.vtlni.info/public/occprjsbos.xls>)

The cost of homeownership continues to rise. According to the Vermont Department of Taxes, the median purchase price for a primary residence in Dover in 2006 (based on 5 homes sales) was \$365,000.⁵ To purchase a home at that price, an annual household income of \$121,557 would be needed.⁶ However, the median household income in Dover was only \$43,824 a year according to the 2000 US Census (median income divides the total household income distribution for the Town into two equal groups).

In addition to home prices rising, homeownership costs are also increasing. According Vermont Department of Public Service’s Fuel Price Report, in September 2004 No. 2 Fuel Oil (commonly used for home heating) was \$1.63 per gallon. This has risen to \$2.56 per gallon in September 2007, an increase of 57.1% in three years.

Currently, housing affordability in Dover is addressed through regional programs. The Windham Housing Trust (formerly Brattleboro Area Community Land Trust) has created and manages affordable housing through a variety of programs that serve low and moderate income residents. Butterfield Commons, an intergenerational mixed income housing development, located off of Handle Road was completed by Windham Housing Trust in 2006. The project consists of a 26-unit senior building, seven family apartments, and seven townhouses in four structures for family ownership. It provides much needed housing for area residents.

Windham Housing Trust can also provide income-eligible homebuyers with a subsidy towards the purchase of a qualifying home. In addition, homebuyers under this program have access to below market rate mortgages as well as financial assistance with closing costs. Southeastern

⁴ HUD calculates county values only.

⁵ The median price of primary residences sold is the middle of selling price of all primary residences sold in ascending order for the given year.

⁶ This has been calculated using the Vermont Housing Data online Home Mortgage Calculator (www.housingdata.org). It assumes a 5% down payment, average interest rates, average property taxes, average property and private mortgage insurance premiums, average closing costs, and that a homebuyer can afford to spend 30% of their income for housing expenses.

Vermont Community Action Agency (SEVCA) provides referrals to area shelters, landlord lists, and assists in completing applications for affordable housing possibilities. SEVCA also operates weatherization and fuel assistance programs for income-eligible homeowners and renters. The Southeast Vermont Housing Rehabilitation Loan Fund provides loan funding for low and moderate income homeowners to maintain safe and affordable housing.

6.3 Housing Needs

During the past 20 years, second home construction has boomed in this area. This has been a double-edged sword. The second-home market put upward pressure on land and housing costs throughout the Town, effecting housing costs for year-round residents. At the same time, Dover's economy, especially service, tourism, and building trades, benefit from the business brought in by resort and seasonal housing development.

It is imperative to assure that existing and future town residents and the workforce are served by a range of housing opportunities. The supply of single family detached, attached, and multi-family housing and their pricing is largely a function of the market. The market alone has been unable to meet all of Dover's housing needs.

6.4 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1: To encourage affordable housing in the Town, not only for low-moderate income households, but also for working middle-income households that are priced out of the market.

Policy 1.1 Promote the creation and preservation of housing that is and will continue to be affordable.

Strategies

- a. Continue to permit the conversion of structures into housing that exceeds the density requirements of the district provided that the units are managed by a Land Trust and remain affordable on a permanent basis.
- b. Reduce permit fees for the creation of affordable housing units.
- c. New developments and expansion of existing developments with a high need for seasonal workers shall make provisions for employee housing or assist in placing seasonal employees in housing designed specifically for seasonal use, such as accessory apartments or dormitories.

Policy 1.2 Support affordable housing projects initiated by non-profit organizations such as community land trusts and housing authorities as well as by for-profit organizations.

Strategies

- a. Inventory town-owned land to determine if there are suitable parcels to encourage the creations of affordable housing units. Consider putting out a Request for Proposal from developers to create affordable housing.

Goal 2: Encourage housing development in locations that promote the existing settlement pattern in Dover and preserve's the more rural areas and character.

Policy 2.1 Promote higher density development in and around West Dover Village and Mount Snow Resort.

Strategies

- a. Encourage development of future uses for structures which currently exist as inns, motels, hotels and houses in resort, vacation, commercial and village areas.

Policy 2.2 Protect the rural areas of Dover from large scale development.

Strategies

- a. Continue to provide for the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District as an incentive to preserve the rural areas of Dover and develop more densely in areas more suitable to handle development.
- b. Community character, infrastructure and natural resources should be considered in both the planning and permitting stages of a multi-family development in order to balance service requirements and environmental concerns, thereby guiding the location of multi-family developments.

Policy 2.3 Encourage a diversity of housing types.

Strategies

- a. Investigate and consider implementing the following:
 - Facilitate the conversion of existing hotel or motel space or an accessory structure into affordable housing units. Create restrictions for these conversions to ensure that units do rent to those whose annual household income does not exceed 80% of the county median income in accordance with 24 VSA §4303.
 - Consider greater density bonus in the Planned Unit Development provisions of the Bylaw to encourage affordable housing.
 - Consider adopting subdivision regulations. Investigate provisions to require that a percentage of lots created as part of a large residential project are made available to low and moderate incomes at affordable prices.

CHAPTER 7

TRANSPORTATION

7.1 Existing Transportation Network

Dover's road network includes town roads and state highways. Route 100 is the primary arterial running north and south through West Dover. The closest interstate is I-91 which passes through Brattleboro, 20 miles to the east.

Route 100 serves a varied population, accommodating people traveling to Mount Snow and Stratton ski resorts as well as local and regional residents who work and shop in the business establishments located along the route. As a major arterial route for tourist and commercial through traffic in the Deerfield Valley, Route 100 experiences seasonal peak periods of intense vehicular traffic resulting in periods of congested travel conditions for vehicles. Traffic delays at the intersection of Route 9 and Route 100 in Wilmington are a well-known problem caused by through traffic on Route 9 year round and winter traffic on Route 100.

