

Memo to: Adjacent communities and DHCA
From: Montpelier Planning Commission
Date: September 20, 2017
Re: Planning Commission Report

The adoption of a municipal plan requires the preparation of a required report which outlines points as identified in state law. In this case the City of Montpelier Planning Commission is providing this report which intends to meet the requirements for reporting on amendments to a Master Plan as well as readoption of a Master Plan.

In accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4387(b), in readopting its Master Plan the Montpelier Planning Commission has reviewed and updated the information on which the City Plan is based and has considered this information in making a finding that the plan, as drafted in 2010 and readopted in 2015, is still applicable. As some changes were made to the plan during the above review, a report is being provided that covers both the requirements of state law when considering an amendment of a municipal plan (24 V.S.A. §4384(c)) as well as readoption of a plan (24 V.S.A. 4387(b)).

Amendment Report.

The *Master Plan Montpelier, Vermont* is consistent with the goals established in the Vermont Planning and Development Act, and the proposed changes will not create any inconsistencies. The proposed plan is intended to be consistent with the goals established in 24 V.S.A. § 4302. The below summary highlights areas in the plan where its statements, goals and strategies are consistent with the planning goals, though the summary is not intended to be exhaustive such that other plan provisions are also consistent with the planning goals. The plan also contains a summary chart, Table 1-1 on page 19, highlighting sections of the plan that discusses each planning goal, which Table is incorporated herein by reference. In summary, the plan strives to achieve the following goals:

- To plan development so as to maintain the historic settlement patterns of a compact urban area with rural country sides. The City's future land use map, Figure 30, on page 122 and described on page 123 identifies clear smart growth and surrounding neighborhood boundaries that establish areas for development that maintain the urban development pattern, and rural areas that protect the character

of those areas.

- Intensive residential development should be targeted to areas related to city's center and strip development along highways should be discouraged. Intensive residential development is targeted to the city center as evidenced by plan strategies, such as 1d on page 138, which provides "*Development should reinforce neighborhoods by increasing diversity of uses and by increasing current densities within the growth center*" and strategy 4b on page 140 providing that the city will "*promote the development of housing in the city's downtown.*"
- Economic growth should be encouraged in locally designated growth areas, employed to revitalize existing villages and urban centers, or both and should be encouraged in growth centers designated under Chapter 76A of Title 24. The city applied for and received state designations (Growth Center and Designated Downtown) in order to encourage development in the urban center. These designation areas are also identified on Figure 30 on page 122 and encouraged in strategies like strategies 5c on page 142 and 6h on page 143. It is also discussed as a key public policy initiative on page 117.
- Public investments, including the construction or expansion of infrastructure, should reinforce the general character and planned growth patterns of the area. Investments in public infrastructure support improving and maintain the existing services. These investments include the utilities are discussed in Chapter 3 from pages 38 to 42 and mapped on Figure 7. On page 124 the plan states that existing plant capacities could support thousands of new units so expanding plant capacity is not anticipated.
- Development should be undertaken in accordance with smart growth principles as defined in subdivision 2791(13) of Title 24. The plan establishes the basis for implementation tools that will require development to be undertaken in accordance with Smart Growth principles. The plan recommends adoption of rules such as those described on page 139 (strategy 2c) which recommend developing new rules and incentives to improve the efficient use of buildings and land in areas where growth is concentrated, while protecting natural resources and reducing development pressure outside the central city area. There are 7 specific recommendations in that section all of which support Smart Growth principles.
- To provide for a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintain high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita income. The plan dedicates a chapter to the discussion of economics and livelihoods (chapter 5). This chapter includes a review of current and projected employments as well as where workers in town live and where residents work. The plan targets two new areas for the city to grow future jobs including green jobs and jobs in the

creative economy (pages 159-160). Compared to the rest of the county and the state as a whole, Montpelier's income is above the median but unemployment rates are near the median for the county. The City has strategies including Goal B on economic well-being (page 168 – 170) that provide strategies that support growth of economic opportunities.

