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INTRODUCTION

This Town Plan is our attempt to set a course for Westfield's growth and development. Town officials assembled information about the history and current status of the Town- its resources, facilities and services, and current land use. We discussed problems and issues which we feel need to be addressed, and we identified opportunities from which we hope to benefit. Finally, we developed a set of recommendations which we will use to guide our actions over the next 5 years.

We have recognized the importance of Westfield's history by providing a historical context for each section of the plan. We hope that this will help us to remember the relationships between past, present, and future as we make our decisions. Much of Westfield's history is preserved within the Hitchcock Museum. Other aspects are evident in our physical surroundings.

The rocky ledges of Hazen's Notch, vast tracts of forest, and the Missisquoi River as it meanders through the town provide the physical setting for life in Westfield. These scenic resources contribute to our quality of life and our economy. Over the next five years, we hope to maintain the historic and scenic resources which have shaped the lifestyle we enjoy here.

The biggest changes Westfield residents noted over last 10 years were the loss of farms and an influx of new residents. Most people don't want to change a thing about Westfield. They want the Town to remain peaceful and rural with well-kept homes and yards and a solid core of prosperous dairy farms. They want Westfield to remain a small town where neighbors are close and people work together for the benefit of their community.

Both Westfield officials and residents recognize the importance of respecting private property rights. In order to maintain the sense of community we have, we will all have to work together to balance public and private interests.

Our Vision for the Next Five Years

We wish we could bring back all the farms which have contributed to Westfield's agricultural heritage. We can try to keep those we still have by remaining flexible in our policies and bylaws so that farmers have the opportunity to diversify. We will encourage the productive use of our land, while offering the opportunities for development in keeping with the rural atmosphere we all enjoy.

We want to maintain local recreation access to forestland for snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, skiing, and hiking.

We are dedicated to supporting our existing businesses and industries. We will keep them by minimizing local government interference.

Over the next 5 years, we will work with Jay to ensure the continuation of a smoothly run school and will do our best to keep the educational needs of our children as the top priority.

Residential growth in Westfield will proceed at a pace which allows us to retain our ruralness and provide municipal services. We will maintain community spirit by making newcomers feel welcome, and by keeping up the neat, clean appearance of the Town.

Finally, we want to continue the spirit of cooperation we have developed with the Town of Jay and extend it to the Towns on our other borders so that development in the region can proceed in a manner which benefits us all.

WATER QUALITY

Surface Water

Westfield lies in the Missisquoi River drainage. Its streams offered many excellent mill sites to early settlers. Mill Brook was named by Lyman Taft, who erected the first grist and saw mill in town upon its banks.

According to the Vermont Rivers Study (1986), Coburn Brook and its tributaries in the northeast corner of town including Phillips Pond are Class A waters - "of uniformly excellent character" and suitable for public water supply. All other waters in the town are Class B - "suitable for bathing and recreation, irrigation and agricultural uses; good fish habitat; good aesthetic value; acceptable for public water supply with filtration and disinfection." Threats to water quality in town include agricultural runoff and sediments washing into streams as a result of logging activities.

Ground Water

Ground water is the source of all the drinking water supplies in Westfield. Any activities which introduce contaminants directly into the ground - underground storage tanks, leach fields, agricultural activities - can affect ground water quality. In addition to the many individual wells and springs, six water systems, serving more than one household, also have protection areas which lie totally or partially in Westfield: Jay Peak Basin, Westfield Village, Alpine Haven, Waterland, and Troy. Protection areas for these systems have been identified and mapped.

Wetlands

Westfield has only 444 acres of wetlands, however they are many in number and they are distributed throughout the town. There are many small wetland areas along the Missisquoi. Two large forested wetlands, associated with Snider and Taft Brooks, are located just west of TH 17. Wetlands serve important water quality functions, and they are subject to both state and federal regulation.

Setbacks and Vegetated Buffer Strips

Minimum setback distances from the top of the bank for septic systems, buildings or other structures as well as a vegetated buffer strip between any land use activity and a waterbody will serve to prevent or minimize water pollution. A minimum setback distance for any structure will keep construction or repair activity away from the shoreline; will help maintain the vegetated buffer strip; and will provide a permeable area for rain and runoff. Setbacks and buffer strips also help protect the natural character of the waterways providing recreational and aesthetic value.

Buffer strips are areas of natural, undisturbed vegetation along the shoreline of lakes, ponds, and streams. They provide a number of valuable functions including bank and

bed stabilization, reduction of nutrients, pollution and sediments entering the waters, regulation of water temperature and stream flow velocity, cover for fish in the water and for wildlife on the shoreline, and feeding and nesting habitat for birds. Buffer strips are extremely complex ecosystems that help provide optimum food and habitat for stream communities as well as being useful in mitigating or controlling nonpoint source pollution.

Buffer strips shall be maintained on all waterways, including small streams. These small streams are most vulnerable because they respond most dramatically to changes in adjacent land uses, tend to be located on the steepest sloping and erosion-prone lands, and often have the highest quality remaining habitat. Even tiny brooks not big enough to hold trout can benefit, because shade keeps the water cool and rich in oxygen for trout habitat downstream. It is essential to maintain the quality of these headwater streams to ensure the protection of water quality downstream.

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) Need to maintain vegetated strips along shorelines of streams and the Missisquoi River in order to prevent bank erosion and collapse.
- 2) Landowners along the river have had problems during high water with erosion and collapse of the banks.
- 3) Current regulations do not address siting, design, and installation of on-site septic systems which may affect ground water supplies.
- 4) Agriculture and forestry practices may affect water quality.

Recommendations:

- 1) Assess existing land uses in flood plain, near wetlands, in well-head protection areas and identify potential sources of contamination.
- 2) Contact Orleans County Conservation District about assistance to private landowners with flooding and erosion control problems.
- 3) Make sure zoning ordinance has provision for consideration of ground and surface water contamination and wetland disturbance. Consider 25' setback from waterways.
- 4) Look into options for regulation of on-site septic systems.
- 5) Recommend that agriculture and forestry operation follow the Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs).

FACILITIES & SERVICES

Water Supply

Fifty homes in the village are provided with a community water supply from both a spring and a well on North Hill. This system is privately owned. Hook-ups may become available when new pipes are laid. Alpine Haven also has a well-fed water supply that serves fifty homes. Water quality from private wells and springs is drinkable, but high sulphur and iron content is common.

Problems\Opportunities:

- 1) There is currently no local control over the siting of septic systems. This means that on-site septic systems can be located anywhere on a lot, and may be upgraded too close to a neighbor's water supply.
- 2) Well-head protection areas (WHPAS) have been defined by the State Health Department to help towns plan for protection of community water supplies (those serving more than one residence).

Recommendations:

- 1) Look into the options for local regulation of on-site septic systems.
- 2) Contact VT Health Department and invite someone to discuss WHPAs and their protection.
- 3) Locate and define WHPA for North Hill spring, identify potential contamination sources, and consider modifying zoning ordinance to prohibit land uses which could affect the spring.

Waste Disposal

Currently waste disposal goes to Waste USA. A facility located on the Airport Road in Coventry. Recycling is provided by Waste USA also. Trash pickup is done by Casella, Waste USA and other private haulers. Twice a year a hazardous waste disposal is held. The Town covers the expense for all the town residents that participate.

Westfield residents want to maintain the Town's neat appearance. Local officials are concerned that this appearance is increasingly marred by an accumulation of junk cars in some neighborhoods.