Town roads, which accommodate much of the locally generated traffic, include Dover Hill Road, Dorr Fitch Road, Handle Road, and Valley View Road. These and other collector roads are frequently used for getting from residential areas to Route 100.

Mount Snow is the major trip generator in Dover and has a major impact on the road system. Of particular concern is the increased through traffic of both cars and trucks on Dover Hill Road to and from the Deerfield Valley and Route 30. The Town of Newfane is especially opposed to traffic being deliberately routed this way because of its impact on its bridges and villages. Similarly, some Marlboro and Wilmington residents are opposed to the use of Higley Hill Road off of Route 100 as an alternative route for visitors to travel to and from Dover. Motorists have discovered both of these routes as convenient and scenic bypasses of the Wilmington village intersection. Consequently, these roads are becoming arterial routes for through traffic.

7.2 Classification of Highways and Roads

Town highways are classified as either Class 1, 2, 3, or 4. This information is represented on maps that are updated annually based on information supplied by towns on an annual Mileage Certificate. The chief purpose of these maps is to document classification and mileage of town highways for calculating payment to towns of State Aid for highway maintenance. The State of Vermont Highway Map classifies Dover's public roads as shown in Table 7-1.

Route 100 is as a State Highway. In accordance with state law, it is exclusively maintained by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). Class 2 town highways are primarily the responsibility of the town. VTrans is responsible for center line pavement markings if the town notifies them of the need to repaint them. Dorr Fitch Road, Dover Hill Road and Handle Road are Class 2 roads. Class 3 roads are comprised of secondary town highways that are passable year round by standard vehicles. These highways are the town's responsibility.

Table 7-1: Mileage Summary of Town Highway/Roadway

Class	1	2	3	4 ⁷	Total Mileage
Town Roadways	0	10.35	48.09	2.14	60.58
State Highways					5.547
Total					66.127

(Source: VT Agency of Transportation Highway Map, 2004)

All other town highways are Class 4. Typically these roads are seasonally functional for normal vehicular traffic and have a dirt surface. Like many Vermont communities, Dover has many Class 4 roads and legal trails that are not mapped on the VTrans Highway Maps. Recent statutory changes require the accounting of mileage and mapping of Class 4 roads and legal town trails. Many Class 4 highways are old, unmapped, and often observable. These particular roads are called “ancient roads.” Act 178 requires municipalities to identify these “ancient roads” and formally declare their existence to the State of Vermont by February 10, 2009, by adding them to the official town highway map. Those ancient roads that are not added to the official map by that date will become “unidentified corridors” on July 1, 2009. Act 178 specifies that “unidentified corridors” will cease to exist as of July 1, 2015, unless the town has followed a formal, and potentially costly, procedure to lay them out as a town highway by that date.

A group of citizens is working to document such roads and trails. This group has been successful in providing the necessary documentation to the State to have some town trails that were not mapped already added to the Town Highway Map. However, there are remaining ancient road issues. To date, efforts to secure a grant from the State to assist with this research have been unsuccessful.

There are approximately 25.9 miles of private roads, accounting for about 30% of all traveled roads in Dover. Unlike in many other towns, private roads in Dover are significant, formal roads that serve housing subdivisions. Therefore it is important to make sure that proper maintenance is performed to prevent deterioration. Adopting subdivision regulations would be an effective way to ensure that private roads are built to public road standards and that there is a strong homeowner’s association in place to deal with road maintenance.

7.3 Infrastructure

Dover’s transportation infrastructure is subject to ongoing maintenance and, when necessary reconstruction. In the next five years, the anticipated projects will primarily revolve around bank stabilization, bridge repairs, paving, and tree trimming.

Dover completed an infrastructure inventory in 2003 that was recently updated. This computer-based system, known as the Road Surface Management System (RSMS), is used to inventory and evaluate local road conditions enabling the Town to objectively “screen” all local roadways in order to assess their condition, and to subsequently develop a schedule of roadway maintenance needs. This system is an important element in adequately budgeting for the ongoing repair of the community’s network of local roads in a manner which does not unreasonably burden taxpayers.

⁷ This only includes the Class 4 shown on the 2004 Highway Map and may not be an accurate number for the actual mileage of Class 4 roads that exist in Town.

The Town also maintains an electronic list of all bridges and culverts which inventories their condition, construction material, and dimension. All bridges and culverts must meet the Town's Bridge and Culvert standards. This requires that all culverts that cross a road have an 18" diameter. Driveway culverts may be 15". While property owners are responsible for installing the initial driveway culvert, the Highway Department does maintain and replace them when necessary. Part of the reason for doing so is that an unmaintained driveway culvert can cause substantial damage to Town roads. Dover's bridges are in fairly good shape. Several bridge projects have been undertaken in the last four years. Anticipated work in the next five years will include the widening of one bridge.

Transportation costs represent nearly 34% of the town's tax expenditures. As road traffic increases it become more costly to maintain the roads. Grant funding to pave roads is scarce and gravel is becoming increasingly more expensive, especially since Dover does not have a municipal source to use. Currently, the Town obtains gravel for its roads in the nearby town of Jamaica. In an effort to save money, Dover has signed onto a cooperative purchasing agreement for highway materials and equipment with other Windham County towns. Items that could be purchased under this agreement include culverts, winter blades, and grader blades.