- To broadens and support access to educational and vocational training opportunities sufficient to ensure the full realization of the abilities of all Vermonters. Starting on page 207 the plan discusses lifelong learning from pre-k to college. These are reinforced by the education goals and strategies starting on page 223 and extending to page 228. These include 6 goals and 21 different strategies that support access to education and vocational training.
- To provide for a safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation system that respects the integrity of the natural environment including public transportation options and paths for pedestrians and cyclists. The City plan dedicates a large discussion to transportation and circulation starting on page 89 and discusses pedestrian networks (page 92), bicycle networks (page 93), bridges (page 97), and public transit (page 99). There is also discussion of rail transit (page 103), streets (page 104) and air transportation (page 112). This is followed later with discussions of goals and policies starting on page 146. These include strategies to adopt a complete streets ordinance (1j), create a complete streets committee (1k) and adopt a complete streets policy (4c).
 - Highways, air, rail, and other means of transportation should be mutually supportive, balanced, and integrated. As mentioned above, transportation plan addresses all forms of transportation from streets to air to rail and the plan discusses the development of a multimodal center (strategy 2e on page 148) where a facility can “integrate local regional, and interstate transit, rail and bike path users.”
- To identify, protect, and preserves important natural features of the Vermont landscape including:
 - Significant natural and fragile areas. The plan details natural communities and biodiversity (page 42) including detailed maps (Figures 8 and 14), wetlands (Figure 12) and endangered species (Figure 13). Policies to implement the goals are outlined on pages 68 and 69.
 - Outstanding water resources including lakes, rivers, aquifers, shorelands, and wetlands. The water resources are discussed starting on page 31 and are mapped on Figure 6. Montpelier is a city of rivers and protection of water quality is a priority which is why there are seven goals and 40 strategies starting on page 62 to protect water resources. These including expanding setback and buffer ordinances (1a) to encouraging students to educate the community through public service announcements (5b) to designing a program to achieve full compliance with ordinances requiring pet owners to

- clean up and properly dispose of pet waste(7h).
- Significant scenic roads, waterways and views. Page 48 discussed the views and vista report prepared by the Conservation Commission in 2002. Those findings also appear on Map 9.
- Important historic structures, sites, or districts, archeological sites and archeologically sensitive areas. The plan discusses the capitol complex (page 81), architectural history (page 82) and design review (page 83) with the National Register Historic District shown on Figure 16. The protection of these resources is outlined on page 137 on goal 1 where "*All development undertaken in Montpelier preserves the integrity and character of the city's respective neighborhoods. The character of Montpelier's Historic District is enhanced and maintained.*"
- To maintains and improve the quality of air, water, wildlife and land resources. Each of these is identified and discussed in Chapter 3 on Natural Features on pages 31, 42, 51 and 52.
 - Vermont's air, water, wildlife, mineral and land resources should be planned for use and development according to the principles set forth in 10 VSA 6086(a). Through inventories of these resources, and regulations and programs recommended through the goals and strategies in Chapter 3, the document plans for development in accordance with the requirements and principles outlined in Act 250.
 - Vermont's water quality should be maintained and improved according to the policies and actions developed in the basin plans established by the Secretary of Natural Resources under 10 VSA 1253. The Basin Plan is identified on page 34 and recognizes it as a basis of watershed protection and projects to protect the high quality water resources and to restore the waters which do not meet the Vermont Water Quality Standards.
 - Vermont's forestlands should be managed so as to maintain and improve forest blocks and habitat connectors. The plan specifically discusses contiguous forest blocks on page 53 which are mapped on Figure 10 on the following page.
- To make efficient use of energy, provide for the development of renewable energy and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Montpelier's aggressive Net Zero by 2030 plan is outlined in the energy section that runs from pages 125 to 130 with goals and strategies from pages 134 to 136. The plan calls for weatherizing 1,000 homes (goal 2) and strategies "*to reduce total fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions by increasing shared transport, public transport, walking, biking, and decreasing use of cars by single riders*" (strategy 3b)
 - General strategies for achieving these goals include increasing energy efficiency of new and existing buildings; identifying areas for renewable energy generation; encouraging the use and development of renewable or