Problems\Opportunities:

- 1) Opportunity for cooperation with adjoining Towns on recycling program.
- 2) Opportunity to work with NVDA or private consultant on solid waste plan.
- 3) There is provision for junk car removal in the Zoning Bylaws which may need to be strengthened or enforced.

Recommendations:

- 1) Examine existing junk car ordinance in the Bylaws and determine if it meets the current need and if it is enforceable.
- 2) Review options for solid waste planning/recycling program

Post Office

For over 30 years, the initial inhabitants of Westfield traveled to Craftsbury for their mail. In about 1830, a mail route was established between Craftsbury and St. Albans. Soon after, a branch route was created between Lowell and North Troy. Ezra Johnson carried the mail twice a week on horseback and finally, a post office was established in Westfield. The current post office is located in a private residence.

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) The post office located in a private residence operates on limited hours. Some residents feel the hours should be extended.

Recommendations:

- 1) Apply political pressure to keep the post office in town.

Cemeteries

North Hill Cemetery is managed by the Westfield Selectmen with an appropriation from the Town. Until 1992, a lot for 2 graves was priced at \$25 with a \$50 perpetual care fee and a lot with 4 graves was \$75 with \$100 for perpetual care. Now the fee is \$75 per grave with no cost for perpetual care. Anyone can buy a lot in North Hill Cemetery.

Total acreage (180' x 124'):	0.5
Number of Lots - Total:	66
Number of Lots remaining to be sold:	42
Number of Lots sold in the last 10 years:	11
Number of burials in the last 10 years:	8

Westfield Cemetery is managed by the Westfield Cemetery Association. It is maintained with funds from a trust. There are only a few lots left, and anyone is welcome to purchase one. Fees are the same as in the North Hill Cemetery.

Total acreage:	
Number of Lots - Total:	218
Number of Lots - Occupied:	184
Number of Lots - Sold (but not yet occupied):	5
Number of Lots remaining to be sold:	29
Annual number of lots sold for last 10 years:	2-3

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) Limited land and high prices for burial plots in other states may encourage non-Vermonters to purchase cemetery space in Vermont.
- 2) Few lots are left in Westfield Cemetery, and as North Hill develops, land prices here are likely to rise. Currently, there is a chance to expand North Hill Cemetery onto adjacent land.
- 3) Price of cemetery lots not adequate to provide for perpetual care of the grounds.

Recommendations:

- 1) Investigate cemetery lot prices in other towns and other states.
- 2) Consider purchasing additional land for cemetery expansion before land prices rise.
- 3) Restructure the cemetery lot prices to provide for the care of the cemeteries.

Emergency Services

Fire Protection: Westfield is protected by the Troy Volunteer Fire Department, except for Alpine Haven, which is served by Montgomery's Volunteers. The Orleans County Sheriff's Department in Newport dispatches these services. The Town pays for fire and rescue services through a yearly appropriation (currently \$17,000).

Emergency Medical Services: The Towns of Westfield, Jay, Troy and Lowell contribute yearly appropriations to support the Missisquoi Valley Ambulance Service based in Troy, and the ambulance bills each insurance company privately. The Ambulance Service is searching for a more central location to make the response time adequate for all the towns it serves. Response times in Westfield are good, since many of the volunteers live in Westfield. Patients are taken to North Country Hospital, twelve miles away in Newport.

Police Protection: The Orleans County Sheriff's Department and the Vermont State Police in Derby protect The Town. The Town contracts yearly with the Sheriff's Department to patrol the roads, check businesses at night, and provide 24-hour emergency dispatching.

Westfield Selectboard has adopted the Local Emergency Planning Committee District 9 Haz-Mat Emergency Plan. This plan for coordinated response to spills of hazardous materials establishes a network throughout Essex, Orleans, and Caledonia Counties. Romeo Myott is the Community Emergency Coordinator. Town residents are notified of tornados, floods, and severe storms by radio or television.

Recreation

For a very small town, Westfield offers a variety of recreational opportunities for all ages. For young children, there is the playground at the Community Center. The Town

offers tennis and basketball courts and recreation fields on public land directly across from the Community Center. The schools offer a ski program at Jay Peak, and there is hockey for all ages in Newport.

For older residents, there is a Senior Center in Westfield, and bingo at many locations throughout the region. Senior meals are provided at the Westfield Community Center. A few times a year, card parties are held. The Hitchcock Library and Museum provides a quiet place to go on rainy days. Commercial establishments in the area offer camping, swim lessons, bowling, downhill skiing, and a fitness center.

The area around Westfield offers outdoor recreation for all ages including canoeing on the Misisquoi River, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing on miles of V.A.S.T. Trails and Class 4 Roads, hiking on the Long Trail, hunting, fishing, and trapping. Private landowners provide access for many of these activities.

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) There is need for adult access to gymnasium space and time for basketball, dancing, etc.
- 2) Some landowners are beginning to post their land, and this may limit certain recreation opportunities - snowmobiling, cross country skiing, hiking, hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Recommendations:

- 1) Encourage the landowners to allow sports on their land.
- 2) Encourage townspeople to use the facilities we have (i.e. the community center and gymnasium).
- 3) Encourage good communication between landowners and recreational users, and recognize the contribution private landowners make toward serving the Town's recreation needs.

Public Land & Buildings

The Hitchcock Museum & Library, Westfield's central landmark, was built in 1899 with funds donated by Aaron E. Hitchcock, a local farmer, businessman, and real estate investor. Hitchcock's \$10,000 donation to the Town constructed the building, established a natural history collection, and provided a fund for maintenance. Since then, the museum collection has grown to include wild game trophies from around the world. There is a large collection of ships in bottles donated by Ralph Preston, a one-time Lowell resident. The museum also houses a complete history of the Town in photos, documents, and objects such as the first plow to till Westfield's soil.

In 1999, a celebration was held in honor of the Museum's centennial birthday. Various Towns supplied floats, antiques, and clowns for the parade. Bread & Puppet Theater also participated with quite a selection of puppet characters. Craft vendors and other

set-ups helped with the celebration. The Air Force National Guard of Burlington opened the celebration by leading the parade.

In the 1950's, the Gilpin family donated just over 40 acres of forestland off North Hill to the Town. The parcel is landlocked, but an adjoining landowner provided access for selective cutting of some mixed hardwoods in the late 1980s. At the 2002 Town Meeting, it was decided to auction off this parcel. The Town also received 0.5 acre on RTE 242 as a gift.

Public land and facilities in Westfield currently include:

Town Owned:

- Hitchcock Museum & Library
- Town Garage
- Community Center and fields opposite (+/- 5 acres)
- Town Forest (+/- 40 acres)
- 0.5 acre on VT RTE 242
- Half of the Jay/Westfield School (located in Jay)
- The Common (intersection of Route 100 and North Hill Road)
- Westfield and North Hill Cemeteries

State owned:

- State Garage
- Jay Peak State Forest
- Hazen's Notch State Forest
- Long Trail (The Green Mountain Club purchases available property, adds to the Long Trail, and donates the rest of the land to the State.)

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) The Town Clerk's office is in a private residence.

Recommendations:

- 1) Consider areas of town, places important to local residents, where the Town may want to secure public access through donation, acquisition, or easements.
- 2) Research the feasibility of purchasing or erecting a new structure for the Town Clerk's office.