7.4 Public Transportation

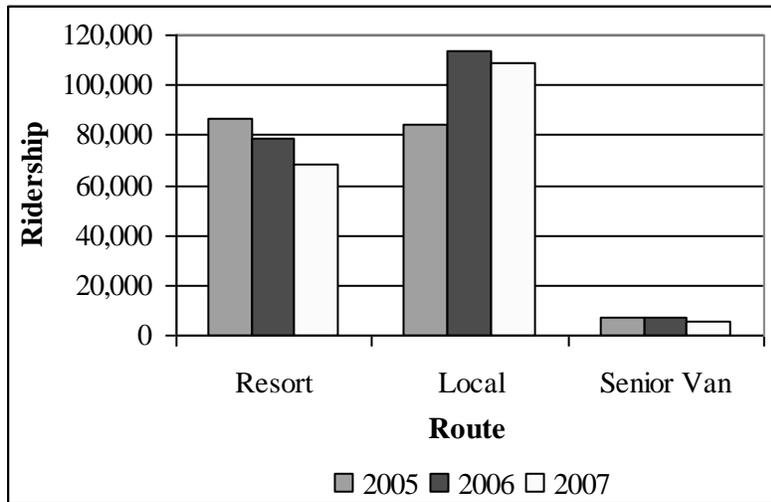
Deerfield Valley Transit Association's (DVTA) provides public transit services year round in Dover. They operate three types of routes – Resort, Local, and Senior. Figure 7-1 shows the annual⁸ ridership figures from 2005-2006. Resort routes run from Thanksgiving to late-March each winter season and connect condos and hotels to the three base lodges at Mount Snow. Ridership figures have been decreasing over the past three years. This may correspond to the decline in annual skier visits to Mount Snow that have been occurring over this time.

There are four local routes that operate year round, all of which interconnect. The MOOver route runs from Wilmington to Mount Snow. There is an East Dover route that connects East Dover and Wardsboro to Mount Snow. Another route connects Readsboro, Whitingham Village, and Jacksonville to Wilmington and then to Mount Snow. Finally, there is a Brattleboro route that connects Wilmington to Brattleboro. Three of the four routes have experienced increased ridership from 2005 to 2007. In particular, the Readsboro route grew from 3,382 riders in 2005 to 8,431 riders in 2007. The Brattleboro route has also experienced rapid growth with 5,527 riders in 2005 to 17,128 riders in 2007.

Senior van routes are also operated by DVTA. The Council on Aging route runs from local towns to meal sites in Jacksonville, Readsboro, and Halifax. In addition, they run a weekly shopping trip to Bennington. The Gathering Place route runs from local towns to the Gathering Place Adult Day Care in Brattleboro. The Van-Go route, takes people shopping locally. With the exception of the Gathering Place route, senior van routes have declined in ridership. The Van-Go route has experienced the largest decline going from 1,271 riders in 2005 to 530 riders in 2007 in large part due to annual cuts in the budget.

⁸ Annual year is calculated from July 1 to June 30 (e.g. 2005 is July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005).

Figure 7-1: DVTA Ridership Figures by Route, 2005-2007



Source: Deerfield Valley Transit Association

The Mount Snow airport is private and provides charter service, flight instruction, rental cars, and hangar and ramp space. The runway is presently 2,650 feet.

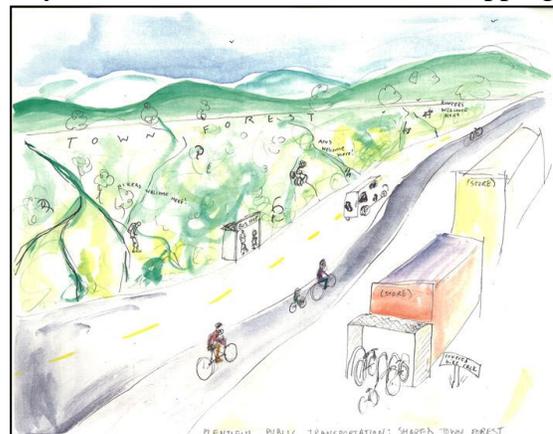
Taxi service and chartered bus service are also available in Dover.

7.4 Bicycle and Pedestrian

There are currently no pedestrian sidewalks in West Dover, East Dover, or along the commercial district on Route 100. Generally, the road right-of-way is narrow, affording pedestrians little shoulder width. This makes it difficult to create sidewalks. The Dover Valley Trail, when completed, will serve as an important pedestrian pathway that links Mount Snow with shopping opportunities in West Dover.

The existing road network is used for bicycle riding however weather conditions, automobile-oriented development patterns, and difficult terrain combine to keep it from serving as a significant mode of transportation in Dover. Biking in Dover is primarily recreational in nature. Route 100 and the Handle Road area are amongst the roads that are used for biking.

As noted in the Community Resources Chapter, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting Mount Snow with West Dover Village, known as the Deerfield Valley Trail has been in the works since 1993. The Trail, which will be primarily located on private land, will be approximately 5 miles in length when completed. Several sections of the Trail have been completed and other sections are moving forward at this time.



A vision for plentiful public transportation and shared uses in the Town Forest.

7.5 Traffic Calming and Access Management

Traffic calming is a combination of physical measures and a supportive environment that help to slow down and control traffic on streets. This is accomplished by changing the design and role of streets to serve a broad range of transportation, social and environmental goals and objectives. In Dover, this may include landscaped medians, bulb outs, neck downs, the use of paving stones, walkways, entrance features to towns, and other structures.

The development of access management standards and guidelines offers an additional and practical way to promote safe, efficient traffic operations and avoid undesirable development practices along town highways. The standards to be developed might include requirements for minimum separation distance between driveways or between driveways and a corner or intersection, driveways that serve more than one lot, parking areas that serve more than one lot/business, circulation/access between two lots and, where appropriate, providing access from secondary streets, rather than main arterials.

