

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

Adopted February 29, 2012

DEDICATION

This plan is dedicated to all those who work within town government dealing with the daily struggle and increasing complexities of modern life, and to those volunteers who read quietly with a child, who make it possible for us to recycle our trash, who wear beepers to be called to a fire. It is these local citizens who make Peacham such a special place to live, who offer so much to this small rural community, and to them we are deeply grateful.

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A town plan sets forth the collective vision of the community for the future. It is a non-regulatory document that establishes the goals and policies of the town in broad terms. It also serves as the basis for local zoning and subdivision regulation. The primary purposes of the town plan are to provide background on our people, landscape, and institutions, to document those things we value, and to provide both a blueprint and policy vehicle to help Peacham achieve its vision. Methods of implementation, like the town itself, will forever be a work in progress. The strategies for implementation within this plan simply illustrate some of the many and diverse ways we can continue to work together toward our common goals. Vermont Land Use Law requires that town plans be updated every five years for the purpose of keeping information current and taking note of development and land use trends that influence the vision the town has for its future or the town's game plan for reaching its goals. The town plan presented herein presents modest changes to the 2005 plan. Many changes are simply aimed at simplifying the plan's message and language. The substantive changes considered herein were crafted with the benefit of comments received during plan development "listening sessions" and through the input the commission received via research and interviews conducted in an effort to update the local statewide data presented and the policies discussed. The Commission is grateful to all of those who came out to our three listening sessions, to others who took the time to be interviewed or to submit written comments and to all the groups that work for the benefit of all Peacham's citizens.

TOWN PLAN DEVELOPMENT "LISTENING SESSIONS"

This plan has incorporated the public comment taken at three public meetings held on the first Monday of October, November and December 2009. The three meetings, advertised as "Listening Sessions" were organized to focus on specific areas of interests impacted under the town plan. The October session focused on agriculture, energy, land use and open space strategies; the November session on economic and community development, housing and education; and, the December

session focused on village issues, public safety, roads, infrastructure and transportation. Four key issues discussed in the listening sessions considered in this plan include the need to incorporate energy considerations into local planning, the need to provide for higher density and more affordable housing opportunities through higher densities in village zones, the need to encourage creative design and mixed use plans in the village district (particularly Peacham Corner) and the need to encourage a more simplified or "user-friendly" zoning and planning process.

PLAN'S INTENT

The plan is intended to provide basic guidelines and an overall vision for the future of the community. It is comprehensive and addresses many issues facing the town today. Each section contains background information, often a vision statement, a list of the current issues and needs, and recommended actions to address these needs.

STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

According to Title 24, Chapter 117 • 4382 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, a plan for a municipality shall include ten specific elements. The following summarizes the state requirements and identifies the location of each element in the plan:

#	Required Plan Element	Plan Location
1	Statement of objectives, policies and Programs to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment.	Vision, p. 1 Goals, p. 2 Programs and policies, throughout by section
2	A land use plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land use, indicating those areas proposed for forest, recreation, agriculture, residence, commerce, industry, etc.	Land use map, Supplement
3	A transportation plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective transportation facilities.	Transportation Town base map, Supplement
4	Utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities (education, recreation, fire stations, etc.)	Town base map
5	A statement on policies on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural area, scenic and historic features and resources.	Natural area overlay and sections on natural areas, Supplement historic/cultural resources
6	An educational facilities plan consisting of a map and statement of use and the local public school system.	Town bas map and education section,
7	A recommended program for the implementation of plan objectives.	Individual sections throughout the plan
8	Statement indicating how the plan relates to development trends and plans for adjacent municipalities, areas, and region.	Plan is reviewed by NVDA and incorporates references where found appropriate.
9	An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs cost and problems within the municipality, a statement on energy conservation and policies on patterns and density of land use to result in energy conservation.	Energy section
10	A housing program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the NVDA	Housing section
(11)	(Although not required under law at this adoption time, but will be later, an economic element that describes current conditions and desired development.)	Employment and Local Economy section