Education

In the late 1800s, when Westfield's population was almost at its peak, the Town had six common schools serving 138 pupils. The Town paid out a total of \$439.75 in salaries to ten teachers. In March of 1992, the Town voted to cooperate with the Town of Jay to build a new elementary school (grades K-6) in Jay. The last remaining school in Westfield, built in 1860, was closed in June 1992. Students in grades K-8 can choose

to go to Sacred Heart School in Newport. Junior high students have a choice between schools in Derby, Troy or Montgomery, and high school students go to North Country Union in Newport. In the 2001 Town Report, 29 students were enrolled in grades K-6 at the Jay-Westfield School; 7 in Jr. High at North Country Union; 32 in High School at North Country Union; and 5 being taught at home. The Town appropriates funding for Adult Basic Education which is provided in Newport. Local day care services are provided in Jay and Troy.

The Village School has become the Westfield Community Center. With grants from the State and the Historical Society, it was renovated to resemble the way it was originally. This building is used for Senior meals on Mondays and Thursdays, partially funded by the Area Agency on Aging. It is also used for civic groups, selectmen, Town and other board meetings, as well as being rented out for private use. Work is still being done on the playground and parking lot.

According to the 1990 Census, educational attainment levels for Westfield residents closely resemble those of the county and the State (Table 1). There are a few notable differences. The percentage of Westfield residents that are high school graduates is higher than both the county and State numbers. Whereas, the number of Westfield residents who have received college degrees is equivalent to the county but compares to nearly half of the State's figures.

1. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: Persons 25 Years and Over			
	<i>Westfield</i>	<i>Orleans</i>	<i>Vermont</i>
Less than 9 th grade	11%	15%	9%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	15%	14%	11%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	45%	38%	35%
Some college, no degree	15%	13%	15%
Associate degree	4%	6%	7%
Bachelor's degree	6%	10%	15%
Graduate or professional degree	4%	4%	9%
Total persons in category:	292	15,232	357,245
Source: 1990 US Census Table P57			

Another table to consider is the school enrollment and type of school attended by the residents. Shown in Table 2, the types of schools attended by Westfield students are equivalent to the numbers for both the county and State. Those enrolled in college are slightly lower, however this reflects the above table which shows that there are fewer residents earning college degrees.

2. SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND TYPE OF SCHOOL: Persons 3 Years and Over			
	<i>Westfield</i>	<i>Orleans</i>	<i>Vermont</i>
Enrolled in preprimary school:			
Public school	3%	2%	2%
Private school	0%	0%	1%
Enrolled in elementary or high school:			
Public school	20%	19%	16%
Private school	2%	1%	2%
Enrolled in college:			
Public school	3%	3%	5%
Private school	1%	1%	3%
Not enrolled in school	72%	73%	73%
Total persons in category:	437	23,096	538,321
Source: 1990 US Census Table P54			

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) After almost 10 years with Jay and Westfield working together with a combined school, problems have been worked out. The joint school received a grant of from the State, with each Westfield and Jay receiving \$113,000. This grant will be used in 2006 to pay off the bond owed on the school.
- 2) With decisions about K-6 educational facilities behind us, folks may begin thinking about a local middle school.

Recommendations:

- 1) Maintain a good relationship with the Town of Jay.
- 2) Begin discussion about middle school.

Telecommunication Facilities

Towers and related infrastructure require careful consideration. These structures tend to be located on highly visible locations on mountaintops, ridgelines and in residential areas. The need for additional facilities is projected to increase dramatically in the next five to ten years. The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 placed certain limitations over municipal control of these structures; however, within those confines, Westfield must act to protect the Town's historic character, rural nature, and aesthetic beauty.

Toward that end, the Zoning Bylaws should incorporate appropriate guidelines and regulations governing at least the following areas: aesthetics, integrity of residential zones, ridgeline protection, preferred locations (general and specific), and collocation or clustering of tower facilities.

The Town of Westfield is quite concerned about the aesthetic and environmental impacts of tower facilities. When planning new infrastructure or upgrades to existing systems, special consideration shall be given to any primary or secondary impacts that

would reduce resource values (including but not limited to aesthetics and streetscape design, agricultural land, timber resources, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and historic sites). In addition, when a new facility is planned, there must be clear evidence that the proposed location is necessary based upon economic considerations, potential impacts on resource values, and the resulting public benefits. In all cases, appropriate and suitable techniques shall be used to minimize or prevent any adverse impacts from the placement of telecommunication facilities and related infrastructure. The following list includes goals and policies regarding Telecommunication facilities:

Recommendations:

1. All such facilities shall be located in appropriate areas, respecting the integrity of residential areas, aesthetic concerns, and natural resource issues. Through the Zoning Bylaws, the Town may specify reasonable areas where these facilities may be located. This is important on a macro scale (general areas in Town) as well as a micro scale (specific desirable placement or location: for example, below ridgelines, tucked into groves of trees, and the like).
2. Towers and related infrastructure shall only be as tall as absolutely necessary. Where towers are located within the treelines, they should be made to be extendable, so they can “grow” with the trees, and remain the minimum height needed above the treetops.
3. Unless required by the FAA, towers shall not be illuminated. Where required, lights shall be shielded in order to minimize aesthetic impacts, and so that light is cast only where needed.
4. Structures shall be designed in order to minimize aesthetic impacts. Equipment sheds can be hidden in the trees; depending on site-specific circumstances, tower structures may be monopole or lattice, of appropriate colors and minimal reflexivity, or even disguised as trees or steeples. Towers and related infrastructure shall be screened from view to the greatest extent possible.
5. Electric or transmission lines shall be installed so as to minimize aesthetic and ecological impacts. For example: clear-cut swaths, created for power lines or access roads which go straight up the mountainside, often create far more adverse impacts than the towers they serve, and are not acceptable.
6. The Town reserves the right to hire independent consultants to evaluate the application and facility as well as to monitor the facility over time. The applicant shall pay for the reasonable costs of these services.
7. All equipment shall be downsized as technology advances and removed when no longer used or needed. These requirements can minimize aesthetic intrusion, while maximizing the potential to serve a greater number of users in the same physical area. A bond may be required to ensure that funds are available to accomplish these purposes.

ECONOMY

Westfield's first center of business and industry was the West Hill or Buck Hill. The first gristmill was built here in 1802. The gristmills were followed by other businesses including a boarding house, blacksmith shop, and starch factory. Farmers made extra cash by raising potatoes to be ground for starch.

The valley was settled later with sawmills, a wheelwright, and a shoe shop. In 1818, Westfield residents were glad when a small store was opened eliminating the need to travel to Craftsbury to do their trading. A cheese factory operated below the LeBlanc farm house. The Bowen Hunter Bobbin Mill began its operation on Mill Brook, north of the village in the early 1900s. The Mill produced its last commercial wooden products in 1964 and is now a small restaurant.

In the 1950s, residents of the surrounding communities decided to develop Jay Peak as a ski area. They formed a company, sold shares, marked trails, and put up a chair lift. Today, Jay Peak has 64 trails and glades served by 7 lifts. Jay Peak's Tram House is located in Westfield. With the completion of the Jay-Troy sewage treatment facility, the present Montreal-based owner, Mont Saint-Sauveur International, plans to enter a new phase of expansion: 150 additional hotel rooms, 4-season recreational center, conference center, shops, restaurants, galleries, child-care facility, 18-hole golf course, and a slope side residential community of single family homes. All of these facilities will be located in the Town of Jay.