- lower emission energy sources for electricity, heat and transportation; and reducing energy demands and single occupancy vehicle use. The plan has 4 goals and 17 strategies for implementing the energy goals. These include increasing efficiency (2a), identifying generation (2d), encouraging use and development of renewables (3c) and reduce demand and single vehicle use (3b).
- Specific strategies and recommendations for achieving the goals that are identified in the state energy plan. While the state energy plan is not specifically discussed in the master plan, the goal of city's Net Zero by 2030 plan and the state energy plan are complimentary. The city's plan has benchmarks and intends to achieve a city-wide 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (page 135).
 - To maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Vermont residents and visitors. Parks and recreation are important topics in the Master Plan including an inventory and discussion of facilities like recreation fields and public parks like Hubbard Park (page 46). These fields, parks and trails are shown on Figure 9 and Figure 19b.
 - Growth should not significantly diminish the value and availability of outdoor recreational activities. According to the plan (page 48) Montpelier is well very served by parks and recreation areas according to national park and recreation standards. The priority areas for future parks (taken from the City's Greenprint Plan) is shown on Figure 9 and is intended to provide guidance on new parks in response to new growth in the future.
 - Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate. There are no lakes in Montpelier but Montpelier is served by the recreation area at Wrightsville Dam (page 48). Hiking trails are shown on Figure 19b and discussed on page 50. Potential trails and greenways are also shown on Figure 9 where new trails are proposed to connect existing parks.
 - To encourage and strengthen agricultural and forest industries. Montpelier sets itself up as the location for growth as much of its prime ag soils in the growth center are already developed. By concentrating development in Montpelier's growth center, it reduces pressure on agricultural and forestry industries in the region (page 52). The city does have some agricultural soils in the rural zoning district which would be appropriate for conservation, and as the plan points out, there is a Conservation Fund for such projects (page 52).
 - Strategies to protect long term viability of agricultural lands should be encouraged and should include maintaining low overall densities. Long term strategies include preparing a complete inventory of productive agricultural and forestlands and assessing the resource value of each parcel in the

inventory (strategy 2b on page 76). The plan also establishes priorities and tools for open space and natural resource protection including fee purchase, transfer or purchase of development rights, acquisition of easements, conservation overlay districts, or other appropriate zoning (strategy 2a; page 76).

- The manufacture and marketing of value added agriculture and forest products should be encouraged. The rural district on the future land use map (page 123) notes that agricultural activities, forestry, and low density settlement patterns, including rural economic activities will be encouraged.
- The use of locally-grown food products should be encouraged. The food goals from plan pages 183 to 186 outline many goals and strategies that support locally-grown food including goal of having 50% of the food supply grown and processed within 100-mile radius of Montpelier in order to reduce dependence on food imports. Strategies include supporting the farmers market (3.a.2) and encouraging community gardens through land share programs (3d.1).
- Sound forest and agricultural management practices should be encouraged. The plan does not go into detail about sustainable agricultural and forestry practices however the goals and strategies outlined do highlight the need to promote sustainable use of land.
- Public investment should be planned so as to minimize development pressures on agricultural and forest land. The plan discusses focusing development and infrastructure in the city's growth center to maximize the community investments and less pressure on outlying areas of the city.
- To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont's natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area. The plan has a strategy (2f on page 77) to "*enact zoning regulations to insure that any extraction of earth resources is in compliance with best practices to minimize harm to all other resources and insure that site restoration is completed so that aesthetic qualities of the area are preserved and enhanced.*"
- To ensure the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters. Plan Section 4.3 evaluates housing data in Montpelier and demonstrates that the plan is consistent with the goal of ensuring the availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters. As described page 117 of the plan, there are a number of new, "pipeline projects" that represent new housing opportunities in the City. Further, Montpelier's Housing Trust Fund and growth center designation have been effective in increasing residential development in the City, all consistent with smart growth principles.
 - Housing should be encouraged to meet the needs of a diversity of social and income groups in each Vermont community, particularly those citizens of low