Future Considerations

As a recreation town, Dover relies on its roads to transport visitors to and from town. The largest traffic generator in town is Mount Snow resort. This does place demands on the capacity of Dover's roads as well as roads of some of Dover's neighbors. Alternative transportation needs to be enhanced in Dover. Deerfield Valley Transit Authority's bus system must be maintained. There is also a need to continue to develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities that provide improved connections within Dover, particularly along Route 100. This should include connecting Mount Snow to West Dover Village using a series of sidewalks, bike routes, and multi-use paths.

Embracing the principles of access management along Route 100 and traffic calming along roads that have become alternative routes of transportation can enhance the function and safety of roads in Dover. These items can be addressed in the Dover Zoning Bylaw but can also be pursued through outreach and education.

7.6 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1: To maintain and improve a safe and efficient existing transportation system

Policy 1.1 Manage existing roads to meet transportation demands and maintain rural character.

Strategies

- a. Continue to require that the construction of new roads is in conformance with Town road specifications.
- b. Develop access management standards to be used during Site Plan review that:
 - limit access points to one per lot or one per specified length of road frontage;
 - require shared access and interconnected parking with adjoining properties where feasible; or access easements that connect to adjoining parcels in the event they are developed or redeveloped;

- require pedestrian sidewalks or paths between buildings, parking areas, existing facilities, and where feasible, to adjoining properties;
 - require the installation of public transit support facilities where service is available;
 - requires consideration of installation of bicycle parking facilities for commercial, industrial, civic, multi-family and recreational uses.
- c. Consider adopting subdivision regulations to:
- include specific design standards for the layout of roads and sidewalks to ensure that new roads, sidewalks, and multi-use paths, whether public or private, effectively connect to existing and planned roads in the surrounding area; and
 - require developers to analyze both on-site and off-site transportation impacts and construct all improvements required as a result of those impacts.
- d. Retain all existing rights-of-way regardless of whether or not they are currently being maintained by the Town.

Policy 1.2 Coordinate with local, regional, and state entities to plan for Dover’s transportation needs in a comprehensive manner.

Strategies

- a. Continue to support the efforts of the Deerfield Valley Transit Association.
- b. Continue to work on regional transportation planning with the Windham Regional Commission.
- c. Work with Vermont Agency of Transportation to coordinate and plan for road improvements along Route 100. Particular emphasis should be placed on minimizing curb cuts along Route 100.
- d. Support road improvements along state highways in order to avoid negative community impacts along secondary roads in Dover as well as neighboring towns.
- e. Continue to work with the Windham Road Foreman’s Network to bulk purchase culverts, fuel, and other transportation materials and equipment.

Goal 2: To minimize transportation energy and trips.

Policy 2.1 Support alternative transportation.

Strategies

- a. Support the continued operation of the MOOver.
- b. Encourage new construction or major reconstruction of roads and highways to include provision of non-motorized, multi-use trails or areas solely for use by pedestrian or other non-motorized means of transportation.

Policy 2.2 Develop a safe and convenient network of non-motorized paths.

Strategies

- a. Prioritize a network of sidewalks or other non-motorized, multi-use paths to connect densely development residential areas with commercial, civic, and recreational facilities.
- b. Pursue funding options such as Transportation Enhancement Grants

- c. Pursue the completion of the Dover Valley Trail.

Goal 3: To inventory all existing town class 4 roads and town trails, including “ancient roads,” to determine which ancient roads will serve the public need.

Policy 3.1 Support efforts to identify and map Class 4 highways.

Strategies

- a. Apply for Vermont Ancient Road Research and Mapping Grants from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

CHAPTER 8

ENERGY

8.1 Energy Uses

According to the Vermont Department of Public Services 1998 report *Fueling Vermont Future, Comprehensive Energy Plan and Green House Action Plan*, energy consumption for transportation is the state's primary energy use. Space heating is the second highest end use.

8.3 Energy Sources

The residents of Dover use a variety of sources for home heating. According to the 2000 Census, 45.8% of homes in Dover were primarily heated with fuel oil or kerosene. Other home heating sources include bottled tank gas or LP (24.7%), wood (18.8%), electricity (8.7%), and the remaining from other sources such as solar, utility gas, or other fuels.

Renewable energy sources that are also available for use include solar, wood, and wind. Passive solar designs and siting can increase the use of solar energy and the conservation of other heating fuels in homes and businesses. No mechanical means are employed in passive solar heating. Instead, siting and design measures, such as south facing windows, open floor plans, and ventilation is used. Photovoltaic systems can be used to convert sunlight to electricity.

Wood is a relatively low cost source of renewable energy. The Vermont Department of Public Service reported in 2000, the last time the state reported the data, that approximately 50% of the households in the region contained at least one wood-burning appliance.⁹ Rising oil and electric costs will likely spur new growth in the use of wood as a home heating fuel, both in the form of traditional cordwood and wood pellets. Dover has a large amount of woodland that, if effectively managed, could supply a reliable, local source of wood.

Wind is another source of renewable energy that is being developed in Vermont on both large and individual scales. There are several factors that contribute to the siting of large scale wind-generating facilities: elevations greater than 2,000 feet, proximity to electric transmission lines, ridgelines locations, and wind speed. There are several ridgelines in Dover that are over 2,500 feet. In 2002, Vermont Environmental Research Associates developed the "State of Vermont Wind Resources and Transmission Map" by overlaying US Department of Energy/National Renewable Energy Lab's wind resource data with Vermont's transmission line data to identify particularly promising sites for wind energy generation. There are several sites in Dover that appear on these maps including, the land along the entire western boundary (lands owned by the Green Mountain National Forest). At this time, much of the land along that ridgeline is under conservation easements associated with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licensing of Somerset and Harriman Reservoirs.