The Town of Westfield currently has a diverse mixture of small-scale business and industry. Goods and services are adequately provided for the local population, however there is no car wash or Laundromat. There are not many jobs available in Town, resulting in many residents commuting to surrounding towns and a high unemployment rate. The average wage for all covered employment (employment covered by Vermont unemployment insurance) in Westfield in 2000 was \$18,006, 22% below the 2000 average wage for the county and 38% below that of the State. As can be seen in Tables 3 and 4, these disparities have improved over the last decade.

3. ANNUAL AVERAGE WAGE		
	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>
Westfield	\$11,214	\$18,006
Orleans County	\$16,516	\$23,177
Vermont	\$20,531	\$28,920
VT Dept. Employment and Training		

4. ANNUAL AVERAGE WAGE OF WESTFIELD COMPARED TO:		
	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>
Orleans County	Westfield = 32% below	Westfield = 22% below
Vermont	Westfield = 45% below	Westfield = 38% below
Calculated by NVDA		

Economic activities are tied to agriculture, forest products, manufacturing, recreation, tourism, and services for the Town and region. The four dominant categories of covered employment in Westfield and Orleans County in 2000 can be seen in Table 5. While the Town would like to see these businesses grow, the Town is more interested in the maintenance of the vitality of these businesses. The Town would like to see new,

non-polluting, value added businesses come to Town that fit in well with the character of the Town and utilize the products of the Town's farms.

The nine operating dairy farms average about 250 acres each, and milk an average of 70 cows. Westfield has over 5,000 acres of actively managed forestland. Six of the nine farmers sell pulp, logs, or firewood to supplement their incomes. There are currently six commercial maple-sugaring operations.

5. ANNUAL AVERAGE WAGE PER ANNUAL AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT OF INDUSTRY		
	<i>Westfield</i>	<i>Orleans County</i>
Private (Agriculture Forestry, Fishing, Manufacturing)	56	7,587
<i>Annual Ave Wage</i>	<i>\$17,226</i>	<i>\$22,633</i>
Retail	15	1,635
<i>Annual Ave Wage</i>	<i>\$10,022</i>	<i>\$14,988</i>
Services	11	2,415
<i>Annual Ave Wage</i>	<i>\$7,955</i>	<i>\$20,692</i>
Government	8	1,830
<i>Annual Ave Wage</i>	<i>\$23,417</i>	<i>\$25,431</i>
VT Department of Employment and Training, 2000		

Westfield Economic Activities 2002

Services\Recreation\Tourism

2 campgrounds
level-two community care center
restaurant
bed and breakfast
2 construction contractors
Jay Peak Ski Area
3 auto shops/car sales

Manufacturing

t-shirt factory
canoe factory

Commerce

general store
hardware store
discount store
antique store

Agriculture\Forestry

9 active dairy farms
yogurt factory
agricultural products dealer
horse farm
3 sheep farms
apiary
2 market gardens
nursery
6 commercial maple producers
2 loggers
pulp, firewood, saw logs

Problems\Opportunities:

- 1) Expansion at the Jay Peak Ski Area may cause an increase in residential development in Westfield. Most of these homes would be seasonal. There may

be increased opportunity for tourist businesses and services such as bed & breakfasts.

- 2) An increasing number of retirees are choosing Westfield as a place to live. There are also more working people who move here and either commute or find ways to work out of their homes.
- 3) The Hitchcock Library and Museum is an unusual facility for such a small town, and has potential to attract visitors to Westfield.
- 4) Local officials are increasingly concerned about the effects of logging operations on erosion, water quality, and aesthetics.

Recommendations:

- 1) Keep up good relations with Town of Jay.
- 2) Make sure zoning is flexible enough to allow agricultural diversification.
- 3) Investigate ways to maintain productive land while allowing some residential lot development.
- 4) Communicate with local forestland owners about local recreation access and concerns regarding erosion control and visual impacts of clear-cuts.
- 5) Encourage forestry and agricultural practices to operate under Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs).
- 6) Encourage new businesses that fit well with the character of the Town.
- 7) Encourage the study of new value added businesses that utilize the products of the local dairy farms.

HOUSING

The first settler in Westfield was Jesse Olds who arrived from Massachusetts in 1798. Olds was a lawyer and Congregational Clergyman, who "by reason of irregularities, left civilization and sought the wilds of Vermont." He settled on the West Hill.

The first family to settle in the flat where the village now stands, Captain Medad Hitchcock and his sons, Thomas, Heber, and Smith arrived in 1804. By 1810, Westfield's population was 149, and by 1890 it had reached its peak at 763. From there, it descended to an all-time low of 354 persons in 1940, and has risen slowly, but steadily to its current level at 503.

In 1990 the Town of Westfield had a population of 422 persons. In the 10 years following the 1990 Census, the population of Westfield increased by 19% to 503 persons. The 2000 Census population of Westfield represents the first time that Westfield's population has exceeded 500 persons since the 1910 Census. Westfield has grown, on average over the last ten years, at a rate of approximately two families per year. However, with the exception of a possible need for a limited number of new, affordable rentals, there does not appear to be a need for affordable housing in Westfield. In fact, the development known as Alpine Haven on Route 242 in the northwestern corner of town does provide some affordable housing units. Data from the 2000 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing confirms the supposition made above.

6. EXISTING HOUSING DATA		
<i>Status</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	
Occupied		
Owner	175	
Renter	25	
Total occupied		200
Vacant		
For rent	23	
For sale only	5	
Occasional use	103	
All other vacant	8	
Total vacant		139
Total units		339
2000 Census, Tables H1, H4, H6, H8		

As of the 2000 Census, there were 339 dwelling units in Westfield. As can be seen in Table 6, of these 339 units, 200 were occupied and the remaining 139 were vacant. Most of these vacant units, 103, are used seasonally, occasionally, or for recreation. Occupied housing units in Westfield seem to have ample room for the occupants. According to the 2000 Census, the average household size was 2.45. This shows that the dwelling units have adequate space per household. The rest of the tables are based on 1990 figures when the total units was 264.

Westfield's housing stock is at an average age for the region. Table 7 shows that the median year which houses were built is 1969. A large burst of new construction in the 1960s and 1970s created half of the overall stock of houses. Table 8 indicates that most of the

7. YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT	
<i>Time Period</i>	<i>Units</i>
1989-March 1990	15
1985-1988	11
1980-1984	20
1970-1979	79
1960-1969	55
1950-1959	9
1940-1949	6
1939 or earlier	69
Median year built	1969
1990 Census, Tables H25 & H25A	

housing units are equipped with complete kitchen and plumbing facilities, implying that the units are in relatively good condition.

8. KITCHEN AND PLUMBING FACILITIES		
	<i>Kitchen</i>	<i>Plumbing</i>
Complete facilities	250	244
Lacking complete facilities	14	20
1990 Census, Tables H42 & H64		

Tables 9 and 10 also give an indication of the quality of housing in the town. Table 9 shows the sources of water for the Town. There is some cause for concern with the 81 houses that have an unspecified source for their water supply. These could be unfiltered and/or untreated surface water which could be a health concern. Table 10 shows that many of the units have a managed system for treating sewage. The 25 units that have “other means” can also be a cause for concern regarding water quality. All of the units served by the public water supply and public sewer are in the village of Westfield.