and moderate income. The plan asserts that Montpelier's decline in population is not due to its lack of desirability as a place to live. The opposite is true- more people would live in the city but cannot find housing at an affordable rate (page 115). To accommodate housing growth, the city has a goal of encouraging the creation of 150 housing units in 5 years and an additional 90 units in the subsequent three years in order to continue to assimilate new units at a pace that the market and the community can absorb (page 119).

- New and rehabilitated housing should be safe, sanitary, located conveniently to employment and commercial centers and coordinated with the provision of necessary public facilities and utilities. The City of Montpelier has local building and health code enforcement (page 124) to ensure safe and sanitary housing. The city has both a designated downtown, which provides incentives to improve historic rental housing by providing sprinkler, accessibility, and lead abatement programs (see strategy 5c on page 142). The growth center is also the target for future housing growth as it meets the requirements of being conveniently located and having necessary facilities and utilities (see smart growth district page 123).
- Sites for multifamily and manufactured housing should be readily available in locations similar to those generally used for single family conventional dwellings. Multifamily housing and manufactured housing are not expressly discussed but is inferred in many places such as promoting high density development within the growth center (2c.1 on page 139) and integrating subsidized housing throughout the city with a mix of rental, owned and mixed income tenures. As these requirements are already a requirement for all zoning bylaws, they already exist in code even if they are not expressly discussed in the plan.
- Accessory apartments within and attached to single family residences which provide affordable housing in close proximity to cost effective care and supervision of relatives or disabled or elderly persons should be allowed. Similar to the previous planning goal, it is already mandated by state law that accessory apartments be permitted in zoning. Accessory apartments are encouraged in the master plan in strategy 2c.5 where the city "*encourages accessory dwelling units and home sharing through various means including renovation loans to homeowners who need assistance modifying their homes to better accommodate additional occupants*".
- To plan for, finance and provide efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs. It is discussed in many places that the city has adequate facilities and services to provide for a growing populations including discussions of water and sewer in chapter 3 (pages 38 to 41) and infrastructure capacity (page 124). Most utilities need more customers and are not concerned with financing

expansions to cover new capacity.

- Public facilities and services should include fire and police protection, emergency medical services, schools, water supply and sewerage and solid waste disposal. Police, fire and emergency medical services are all discussed in chapter 7 (page 212 and 213) along with schools. As mentioned previously, water, sewer, and solid waste are discussed in chapter 3 on pages 38 to 41 and 50 respectively.
- The rate of growth should not exceed the ability of the community and the area to provide facilities and services. The current plan for growth and development is to encourage 30 to 50 new units of housing per year (page 119 and goal 5 on page 142) for the next five years. These are planned for the growth center where facilities and services are most easily accommodated. Each service has already been evaluated as a part of the Growth Center approval process to confirm that the service can accommodate the projected growth.
- To ensure the availability of safe and affordable child care and to integrate child care issues into the planning process, including child care financing, infrastructure, business assistance for child care providers, and child care work force development. The plan dedicates many pages to addressing child care starting on page 204. There is a general discussion of the needs and an inventory of existing providers. The plan also discusses the Family Center of Washington County and the services they provide to help with child care referral, child care financing, training for providers, and other supports. Finally the plan discusses regulatory issues and the current zoning in effect.
- To encourage a flood resilient community. Montpelier is a city built on rivers and flood resiliency is paramount. In chapter 3 the plan discusses flood mitigation and resiliency (page 34). The city has ongoing mitigation measures including early warning systems and participation in the Community Rating System (CRS). In 2016 and 2017 the planning commission proposed new river hazard regulations which, once adopted, will regulate to higher standards and include protection of the river corridor on the North Branch of the Winooski River.
 - New development in identified flood hazard, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas should be avoided. If new development is to be built in such areas, it should not exacerbate flooding or fluvial erosion. Goal 4 on page 65 states that "*Montpelier enhances river corridor and floodplain management so that development in the flood hazard area, fluvial erosion, and river corridor protection areas are avoided and that the capacity of our flood storage and mitigation areas has expanded by 25% of their 2010 levels.*" The plan then lays out six strategies to meet that goal.
 - The protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion should be encouraged.