Small, home based wind energy systems are being used in the region but high costs have restricted their growth. Towns may only regulate wind facilities that do not connect in any way

⁹ *Vermont Residential Fuel Wood Assessment 1997-1998*, Vermont Department of Public Service, December 2000.

to the public power supply. The height of wind turbines with blades less than 20 feet in diameter cannot be regulated unless a town specifically addresses them in their bylaws.

Net metering is one way in which homeowners can realize savings from operating a residential wind or photovoltaic system. Under net metering, a homeowner is permitted to connect suitable generating equipment to the public power grid. During periods when more energy is generated than the property is using, the metered amount of electrical energy provided to the grid reduces residential electric bills. In order to net meter, the homeowner must receive a Certificate of Public Good from the Vermont Public Service Board under Section 248.

8.2 Electrical Infrastructure

Three electric companies, Central Vermont Power Service, Green Mountain Power, and Vermont Electric Co-op, provide service to Dover. A 69kV electrical transmission line, emanating from the Searsburg Station hydroelectric facility, extends into the southwestern part of town. Green Mountain Power operates a distribution sub-station on Tannery Road. This sub-station provides power primarily to Mount Snow and areas in its vicinity including Route 100, Tannery Road, and Handle Road.

There are capacity limitations at the sub-station and the lines that serve Mount Snow. During peak demand, Mount Snow is restrained from drawing as much power as they would like for optimum snowmaking. In these situations, the resort must make snow at higher temperatures when the snowmaking process is less efficient. In order to handle peak demands and allow for expansion of snow making facilities, Mount Snow, in collaboration with Green Mountain Power, is proposing to add a new transformer to the Dover sub-station. This additional transformer will make electrical distribution more reliable to all users that rely on that substation.

8.4 Energy Conservation

State and federal government have far more control of energy supplies, sources, and pricing than other regions or towns. However, regional and local efforts can play an important role in energy conservation.

Reducing automobile dependency will go along way towards reducing transportation energy consumption. In 2000, 78% of Dover residents commuting to work drove alone. The Deerfield Valley Transit Authority (DVTA) operates a free public transit system (MOOVER) within the towns of Dover, Wilmington, Wardsboro, Readsboro, and Whitingham. Direct connection service to Brattleboro is available via Wilmington. During the winter, route service between several condo/hotel developments and Mount Snow are consistently operating. DVTA also offers demand-response service and handles special transportation needs.

Effective land use planning can promote energy conservation. Concentrated development and land use patterns can reduce reliance on the automobile, vehicle miles traveled, and inherent system energy costs. Cluster development, where buildings and infrastructure (such as roads, power) are concentrated in specific areas rather than spread out, generally disturbs less land, and requires less fuel, material, and energy to both build and maintain. It also encourages people to walk, rather than drive, to nearby destinations. Separate subdivision regulations, which could

include such siting standards, have not been adopted. Dover has adopted planned unit development (PUD) provisions that encourage the clustering of development.

Energy savings can be realized by retrofitting existing buildings with insulation, more efficient doors and windows, weather-stripping, compact fluorescent lights, and energy efficient appliances. The following programs are available to residents of Dover:

- Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA). SEVCA offers a variety of programs that are designed to assist low-income residents with their energy costs. These programs include seasonal fuel assistance, emergency fuel assistance, and free weatherization services to reduce heating costs. In addition, SEVCA also works with electric companies in order to prevent disconnection and help negotiate payment plans.
- Efficiency Vermont. Efficiency Vermont is the State's provider of energy efficiency services. They provide technical and financial assistance to electrical consumers for the purpose of improving the efficiency of existing and new facilities. Additional programs that support low-income housing and households are available through Efficiency Vermont.
- ENERGY STAR Home Rebates. Energy Star Homes meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy. Efficiency Vermont provides free financial, design, and technical to help build an ENERGY STAR qualified home. Benefits of being an ENERGY STAR home include financial incentives such as product rebates; utility savings; higher resale value; increased comfort and air quality; and other environmental benefits.

Future Considerations

In order to promote energy efficiency and mitigate carbon emissions, Dover needs to develop an incentive-based program for the development of green buildings. In addition to educating the public and the construction community, there are several techniques that towns around the country have employed. Density bonuses, expedited permitting, tax breaks, and fee reductions are some of the methods that should be studied in order to create a practical program for Dover.

8.5 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1: To reduce energy consumption in Dover.

Policy 1.1 Maintain land use patterns that will conserve energy.

Strategies

- a. Continue to limit the types of land uses and allowable densities in areas outside of the Village, Planned Commercial, and Resort districts.
- b. Maintain the Conservation Districts as areas with a very low density (1 unit per 27 acres) in order to promote sustainability management of wood lots.
- c. Continue to maintain provisions in the Zoning Bylaw that encourage clustered and multi-family housing in new residential developments and provide opportunities for appropriate home occupations and larger home-based businesses to minimize commuting to work

- d. Promote the Transfer of Development Rights Overlay District as a means of concentrating development in desired growth areas and reducing transportation costs.

Policy 1.2 Promote the use of alternative forms of energy that respect the built and natural environment.

Strategies

- a. Promote Vermont’s Use Value Appraisal Program to stimulate fuelwood production and improve forest management.
- b. Residential connection of individual wind energy and photovoltaic systems to the electric power grid under “net-metering” shall not be considered commercial use.
- c. With regard to all energy generation, transmission, and distribution projects:
 - Adhere to high environmental standard that includes avoiding negative environmental impacts to the extent possible and adequately minimizing or mitigating those that cannot be avoided;
 - Conduct thorough and proper studies and analyses of all anticipated socioeconomic and environmental impacts;
 - Adequately address all areas of concern related to facility operation and reliability; and
 - Effectively address all issues related to facility operation and reliability.
- d. Evaluate, and as appropriate, propose amendments to the bylaws to regulate the siting of systems that make use of renewable energy, such as solar panels and wind energy systems. Such regulations may allow for flexibility in the application of setback, height, and other requirements, and they should also allow for building design and placement that maximize passive solar energy use.