9. WATER SUPPLY	
<i>Source</i>	<i>Units</i>
Public/Private system	117
Individual Well:	
Drilled	43
Dug	23
Some other source	81
1990 Census, Table H23	

10. SEWAGE DISPOSAL	
<i>Means</i>	<i>Units</i>
Public sewer	12
Septic tank or cesspool	227
Other means	25
1990 Census, Table H24	

Affordability

The definition of affordable in terms of housing is that the mortgage or rental payments do not exceed 28% of the occupant's gross income. Table 11 presents data on housing costs as a percentage of household income for both renter and occupied units. This table sets forth sample data for owner and renter occupied units.

This table reflects the fact that there were only 4 renter occupied households that were paying in excess of 30% of their household income. The data for the owner occupied units includes the costs of taxes, insurance, and utilities as well as the cost of the mortgage if one exists. Hence, only those households paying in excess of 35% of the household's income have been counted as paying too much per month of housing. In this instance, 7 owner occupied households were paying in excess of 35 % of their household income. All totaled, then, there were only 11 households that were paying too much for housing. This represents 4% of the households in Westfield. This suggests that houses are affordable in Town and that there is not much of a concern right now.

11. HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989 BY MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989					
<i>Income Category</i>	<i>Occupancy</i>		<i>Income Category</i>	<i>Occupancy</i>	
	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Renter</i>		<i>Owner</i>	<i>Renter</i>
Less than \$10,000:			\$20,000 to 34,999:		
Less than 34 percent	0	0	25 to 29 percent	0	0
35 percent or more	5	4	30-34 percent	2	0
\$10,000 to \$19,999:			35 percent or more	0	0
Less than 20 percent	5	0	Not computed	0	2
20 to 24 percent	2	3	\$35,000 to \$49,999:		
25 to 29 percent	0	2	Less than 20 percent	14	0
30 to 34 percent	0	0	20 to 24 percent	0	0
35 percent or more	2	0	25 to 29 percent	3	0
Not computed	0	2	30 percent or more	0	0
\$20,000 to \$34,999:			\$50,000 or more:		
Less than 20 percent	10	0	Less than 20 percent	11	2
20 to 24 percent	6	0	More than 20 percent	0	0

1990 Census, Tables H50 & H59

Therefore the Town has decided that the more important housing need in Westfield is to make sure that the Town's residents are living in housing that is safe, energy efficient, and provided with water supply and sewage treatment systems that function properly. To this end the Town has recently created a fire district to upgrade a water supply system that serves the Village. This system was at one time privately owned and has been donated to the Fire District. With regard to sewage treatment, Westfield does not have a public sewer system, therefore, it is critical that the Town encourage the installation of on-site sewage treatment systems that 1) comply with any applicable State regulations and 2) function properly.

Projected Housing Needs

The population of Orleans County experienced a moderate growth in population between 1990 and 2000 as can be seen in Table 12. However, the Towns of Westfield, Lowell, Jay and Montgomery all experienced rapid population growth. This rapid growth

12. POPULATION GROWTH 1990-2000		
<i>Area</i>	<i>2000 Pop.</i>	<i>% Change 1990-2000</i>
Westfield	503	19%
Lowell	738	24%
Jay	426	12%
Troy	1564	-3%
Montgomery	992	21%
Orleans County	26,277	9%
Northeast Kingdom	62,438	7%

U.S Census Bureau, 2000

could put pressure on existing housing stock, creating a need for more housing in the future. Yet, by taking a look at the age distribution of the population, it can be seen that most of the increase is in the older population. This is consistent with the fact that a little more than one-third of Westfield's housing units are in seasonal/ occasional use (Table 6).

The aging of Westfield's population, following the national trend of aging "baby-boomers", is quite dramatic. For the past twenty years, all age groups under 30 have been declining in number, while those over 30 have been on the increase. This trend will affect the type of services and housing needed by Westfield residents in the coming years. Demands for health services and accessibility will probably increase. It will be important to ensure that all public buildings are handicapped accessible. Access for emergency vehicles will also become more important as this aging population moves further into remote areas of the Town.

Town officials feel there is no further room for residential development within the village. Most of the land along RTE 100 is in the flood plain, thereby limiting its development potential. Future development is expected to occur on the higher land in town. Alpine Haven and North Hill are the most likely places for residential growth. These areas are both served by good roads. In addition, development in Alpine Haven and North Hill areas will not substantially affect farming or forestry activities.

Problems\Opportunities:

- 1) Expansion at Jay Peak may cause an increase in residential development in Westfield, especially in the Alpine Haven area.
- 2) An increasing number of retirees are choosing Westfield as a place to live. There are also more working people who move here and either commute or work out of their homes. These people will have different needs for town services than those who have lived here in the past. Their preferences will also tend to alter the traditional settlement pattern. For example, new rural residents may choose to live away from other people rather than clustering close together.
- 3) Land and housing prices may rise above the affordability level for local residents.

Recommendations:

- 1) Review zoning regulations to offer a variety of options for future home sites, especially in the areas of town which are most able to support new growth.
- 2) Make sure lot sizes are adequate to allow for on-site water and septic systems with required isolation distances.
- 3) Monitor residential growth in order to ensure that municipal services are adequate.
- 4) Make available to homeowners information regarding energy efficient home improvements.
- 5) Make available to homeowners information regarding the proper design, maintenance, and installation of on-site water supplies and sewerage disposal systems.

TRANSPORTATION

The main road from Westfield to Lowell was laid out in 1806. This was a welcome development to residents who previously had road access only to Craftsbury, a long uncomfortable ride over West Hill. Today, Westfield has over 31 miles of traveled highways. The route from Westfield to Lowell is part of State Highway Route 100 which crosses 5.9 miles of town. Another 3.7 miles of the State Highway Route 242, traverses the northwest corner of the town along Jay Brook into the Jay State Forest.

Westfield has about 23 miles of town roads: 6.57 miles of Class 2 (Nos. 1, 2, 3); 16.17 miles of Class 3; and just over 2 miles of Class 4, located in the forested area of town, west of Route 100.

Gravel for road building and maintenance comes from private sources in Lowell and Westfield. The Town owns a grader and a sander. There is a fund in place for repair and/or replacement of road equipment.

The Town has a schedule for regular maintenance of its roads and bridges. It has been said that Westfield has the best-maintained dirt roads in the State! At this time, all the bridges in the town have been replaced except for the one on Taft Brook on Buck Hill. This one has been placed on the list for renewal. The Town has also adopted a set of road and bridge standards prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Maintenance according to these standards will insure funding for the replacement or repair of roads, bridges, and /or culverts damaged by floodwaters. In addition, for those roads, bridges, and culverts that have been installed in accordance with these standards, they should help to reduce damage caused by floodwaters.

Town businesses have access to Central Vermont and Canadian Pacific rail lines in Richford. Newport State airport in Coventry provides chartered air freight service. The closest commercial passenger air service is in Burlington and Montreal.

Bus and Taxi services are available out of Newport. Northeast Kingdom Regional Transit, a program offered by Northeast Kingdom Community Action in Newport, provides ride services upon request through volunteer drivers who are reimbursed per mile.

The western side of town has an extensive trail system with some legal trails which have deeded right-of-ways. The Long Trail traverses almost the entire town from north to south from Jay State Forest to Hazen's Notch State Forest.

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) As more people build homes in remote places, there may be a demand for the Town to take up private roads or upgrade Class 4 roads.
- 2) Remote homes on poor quality roads offer limited access for fire and rescue vehicles.

- 3) Currently individuals building new driveways voluntarily consult with the Road Commissioner about construction standards and access onto town roads. Can this arrangement continue to work?