Consistent with the discussions above, the city has a history of establishing programs and regulations to protect against flooding and erosion. These are discussed with regards to the river hazard area regulations (page 35) and contiguous forest blocks (page 53).

- Flood emergency preparedness and response planning should be encouraged. Emergency preparedness and response planning is directed by the Emergency Management Coordinator and the Emergency Management Team. The city has a strong history of preparedness and response (page 213).

One amendment to the plan is the future land use map (Map 30) therefore the designation of some land has changed. The future land use map was adjusted to reflect much of the information learned through the zoning process from 2012 to 2017.

- What was previously Low Density Rural on the Future Land Use Map was adjusted on the new map to reflect where sewer and water infrastructure are currently NOT available. This area is now labeled as Rural. The changes are subtle but reflect better planning by supporting development where the city has services and does not support development in areas that lack services.
- Second, the Smart Growth district remained the same in principle between the two Map 30s except that the Growth Center boundary was amended in 2016 and is now smaller. The smart growth boundary now is divided into two areas- the Designated Downtown and the Growth Center areas.
- The previous Smart Growth district was divided into development priority areas by 5 year increments. The Commission found that this is not a realistic way that development occurs. Development occurs where opportunities exist and the town should decide where development will be supported. The Commission found strong support for development, particularly housing, within all areas of the Smart Growth district today.
- As the Growth Center is now smaller it was now necessary to create a third class called surrounding neighborhoods. These areas have sewer and water but are outside of the growth center. This creates a conflict between encouraging growth where existing infrastructure is in place and not supporting growth that detracts from the vibrancy of the downtown and growth center. No decisions were made to answer that conundrum but the area was identified as needing additional attention to better define how the city should develop in these areas.
- The historic district is the same for both the 2010 Map as well as the 2017 Map but the new map incorporates the historic district by reference (Figure 16).
- Also in support of what was heard during the zoning process, the future parks and recreation areas were adopted by reference (on Figure 9) as well.

As a result of the changes to land designation this report is required to address the

following:

(1) The probable impact of the surrounding area, including the effect of any resulting increase in traffic, and the probable impact on the overall pattern of land use.

The overall pattern of land use is not expected to change much. The most significant change in land use designation makes the Smart Growth district smaller and creates a new surrounding neighborhoods district. This change simply narrows the focus of the future land use to areas in and around the current developed areas of the downtown. The surrounding neighborhoods have been identified for additional future attention. Some of these areas are residential where property owners prefer the low density development. In other areas, like National Life and River Street (Route 302), the areas are underdeveloped but commercial development tends to be auto oriented and not support the downtown core. Calling these areas out for additional study does not increase traffic or impact patterns of land use.

(2) The long term costs or benefit to the municipality, based on consideration on the probable impact on the municipal tax base and the need for public facilities:

Projecting impacts on the grand list is a complex undertaking that we do not attempt. In Montpelier, it would require a tremendous amount of growth to change the tax rate. The City recognizes that incremental growth in the grand list will require new development and provided this development does not require the city to add new services (i.e. costs), the growth is generally beneficial to the goal of affordability. Montpelier is fortunate at this time to have excess capacity in sewer and water utilities as well as capacity in public safety, schools, and administration. These all can absorb modest growth without requiring expansions. The Planning Commission therefore finds that there is a long term benefit to the tax base and facilities to have additional customers.