Policy 1.3 Reduce energy consumption and increase energy efficiency.

Strategies

- a. Promote the reduction of transportation energy use by supporting carpooling, public transit, and the use of energy efficient vehicles.
- b. Support the programs of SEVCA and Efficiency Vermont.
- c. Develop and maintain sidewalks and non-motorized pathways, where feasible.
- d. Consider energy use and efficiency when making municipal investment and expense decisions.

Policy 1.4 Encourage the development of energy efficient subdivisions and buildings.

Strategies

- a. Educate citizens about green building techniques such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.
- b. Develop an incentive-based program to encourage the development of green buildings.
- c. Site development in areas with characteristics most suitable for maximum energy conservation, including southern orientation and slope, and protective wind barriers.
- d. Cluster development to reduce infrastructure expenses.

Goal 2: To provide reliable, cost effective electrical service to Dover.

Policy 2.1 Support efforts to upgrade the electrical infrastructure in Dover.

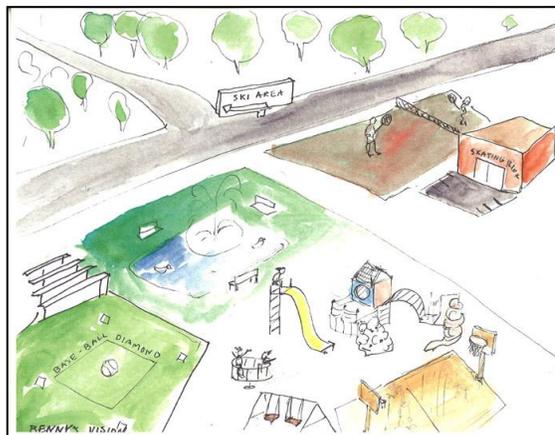
CHAPTER 9 COMMUNITY RESOURCES

9.1 Recreational and Cultural Resources

Outdoor and indoor recreational resources are some of Dover’s most important assets. The Town provides a variety of recreational opportunities including, but not limited to down hill and cross country skiing, ice skating, snowmobiling, snowboarding, mountain biking, hiking, golf courses, and tennis facilities.

Public Lands and Facilities

Table 9-1 lists the publicly owned lands and facilities in Dover:



A vision for increased recreational opportunities.

Table 9-1: Public Recreation Resources

Site	Ownership	Acres	Current Facilities
Dover Elementary School	School		Playground
Dover Common	Town		Open space
Dover Town Forest	Town	1,392	Hiking Trails Open space Wetlands
Class IV roads	Town		Multi-use trails
Valley Trail	Town		Trail
Green Mountain National Forest	Federal	approx. 5,147	Hiking Open space Wetlands Skiing
Dover Town Hall	Town		Multi-use hall for indoor social activities

Recreational Corridors

Recreational corridors include trails for foot travel, bike paths, roadways accommodating bicycle lanes, and snowmobile trails. There are several hiking trails on lands in the Green Mountain National Forest (including Rice and Cooper Hills, and along the ridge between Haystack and Mount Snow). The Town’s Class 4 highways are no longer used regularly by vehicles, so are also popular for hiking.

Snowmobile trails, mainly on private land, are overseen by Vermont Association of Snowmobiling Travelers (VAST). Snowmobiles and other motorized recreational vehicles are not permitted on most Town-maintained trails located off Class 4 roads.



A vision for better trail marking and trail maps in Dover.

Because bicycling is transportation and recreation, the planning of bike paths and shared roadways needs to be considered in transportation patterns and road design. Bicycling along Route 100 is popular in spite of the fact that this is a moderately high traffic road with a potential for bicycle/vehicle conflict along many portions of the road. Much of Route 100 has been striped in order to define a shoulder wide enough to ride a bicycle.

Plans for the Deerfield Valley Trail, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting Mount Snow with West Dover Village have been in the works since 1993. The Trail, which will be primarily located on private land, will be approximately 5 miles in length when completed. Several sections of the Trail have been completed.

Plans for the Deerfield Valley Trail, a pedestrian and bicycle pathway connecting Mount Snow with West Dover Village have been in the works since 1993. The Trail, which will be primarily located on private land,

Private Lands and Facilities

Dover has a wealth of private recreational lands and facilities as Mount Snow operates as a four season resort. Winter offers skiing, snowboarding, and tubing while summer recreation at the resort includes golfing, mountain biking, and hiking. Although not free to the general public, there are several private recreational facilities including swimming pools, playgrounds, and tennis courts.

Arts and Cultural Activities

Within the Deerfield Valley, there is a growing cultural and arts program available to residents and visitors. Current offerings include programs in the arts, art galleries, craft fairs, and food festivals. In 2004, the inaugural Dover Day Festival was held. This annual festival, held at the end of September, brings together residents to celebrate the community. The Town supports and encourages the local chamber of commerce, private enterprise, and other organizations to promote cultural events.

9.2 Historic Resources

Two centuries of history has left a rich heritage in Dover. Although few structures remain from the past, the following are significant historic areas and structures:

- Home to early Dover settlers who settled on scattered hilltop farms, the Dover Hill area today combines several dwellings from the late 1790's with spectacular views. The "little red schoolhouse" and other houses along that Dover Hill Road are now some of the oldest structures in town. Situated on the Dover Common, the Dover Town Hall serves as a function hall for various events. The Town Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- East Dover grew around a sawmill that was built in 1797. The East Dover Baptist Church building is an important historic building.