Recommendations:

- 1) Consider restricting curb cuts accessing private driveways onto town roads.
- 2) Require access permit issued by Selectboard/Road Commissioner for private driveways adjoining town roads or insert some standards for driveways/private roads into general regulations section of zoning bylaw.
- 3) Continued maintenance of the town's roads and replacement of the 1952 grader.

ENERGY

All of the energy needs of the Town presently appear to be met. There are no documented scarcities of energy resources in the region. The costs of energy resources are within reason compared to the costs of the surrounding towns. However, gasoline prices for commuting to work and heating oil prices in the winter are constantly putting a strain on residents. The Town does not foresee any potential problems with resource scarcity or rising costs.

Most of Westfield residents heat with gas or wood, or a combination of wood and oil. Many local homes have taken advantage of energy audits and weatherization programs offered by utilities in the past. Electricity is supplied to Westfield by Citizens Utilities Company in Newport and Vermont Electric Cooperative in Johnson. Both of these utilities have proven very reliable with very infrequent and minor outages.

Westfield's town buildings are all heated with oil except the garage, which has a combination of wood and oil. All buildings are insulated, but have never been audited for energy efficiency, with the exception of the Community Center which was weatherized when it was renovated.

The greatest share of energy consumption for both public and private uses is for transportation. As of the 1990 Census, 85 of Westfield's 190 workers reported traveling at least 20 miles to their work place.

The Town only has one piece of large machinery, a grader which is 50 years old, due to its initial quality and careful maintenance.

The school bus driver receives a flat fee for transporting the town's school children. This helps to ensure that he uses the most efficient route possible.

The Planning Commission recognizes the importance of renewable energy resources and recommends their development and use within the town. These would include the use of wood heat, solar, wood, small hydro, and wind energies. Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS), are specifically addressed in the Westfield Zoning Bylaw to address safety and design requirements. It is the Town's goal that all WECS meet these recommendations.

The conservation of energy is also strongly encouraged. This plan recommends the use of energy saving products such as insulation, efficient appliances, and, when necessary winter weatherization products. New construction and the replacement of old appliances, doors, and windows should always be done with energy efficient products. In addition, energy efficient behavior (shutting off lights when leaving the room, turning the thermostat down at night, etc.) should be taught and used at school, home and in the workplace. The Planning Commission also recommends that an energy audit be conducted in all Town owned buildings. Then the necessary improvements should be made to these buildings to make them more energy efficient.

In addition to development patterns, site design can play a large role in bringing down energy costs. Southern orientation can provide direct energy contributions. Designing building construction to provide large window areas on the southern side, allows passive solar heating in the winter months. These windows will capture sunlight and in turn pay for themselves in energy savings. In the same way, designing construction to allow large southern roof areas allows the homeowner to retain the opportunity of future solar development. This should be considered in initial site design. Consideration of the natural surroundings is also important in site design. The use of existing shelterbelts, or tree rows, can further reduce energy costs. Shelterbelts act as buffers to the cold winter winds (if located on the north side of the building) or provide cooling shed in the summer (if on the south).

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) There may be funding available to do energy audits for public buildings.
- 2) The Town will eventually need to purchase a new grader.
- 3) Town will be revising its zoning ordinance.

Recommendations:

- 1) Check into funding for energy audits for public buildings.
- 2) Consider lifetime costs including gas mileage, energy efficiency, useful life expectancy, and operating costs when purchasing new vehicles or machinery for the Town.
- 3) Consider access to sources of renewable energy (sun, wind, water) when reviewing zoning ordinance.

WILDLIFE HABITAT AND SIGNIFICANT NATURAL & HISTORIC FEATURES

Wildlife Habitat

Fisheries are indicators for clean water and diverse and productive aquatic habitat. The Missisquoi, from the North Troy Dam to Westfield Village has naturally sustained populations of Brook, Rainbow, and Brown Trout. Snider and Taft Brooks have Brook Trout, and Mill Brook has natural populations of both Brown and Brook.

The Missisquoi flood plain is a valuable stretch of habitat for wildlife species that depend upon the water system for food, travel, and shelter. The woods and higher elevations on the west side of town provide relatively uninterrupted habitat and travel corridors for upland wildlife. While there are no deer wintering areas documented in town, it is important for large mammals like deer, moose, and bear to have these large uninterrupted areas apart from humans for travel and food. Westfield is part of a region which supports relatively high densities of cub-producing female bears.

Natural Heritage Sites

The Vermont Natural Heritage Program has identified sites including rare, threatened and endangered species, and significant natural communities. Rare plants and animals tracked by the Vermont Nongame and Natural Heritage Program are native to the State and considered rare for one or more reasons: they have particular habitat requirements, are on the edge of their ranges and/or are vulnerable to disturbance or collection. Natural communities are either rare habitat types in Vermont or are among the best examples in the State of a common community type.

There are several sites within the town (see map). Hazen's Notch is the home to a cold calcareous cliff community. This type of community occurs in less than 10 sites statewide and is home to some rare plant species. There is also a peregrine nesting site which is not currently in use, but may be used as the birds reestablish themselves here. Another area of significant importance is where the Missisquoi and Mineral Spring Brook meet. This floodplain forest is the site of several rare plants. Inside the Jay State Forest is a boreal outcrop on the top of Jay Peak. This high elevation forest is a home to the rare bird, the Bicknell's thrush.

The other sites which appear on the map are actually in Lowell and Troy, but the buffer zones around them extend into Westfield. A state-threatened plant species, the Great Laurel or Giant Rhododendron grow near the Westfield/Troy line. Close to the Lowell/Westfield border is a serpentine outcrop community, Browns Ledges, where the Green Mountain Maidenhair Fern was discovered. This plant species has worldwide significance: there are 5 or less known sites in the world, and all are in Vermont.

Significant Natural & Historic Features

The main chain of the Green Mountains runs through the western side of town. Hazen's Notch State Park/Natural Area, a steep-walled gap, lies between Sugarloaf and Haystack mountains. Cliffs of serpentine rock support rare alpine plant species and has historically been a nesting place for peregrine falcons. Traversed by the Long Trail, these 197 acres provide many opportunities for recreation. The Long Trail State Forest, providing 5,459 acres for fishing, hiking and hunting, follows the Trail northward to nearly connect with the Jay State Forest at the town's northern border. Jay Peak, a regional landmark and well-known ski area, sits inside of the 1,319 acres of the Jay State Forest.

The most well-know natural feature in town is Balance Rock located only about 10 minute's walk off Town Road 17 on Buck Hill. The rock estimated to weigh about 100 tons, is balanced on top of a ledge. It has been guarding the valley for over 12,000 years. The property is now privately owned.

The Missisquoi River meanders through the eastern side of town. It is one of five Vermont rivers with segments of known archeological sensitivity greater than 20 miles. The stretch that runs through Westfield is designated as a corridor of "expected archeological sensitivity". Present and past topography, exposure, slope, distance to water, availability and abundance of food and other natural resources combine to produce a strong likelihood that archaeological sites exist here.

As was explained under Public Lands and Buildings, the Hitchcock Museum & Library is Westfield's central historical landmark. This historical building holds many treasures from around the world, as well as a complete history of the Town in photos, documents, and objects. The windows of this 103-year-old structure need to be repaired or replaced. The Community Center is also a historical feature and with help from grants from the Historical Society, it was renovated to resemble its original structure. It is important that the Town keep these two buildings maintained so as to remain as central meeting places in the Town's daily activities.