(3) The amount of vacant land which is already subject to the new designation and actually available for that purpose, and the need for additional land for that purpose.

As mentioned above the primary change on the future land use map is to refine the growth center and identify a new class called surrounding neighborhoods. This required discussion point is generally looking at communities that change uses in a more "Euclidian" manner (change from rural residential to industrial). The City's change in land use is not making a change in a way that affects the outcome under this criterion, except that the City provides clarity that infill of vacant land in the Smart Growth District is generally supported, while redevelopment of areas in surrounding neighborhoods is not automatically supported since development will need to ensure it does not impact either the residential character or vibrancy of the downtown depending on the location of the project.

(4) The suitability of the area in question for the proposed purposes after consideration of

appropriate alternative locations, alternative uses for the area under consideration, and the probable impact of the proposed change on other areas similarly designated.

Again this required discussion point is anticipating a Euclidian change in zoning proposed in the future land use map. The City's change in future land use map is simply a refinement of the Smart Growth line to match the new Growth Center district and to reclassify the remaining lands as "surrounding neighborhoods". The reason for the change is simply that the Growth Center is no longer covering 68% of the town and is now a much more narrowly defined area. Uses in both the refined Growth Center and new surrounding neighborhood areas would remain the same. Certainly the designation of Rural based on a lack of sewer and water service makes sense in that these areas would be the most appropriate for lower density development.

(5) The appropriateness of the size and boundaries of the area proposed for change, with respect to the area required for the proposed use, land capability, and existing development in the area.

Again, the City is not proposing uses of land but rather is identifying general areas where development is supported. The reasoning for each of the changes in designation has been laid out and is logical. As discussed above, the Smart Growth line was refined to match the new Growth Center district and then the plan reclassifies the remaining lands as "surrounding neighborhoods". The reasoning for each change also reflects the area necessary for the proposed use; land capability including sewer and water are addressed, and each change is generally reflective of existing development.

Readoption Report.

The final group of requirements are those that appear as a result of the readoption requirements found in 24 V.S.A. § 4387(b)(1) and specifically (A) through (G). In its review and update of the 2010 Master Plan the Planning Commission was required to:

(A) Consider the recommendations of the Regional Planning Commission provided pursuant to 4350(c)(2).

The Planning Commission reviewed the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission municipal consultation – Summary of 2015 Town Plan (dated May 22, 2017). While the 2015 City Master Plan was found to be compliant with the goals of 4302, the places where items were noted generally centered on the lack of a clear future land use map. The new changes to Map 30 and the accompanying text will help to alleviate those concerns.

(B) Engage in public outreach and involvement in updating the plan.

This original plan adopted in 2010 included extensive public input from 800 persons a survey and other inputs. Since that time the Planning Commission

spent 5 years working on zoning updates including three rounds of public hearings. That input has formed the foundation of changes to the land use sections. This 2017 update and readoption of the plan focused on a review and update of the information on which the plan is based including incorporating the public input following five years of public input on zoning. The Commission also held 3 warned public meetings, which included an opportunity for public comment, regarding the readoption of the plan in 2017. Not yet adopted at the time of this report, the Commission intends to continue outreach based on the strike out copy and clean copy of the 2017 draft Master Plan to solicit additional comments and recommended changes to the plan. Aside from the meetings it already conducted, additional public outreach and involvement will occur in advance of or at the public hearing warned for readoption and amendment of the 2017 plan. Following formal hearings the Commission will forward the plan to the Council where additional comment will be received.

(C) Consider consistency with the goals established in 4302 of title 24.

As pointed out in multiple places in this report, a thorough review of the goals has been conducted many times by the Planning Commission and staff during the original adoption of plan and the 2015 and now 2017 readoptions. It has also been reviewed multiple times by a third party, in this case the CVRPC, as a part of regional approval (2010 and 2015) as well as municipal consultation (most recently 2017). As discussed above, the Planning Commission finds that the plan is consistent with all the goals in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

(D) Address the required plan elements under section 4382 of this title.