- West Dover village still maintains the atmosphere of a 19th century rural village. The village is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Consisting of over 20 buildings dating from 1805 to 1885, the village showcases a number of well preserved buildings. The West Dover Inn (c. 1846), with its wide columned porches, remains an unspoiled example of vernacular Greek Revival architecture, and is the area's oldest continuously operating hostelry. Next door, the West Dover Congregational Church was built as a Meeting House in 1858 with money raised by selling pews at auction. The adjacent Dover Town Office was the District #6 schoolhouse erected in 1857. Across the street, the Harris House (c. 1820), one of the oldest houses in the village, is now home to the Dover Historical Society.
- Handle Road in West Dover was historically a unique summer colony in Vermont. Bostonians and New Yorkers began buying up old farms in 1858 and devoted great energy to restoring them to their original condition. Several of these houses remain in the holding of these original summer families.
- There are two historic iron mines located on the Carinthia face of Mount Snow. The mines date back to the early 1800's when they were a source of low grade ore that was smelted locally using lime from a nearby brook. Today, the lower mine is primarily flooded with water. Tracks and veins from the mining operations remain visible in the upper mine.

The Dover Historical Society, founded in 1975, is dedicated to gathering and preserving the town's history for future generations. The Harris House in West Dover Village is owned and operated by the Historical Society as a museum. The museum is open to the public. In addition, the Society often offers free summer programs. Membership is comprised of residents, seasonal residents, and former residents.

9.3 Scenic Resources

Dover's hilly country provides abundant vistas of scenic quality. Views from Mount Snow golf course and from the summits of the ski lifts are especially noteworthy. Many homes exist or are built to enjoy the beautiful vistas of the surrounding country. Route 100 provides an important scenic corridor through Dover as it winds through the Deerfield Valley. The Dover Hill Road and Cooper Hill Road, as well as many other roads also offer spectacular views.

The maintenance of an attractive rural environment is of paramount importance. Dover's economy is heavily dependent on the recreation industry, which in turn, depends on the rural and scenic beauty of the Town.

Future Considerations

Dover's economy is inextricably tied to the recreation industry. Mount Snow attracts second homeowners and visitors to Dover. In order to both meet the needs of year round residents and to attract visitors to support the recreation industry, the town must enhance its recreational resources. The following considerations are an important component of planning for the town's recreational environment:

Lack of Facilities: Most recreational facilities in Dover are privately owned. Adding venues, such as an ice skating rink or a community center, that are accessible to the public will contribute to the recreational opportunities in Dover. An Economic Development Committee is looking into the development of such facilities.

Enhancement of Trail System: According to the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2005-2009, the popularity of trails-based recreational pursuits has grown. Dover is fortunate to have a Town Forest and access to a large amount of National Forest land. Many trails exist in Dover, however their location and the network possibilities is not fully understood. Dover should capitalize on this existing resource and produce information that will attract greater usage. The Planning Commission or a Conservation Commission could assist with developing this information.

9.4 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal 1: To economically provide quality recreational programs, facilities, and open space which are designed to enhance the leisure time experience in Dover.

Policy 1.1 Enhance the trail system in Dover.

Strategies

- a. Retain Class 4 town roads, legal town trails, and other public rights-of-way for use as recreational trails.
- b. Develop and upgrade trails with an emphasis on access, improved signage, and adequate parking.
- c. Publish a trail guide illustrating the system of trails.

Policy 1.2 Facilitate the orderly development of public and private recreational facilities.

Strategies

- a. Support United State Forest Service acquisition of private landholdings within the Green Mountain National Forest proclamation boundaries provided that adequate payment in lieu of taxes are made to Dover.
- b. Create an Open Space Committee as a subcommittee of the Planning Commission to:
 - evaluate recreational lands;
 - recommend to the Selectboard the purchase or receipt of gifts of lands;
 - receive money, grants or private gifts from any source to be a fund to be expended for the purchase of open space and recreational lands.

- c. Direct the Economic Development Committee to address the lack of public facilities.

Policy 1.3 Provide adequate and safe opportunities to travel as a pedestrian or bicyclist, both for recreation and transportation purposes.

Strategies

- a. Support the completion of the Deerfield Valley Trail.
- b. Incorporate the new pedestrian and bicycle paths into the planning of any new recreational areas in Dover.

Policy 1.4 Increase public awareness and use of recreational opportunities in Dover.

Strategies

- a. Work with the Chamber of Commerce to publish a recreation guide.

Goal 2: To strengthen and build upon Dover’s cultural assets including organizations, events, festivals, and artists.
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Policy 2.1 Support and encourage further development of arts and cultural programs that can serve as attractors for new business investment as well as enhance quality of life.

Strategies

- a. Investigate public/private partnerships to create cultural programs in Dover.
- b. Work collaboratively with other Deerfield Valley towns, the chamber of commerce, and other groups to use the arts to promote cultural tourism.

Goal 3: To promote a greater understanding and appreciation of Dover’s history.
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Policy 3.1 Promote historic preservation and development that enhances the historic resources of Dover.

Strategies

- a. Support the efforts of the Dover Historical Society to preserve and promote the Town’s history.
- b. Create an inventory of historically and/or architecturally significant structures/sites.

Policy 3.2 Protect historic and architectural integrity during the redevelopment of historic sites and structures.

Strategies

- a. Strengthen incentives for historic preservation in the zoning bylaw by including provisions for adaptive reuse and considering the creation of a historic district or design review district in West Dover Village.
- b. Encourage listing on the National Register of Historic Places for appropriate local structures.
- c. The Town and Historical Society should consider the acquisition of available, significant property for conservation and preservation purposes in limited but critical cases.