Problems/Opportunities:

- 1) Westfield has many unique physical characteristics that can serve as attractions to many types of visitors - tourists, scientists, and recreationists.
- 2) Most of the fragile sites are protected by other physical limitations of the area - floodplain, rock outcrops, steep slope, and inaccessibility.
- 3) Balance Rock is on private property and there is some concern about continued public access and landowner liability.
- 4) Logging activity followed by subdivision of large forested tracts may pose threats to wildlife habitat and recreational uses.
- 5) Stream water quality may be affected by sedimentation from logging practices, installation of private in-stream ponds, and agricultural runoff.

Recommendations:

- 1) Use the Natural Heritage site designations on the map as red flags which indicate the need to contact biologists with the Vermont Natural Heritage Program (241-3700) if there is development proposed with the site. They will work directly with landowners.
- 2) Identify places of significant local value to consider for Town acquisition of easements, right-of-ways, cooperative agreements with landowners to secure access.
- 3) Continue regular maintenance of Hitchcock Library and Museum, such as replacing or repairing the existing windows.
- 4) Continue the renovations of the Community Center, including the playground and parking lot.

LAND USE

The first settlement in Westfield occurred on Buck Hill (or West Hill) when Jesse Olds built his family's home in 1798. The flats where Westfield Village now lies weren't settled until the early 1800s. Histories of the Town suggest that this lower land was originally too wet for development.

The most recent part of town to be developed is Alpine Haven in the northwest corner below Jay Peak. In 1962, the Town of Westfield deeded 200 acres to Hubert Daberer with the stipulation that he invest \$50,000 to develop the land. Daberer subsequently obtained 200 additional acres, put in a road and water system, and built a hotel and 56 chalets.

Current Land Use

The Town of Westfield has 25,496 acres of land (U.S. Census). According to the 2001 Grand List, land use in the Town has not changed significantly over the past years. The total amount of farm and forestland has decreased slightly, and residential use has increased. The vast majority of the land in town remains forested. Farms use 2,638 acres (10-15%) for crops and pasture. The National Wetlands Inventory lists only 444 acres of wetlands in Westfield. This is under 2% of the total land area.

The town can be divided into 11 discreet areas for more specific discussion of current land use:

Alpine Haven remains an island of development which is separated from the rest of Westfield by topography. The character of the land is mountainous, and its proximity to Jay Peak makes it desirable for vacation home development. Existing homes are concentrated on the east side of RTE 242 on lots of less than one acre. There has been some commercial and light industrial development on the west side of RTE 242 in recent years.

Hubert Daberer has sold most of his chalets to individual owners with lots approximately 0.5 acre in size. Some of these owners are now year-round residents with children who must be picked up by the school bus. The roads and water system within the development remain privately owned and maintained, and there is continuing discussion among property owners about the water rights. A wellhead protection area has been established for the Alpine Haven water system. The condominium is still in completion stages with several units rented.

North Hill's large maples form a canopy for bicyclers and walkers and contribute to the area's picturesque Vermont rural character. The presence of North Hill cemetery further contributes to the peaceful atmosphere. This part of town has experienced a transition from dairy farming to more diversified agricultural operations of over 100 acres. A recent subdivision has created some residential lots, all greater than 10 acres. Homes

here are year-round. The spring and well, which serve the Village's community water system, are located on North Hill, along with the aquifer protection area.

Buck Hill appeals to those who like privacy. It covers a large forested area with scattered vacation homes and hunting camps. Lots are large (greater than 10 acres). There is one main road that is plowed, but side roads have only seasonal access, and some camps have no direct road access, running water, or electricity. There are some year-round residences including two commercial operations - a tree farm and a dairy farm which produces yogurt. Buck Hill's forestland is mostly in the State's Current Use Program, and is actively managed for forestry. The main road provides access to some of the wood lots in the central forest section of Town. Seasonal and logging roads are used for snowmobiling.

Westfield Village remains the commercial, civic, and residential center of the Town. The main street (RTE 100) passes the general store, Community Center, hardware store, a commercial campground, the Hitchcock Museum and Library, and the Congregational Church. The Post Office and Town Clerk's Office are located in private homes. There is some rental housing, and a community care facility. Village lots range in size from less than half an acre to several acres. The community water system is served by a spring and a well on North Hill. There is no municipal sewage disposal system.

Kennison Road is characterized by an active gravel pit and farms with smaller yet more widely dispersed fields than those on the flood plain. There are year-round residences on lots of 5+ acres, and some home industries.

The **Loop Road**, which runs along the flood plain, is lined by Westfield's prime agricultural land and its largest dairy farms. Non-farm residences are on lots of 7+ acres, and there is some seasonal home development on the south end. One of the farms in the area has a rare plant species. Some of the land is adjacent to the Troy talc mine, but the mine owners have purchased a protective buffer to minimize impacts upon adjacent landowners.

The approach to Westfield Village along **South RTE 100** is dominated by the presence of the Benedictine Monastery with its 100+ acres of open land and retreat trails. Several large working farms (100+ acres) with prime agricultural land are also significant features. In addition, there are some home businesses and a commercial campground.

RTE 100 North of the Village has more prime agricultural land along the highway and Missisquoi River. There are 2 large farms, a commercial maple operation, and some rental housing units. These farms and maple operation have had their development rights sold and will therefore alleviate development pressure along this corridor.

The Town's extensive **interior forest lands** feature a prominent ridgeline, and provides a backdrop for the open fields along the town roads and flood plain. These are very

large land holdings of 1000+ acres. The woods provide trails for snowmobiling, hunting, and other recreational activities, as well as firewood for some local homes. Well-built logging roads could be used for future residential development. Some subdivision of these lands is beginning to occur.

Hazen's Notch with its steep ledges and unusual vegetation is a scenic and historical area of statewide significance. The Long Trail Runs through the area, and it is designated as a Natural Heritage Site. The road through the Notch is closed in winter. Most of the land is owned by the State, but there is some private ownership along RTE 58 toward Lowell. This private land provides access to some of the interior forests and camps.

The tip of **Jay Peak** is located in Westfield. This includes the Tram House and its resident apartment. The land on Jay Peak is owned by the State of Vermont and leased to the Jay Peak Ski area.

Future Land Use

Westfield Town officials would like to maintain the existing patterns of land use while providing for some new development compatible in density, type, and location:

Alpine Haven - May allow some new growth, but concerned about small lots, water rights and road maintenance agreements. Controlled growth of residential, commercial, and industrial uses on east side of RTE 242.

North Hill - Allow more residential development while taking steps to protect the scenic qualities of the road and rural, open character.

Buck Hill - Encourage construction of residential homes. Continue to upgrade roads to accommodate growth. Maintain productive forestland and ruralness.

Village - Maintain clean rural village character. Encourage commercial opportunities in existing homes. Further growth is limited by available land and requirement for on-site water and septic systems.

Loop Road - Maintain agricultural land and residential use on 1+ acres.

South RTE 100 - Maintain open agricultural land. Also some residential and some small commercial development.

North RTE 100 - Maintain rural scenic roadway with open land and few residences, farms.

Interior Forestland - Encourage good forestry practices. Some subdivision and residential growth.

Kennison Road - Maintain farmland. Residential growth on 1+ acres.