This review has also occurred multiple times including during the regional approval process in 2010 and 2015. Following the 2015 review the following conclusion was made by Regional Planning Commission staff and endorsed by the full Regional Planning Commission:

The Montpelier Master Plan has clearly and unequivocally met all the statutory mandates of Chapter 117 required for "approval" of the document by the CVRPC. On that basis alone, staff strongly encourages the Town Plan Review Committee to recommend its approval to the full Commission. In addition, it is important to understand that many of the bold and innovative goals and strategies for housing development and "smart growth" land use principles proposed in this Plan are dependent on the continued good standing of the City's current State Growth Center designation. As such, any action other than approval would not only defy CVRPC's statutory responsibility, but jeopardize the implementation of the Master Plan and aspects of the Regional Plan, as well.

That recommendation was approved on September 8, 2015 at the CVRPC Board meeting.

This current amended version that is being readopted has been submitted to the CVRPC as a part of the warning process and the City will be receiving a

preliminary review to confirm that that this plan addresses all the required plan elements under section 4382.

(E) Evaluate the plan for internal consistency among plan elements, goals, objectives, and community standards.

The Planning Commission has reviewed the plan for internal consistency among the stated items. The Commission notes that all comprehensive plans by their nature will involve multiple conflicting goals such as open space protection vs. housing growth. The plan establishes a framework for weighing those community values. The Commission believes the plan is internally consistent. Many details will be worked out in the implementation of the plan- in the adoption of zoning for example.

(F) Address compatibility with the regional plan and approved plans of adjoining municipalities.

Again, similar to (C) and (D) above, the 2010 and 2015 Master Plans received regional approval which reviews the plan for compatibility with the regional plan and adjacent communities. During the regional process, the representatives of the adjoining towns are invited to participate in the review of the plan. Both the 2010 and 2015 reviews found the Montpelier Plan was consistent with them. The Planning Commission found that none of the changes made between the 2015 and 2017 plans would cause the plan to be incompatible with the regional plan.

(G) Establish a program and schedule for implementing the plan.

The 2017 plan's implementation plan sets out the program and schedule for implementation. Implementing plans occurs through three primary means- regulatory implementation, non-regulatory implementation, and special projects. Regulatory is somewhat self-explanatory. The city can achieve some goals by adopting regulations and requiring permits. For example, to protect health and safety in the flood hazard area the city can adopt rules about elevating structures and floodproofing. Second, we have non-regulatory programs like first time home buyers, tax stabilization, historic tax credits, education and outreach about energy efficiency, and others. No one is required to do these things but incentives are provided to encourage a positive outcome for the community. Finally specific projects round out implementation. Building the transit center or district heat plant are one time projects. These are three of the five "Ps" the planning office talks about with respect to implementation- Permits, Programs, and Projects are included along with additional Planning and Policies.

Specifically this plan is being readopted to allow the simultaneous adoption of the plan with a revised Unified Development Regulations and River Hazard Area regulations. This will then allow the Planning Commission to more address specific planning and implementation tools that have been delayed while the

adoption process for the Unified bylaws, master plan, and River Hazard Area has been ongoing. In January 2018 the Commission will prioritize a list that may include development of an Official Map, development of new rules regarding design review and historic preservation, or the commencement of a complete review and update of the Master Plan to make the plan more strategic – a process that has been started but has been tabled due to the recent need to readopt the master plan. The Commission looks forward to reviewing plans for improving housing, energy, transportation, natural resources and other key areas of concern for the City.

In conclusion, the Planning Commission believes this amendment and readoption meets all requirements under state law. While it is unclear whether this is technically an adoption of a plan, an amendment to a plan, or a readoption of a plan, the commission has conservatively tried to meet any and all requirements in this report. If there are any questions or comments with respect to the plan or this report, please contact Mike Miller, Planning Director at mmiller@montpelier-vt.org .