Goal 4: To protect those open spaces, vistas, farmlands and scenic areas which contribute to the character of Dover.

Policy 4.1 Protect and enhance the scenic landscape and rural character.

Strategies

- a. Identify and designate scenic vistas within Dover to be protected.
- b. Regulate land subdivision in a manner that ensures the pattern of future development does not adversely affect the Town's natural features, rural resources and scenic character.
- c. Through planned unit development standards, continue to require clustering and siting of new development as necessary to protect natural and cultural resources.

CHAPTER 10

COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER PLANS

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. Town Plans are to be compatible with the regional plan and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region.

10.1 Compatibility with Adopted Town Plans

Dover abuts the following towns: Wardsboro, Newfane, Marlboro, Wilmington, Somerset, and Stratton. This plan strives to support the goals and policies of the neighboring towns as well as strengthen the relationships with those towns to work on issues that are a common concern.

Wardsboro: (Town Plan adopted September 2003) Wardsboro is situated to the north of Dover. The majority of the border in Dover is classified as Resource Reserve and Conservation lands. Wardsboro has the land on its side of the border classified as Conservation. The Dover Town Forest is located on the border and abuts a large area of land that is owned by the Green Mountain National Forest in Wardsboro. Combined, this creates a large area of unfragmented land. This supports both towns' desire to maintain and improve wildlife resources. In particular, both towns acknowledge important bear habitat and travel corridors.

There is a corridor along East Dover Road in Wardsboro that is classified as Rural Residential. While Dover classified the East Dover Road corridor as Resource Reserve and Conservation, there are no anticipated conflicts at this time because there is low density development along East Dover Road in both towns.

Newfane: (Town Plan adopted September 2006) Newfane is located to the east of Dover and is accessed via Dover Hill Road. Since the last Town Plan, Newfane has amended their Town Plan so that the majority of the border with Dover is now classified as Resource Lands with the stated goal of restricting development to uses and activities that will not diminish the ecological function, scenic and natural beauty, and natural character of the area. This is compatible with Dover's vision for the border area in that the plan for this area is primarily Resource Conservation and Reserve or Productive Residential. With the exception of East Dover Village, both plans support low-density residential development with a focus on respecting and preserving the important natural resources.

Marlboro: (Town Plan adopted June 2003) A small area in the southeastern corner of Dover abuts Marlboro. Marlboro has designated their lands on the border as Conservation and, along the road, Rural Residential. The proposed land use for Marlboro in this area is Rural. This is an area that is anticipated to accommodate the majority of the Marlboro's growth. Their plan does not discuss desired densities in this area. On the Dover side, the Town has classified the land as Productive Residential allowing residential uses at a density of 1 unit per 5 acres. These classifications appear compatible but there is potential for dialogue between the towns to further

understand Marlboro's wishes. Marlboro's Plan expresses concern over increased resort traffic on Higley Hill Road. Higley Hill Road branches off into Upper Dover Road and Lower Dover Road and enters Dover.

Wilmington: (Town Plan adopted September 2005) Wilmington is located to the south of Dover. Route 100 is the major corridor that connects the towns. Handle Road is another important north-south route between the two towns. Lands above 2500' in both Dover and Wilmington have been categorized as Conservation lands. The rest of the land is compatible. Some key difference in the rest of the land use classifications are as follows: Dover has classified the North Branch Fire District spray fields as Industrial. This abuts residential land in Wilmington. This is an area that the towns should discuss.

Somerset: Somerset does not have a Town Plan.

Stratton: (Town Plan adopted September 2004) Stratton lies to the northwest of Dover. Route 100 is the only transportation corridor that connects the towns. The Route 100 corridor in Dover is classified as Productive Residential, allowing for moderate density residential development. Dover has classified lands above 2500' that abut Stratton as Resource Reserve and Conservation, the most restrictive land use classification. The area around the Route 100 corridor is classified as Productive Residential. Stratton has a variety of land use classifications on the border including: Conservation, Public, and Commercial/Residential. The Commercial/Residential area proposes to allow planned residential development and commercial uses as conditional uses. This is not compatible with Dover's desire to restrict dense development so that it does not extend all the way up Route 100. This is an area that the towns should discuss.

10.2 Compatibility with the Windham Regional Plan

The Windham Regional Plan is intended to provide guidelines for the planning and coordination of change and development which will, in accordance with present and future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the region. The Dover Town Plan supports and complements the land use and development goals of the Regional Plan.

There is one exception between the land use plan in the Regional Plan and the Dover Town Plan. The Handle Road area in the Regional Plan is categorized as Resource Lands. Resource Lands are described as "lands requiring special protection or consideration due to their uniqueness, irreplaceable or fragile nature, or important ecological function" (Windham Regional Plan, 2006). While the Town agrees with the Windham Regional Commission that there are some important ecological features in this area, the Town has classified the lands as Productive Residential, a land use category that is not as restrictive to development as the Resource Lands. Handle Road has, in the past, provided an important connection between Mount Snow and Haystack ski mountains. The Town believes that development (1 unit per 5 acres) can still occur in this area while preserving the special values of the existing natural resources.

CHAPTER 11

TOWN PLAN MAPS

A series of maps has been prepared to assist planners, public officials and citizens to understand Dover and to assist in the planning process, governmental and business decisions. These maps are for planning purposes only. The policies and actions, and associated narrative discussions in the body of the Town Plan prevail as the guidelines for the Town's future growth.

- Map 1. Existing Land Use
- Map 2. Proposed Land Use
- Map 3. Natural Resources
- Map 4. Community Facilities
- Map 5. Transportation System