Recommendations:

- 1) Consider use of local and state road policies as they affect the amount and type of development in each part of town.
- 2) Limit the number of curb cuts allowed on Town Roads so that a large landowner will have to think through his overall land plan before he starts creating lots.
- 3) Consider a provision in the zoning ordinance which will encourage orderly development by allowing greater density in a planned residential development.
- 4) Control the siting, design, and installation of on-site septic systems on all newly created lots.
- 5) In the zoning ordinance, carefully define the amount, type, and scale of commercial development to be allowed on RTE 100 outside the Village.
- 6) Carefully consider additional development in Alpine Haven area and review permitted and conditional uses for this area in the zoning ordinance. (How much growth? What kind? How dense?)
- 7) Consider overlay zone for sensitive areas such as WHPAS, wetlands, Natural Heritage Sites, shorelines.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS AND PLANS FOR ADJACENT TOWNS & THE REGION

The Town of Westfield is bordered by five towns. These include Montgomery, Lowell, Troy, Jay, and Richford. At the time this section of the Westfield Plan was written, the Towns of Montgomery, Jay and Richford had Town Plans in effect.

Montgomery:

Westfield shares its western border with the Town of Montgomery. The two roads connecting these towns are Route 242, which runs through Alpine Haven and Route 58, also known as the Hazen's Notch Rd. The access along Route 242 has potential to bring more development into Westfield. Alpine Haven, a residential area concentrated on the border of both towns, is part of Montgomery's Village-2 District. Montgomery considers this to be one of the main centers of population in their Town. This has the potential to bring in more residential and commercial growth along Route 242 in Westfield. However, according to Montgomery's 2000 Town Plan, the population growth for Montgomery is expected to see only a small increase for the next 15 years. This implies that the potential growth pressure from Montgomery will remain quite minimal. As well, both Westfield and Montgomery delineate similar permitted and conditional uses in this area, which shows the compatibility of land use planning.

The other major road, Route 58 runs through Hazen's Notch State Park/Natural Area in Westfield. This route provides only limited access to Westfield. It travels only a few miles through the southwest corner of Town before it dips into Lowell and is therefore a minor transportation route for Westfield. It is also closed in the winter, limiting its access even more. Besides these two routes, there is no foreseeable development along the Montgomery border because it is too mountainous. For example, the peaks of Jay Peak (Big Jay & Little Jay) are shared at the northern border.

Lowell:

The southern border of Westfield connects to Lowell. Currently, Lowell does not have an adopted Town Plan. However, the previous Municipal Development Plan encouraged small business development that would not upset the settled rural character. There are two major transportation routes between the towns, as well as several town roads. As discussed above, Route 58 connects Montgomery Center with the village of Lowell. This has the potential to bring light residential development along the town roads of Balance Rock Road and Buck Hill Road. Route 100 is the major connector between Lowell, Westfield and Troy. This State Highway creates the opportunity for increased development but there is no current pressure. This is an area to monitor.

Troy:

The eastern border of Town is shared with Troy. At this time, Troy's Town Plan has expired. However, the old Town Plan shows that the zoning districts of Industrial, Commercial-Residential and Village take up the northern half of the border and the southern half is a Rural district. Route 100 runs through this northern border of

Westfield connecting to Troy and onto Newport. In addition, the Jay/Troy sewage treatment plant has helped to further development of Jay Peak, including a proposed Golf Course in Jay. Troy foresees future commercial development to service this resort. This could affect the development on Route 100 as well as Route 101 which runs inside of Troy but parallels the border of Westfield and Troy. This could mean more development pressures for the northeastern portion of Westfield which is noteworthy of monitoring.

Jay:

Along the northern border of Westfield is the Town of Jay. Jay's current Town Plan, adopted in August 1998, calls for land use practices which are consistent with Westfield. Specifically, Jay wants to preserve the local development patterns by focusing commercial development in the village core, maintaining a recreational core at Jay Peak, allowing low impact commercial and residential development where appropriate, while conserving open space, forestland and natural environments.

These two towns share Route 242 connecting Montgomery Center with the village of Jay. Jay Peak State Forest lays on both sides of the Westfield-Jay border and envelopes the road, thereby prohibiting much more development directly in this area. North Hill Road, a town road connecting the villages of Jay and Westfield, has the potential for increasing residential growth in the northeastern corner of Westfield.

Richford:

Richford touches the northwest corner of Westfield for only a few miles. These towns do not share any roads. On the Westfield border is the Jay State Forest which will prohibit any development from entering Westfield from Richford.

Regional Plan:

Westfield is nestled in the northwest corner of Orleans County, just south of the Canadian border. Westfield occupies 25,496 acres (5.7% of the county) and is more mountainous than most of Orleans County. In the regional context, Westfield is considered a Village Center. This is defined as "a small, attractive New England village which provides a pleasant environment for people who enjoy the benefit of small village living and for visitors who are attracted by the scenic and historic beauty of these villages." These Village Centers generally have a village center, some public utilities like a water system, some commercial development and adequate highway access. This category is a general pattern to guide growth in the appropriate manner which is in keeping with the character of the area. Westfield is compatible with the overall regional land use plan designed "to concentrate residential development in the growth centers while maintaining the historic character of the community; to encourage clustering of rural residential development; and to retain large blocks of open land, scenic vistas and wildlife habitat and preserve rural character."

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan is a work sheet for Westfield Town officials to use over the next five years. It lists all the recommendations from the plan sections and provides space to record the level of priority for each action. Since it is a working document, the Implementation Plan will always be in a draft form so that it can remain flexible to adapt to changing needs and circumstances. Additional space is provided for further actions that become necessary after the adoption of this plan. If the Implementation Plan is maintained, it will serve as a guide for revising and updating Westfield's Town Plan five years from now.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>PRIORITY: HI, MED, LOW</i>
Review options for solid waste planning and recycling program.	H
Maintain good working relationship with Town of Jay concerning the school.	H
Develop a road policy and upgrade plan which fits the amount and type of development desired in each part of town.	H
Restrict the number of curb cuts allowed on town roads to ensure that large landowners consider the overall land plan before creating lots.	M
Identify land of significant public value where the Town may want to secure public access through donation, acquisition, or easements.	M
Expand recreational facilities at the Community Center.	M
Encourage good communication between landowners and recreational users, and recognize the contribution private landowners make toward serving the town's recreation needs.	M
Consider purchasing additional land for cemetery expansion before land prices rise.	M
Investigate methods such as cluster development and purchase of development rights to maintain productive land while allowing some residential lot development.	M
Investigate cemetery lot prices in other towns and other states.	L
Contact Orleans County Conservation District about assistance to private landowners with flooding and erosion control problems.	L
Monitor residential growth in order to ensure that municipal services are adequate.	L

ZONING CHANGES	
<i>RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>PRIORITY: HI, MED, LOW</i>
Review zoning regulations to offer a variety of option for future home sites, especially in the areas of town which are most able to support new growth.	H
Carefully consider additional development in Alpine Haven area. This area may be subject to increased development pressure due to expansion of Jay Peak Ski Area. (How much do you want? What kind? How dense?) Clarify permitted uses and conditional use standards.	H
Make sure lot sizes are adequate to allow for on-site water and septic systems with required isolation distances.	H
Consider overlay zone for sensitive areas such as WHPAs, wetlands, Natural Heritage Sites, shorelines.	M
Make sure zoning is flexible enough to allow agricultural diversification. Consider land uses such as farm stands, livestock farms, dairy processing facilities.	M
Carefully determine the amount, type and scale of commercial development desired on RTE 100 outside the Village in the zoning ordinance.	M
Consider access to sources of renewable energy (sun, wind, water) when reviewing zoning ordinance.	L