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PEACHAM: A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1763 Governor Sensing Wentworth of New Hampshire gave a charter for the Town of Peacham to a group of proprietors. He also gave Peacham its name. The proprietors were speculators whose main role was to survey the town, sell lots, and layout roads. In 1775, settlers, primarily from Connecticut and Massachusetts, bought the lots, built dwellings and developed the land. Crops, including wheat, grew abundantly in the fertile soil. Nine years later, records show about 200 people in town. The first recorded town meeting took place in 1784. Selectmen were duly elected to govern the affairs of the town. According to local tradition, as early as 1795 scholars studied in a log structure on the Bayley Hazen Road, halfway between the corner and Water Street (South Peacham). In 1795 Caledonia County Grammar School received its charter. In 1799, a library was established. A group of men established the Congregational Church in 1794. James Bayley organized a Free Will Baptist Church and served as its minister, it disbanded in 1819. Yet another group began the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1831 and built a chapel in 1832. Because of declining membership, the Methodists closed the church. The building later became the Academy gym and currently houses the town offices and post office.

Peacham's early farmers traded butter, eggs, and wheat for goods which they could not make at home. The distillation of whiskey produced a cash crop for distant markets, as did the making of potash. From 1800 to 1830, sheep farming flourished and, in 1840, the town reached its greatest population of 1,443. From that date, census numbers steadily declined. (See the following population chart developed from data provided by the Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont). Farming methods changed and dairying became predominant. Even the labor-intensive farms of the late 1800's could not accommodate all members of the large families. Over the years Peacham had sent teachers and missionaries to distant parts. Young men and women went to the mills in Massachusetts and New Hampshire or, especially after the discovery of gold in California; they trekked west to seek their fortunes. Almost from the beginning various trades and industries - as many as 30-35 at a given time - flourished in Peacham. Lumbering, coopering, milling, butter making, tin ware, tanneries and leather goods provided goods for local consumption. Today, carpenters, small contractors, and builders continue a long tradition, while local crafters, artisans, and artists prepare their wares for the global market. Tourism became important during the 1900's as people opened their homes to visitors from away. With the advent of the railroad in Barnet and then motor vehicles, Peacham became a popular location for summer residents, some of whom were educators from Boston and New York. Their interest and stimulation enhanced the cultural interests of the town.

A VISION OF PEACHAM IN THE FUTURE

Peacham in the future will look much as it does today - a small scale, rural community that supports the New England traditions of farmers working the land, sap being boiled to maple sugar, a parent taking a child hunting, the democratic forum of town meeting, gravel roads lined by maple trees. The way of life is still deliberate, relaxed, and rural. Peacham continues to be a special place. A mixture of landscapes and a diverse population contribute to its unique character. Preserving working dairy and other types of farming are a top priority for the community, as is improved management of forest lands through individual initiative. Recreation is available through the Groton State Forest, various trails, and town facilities. The special and unique places in town are protected through a variety of methods. Housing choices are available for all income levels. Educational opportunities exist for both children and adults, Peacham residents continue to be active in town government, and to meet challenges as they strive for greater efficiency in the provision of town services. As issues have become more complex, the residents contribute even more volunteer time.

This tradition is important to maintain the democratic way of life. While these attributes present a quality foundation for rural life, there have been efforts to further increase the vitality of this community. Whether it's the recent introduction of a Farmer's Market bringing local food and products to the residents or using the town property for a music festival, these types of initiatives increase the activities available in the community and further augment the relatively ideal lifestyle Peacham currently provides.

STATEMENT OF PLANNING GOALS

- A. Maintain the scale, the traditions, and the rural character of Peacham. Preserve those rural, pastoral qualities of agriculture, forest, and settlement patterns which make Peacham an attractive community in which to live, work, and raise a family.
 - a. Promote family-owned agricultural enterprises essential to the overall town objectives of preserving open space, scenic qualities, and the rural flavor while improving wildlife, forest, water, and agricultural land management. Encourage small-scale farming and home occupations. In regard to home occupations allow and encourage development of a broad range of non-agricultural small businesses that provide employment and income opportunity to those who live here.
 - b. Preserve unique natural areas and ecosystems that make up Peacham's diverse and scenic landscape. Discourage development on agricultural lands, hilltops, and environmentally sensitive areas. Encourage environmentally responsible land use.
 - c. Preserve important historic and cultural resources for future generations to enjoy.
 - d. Maintain opportunities for recreational activities. Protect the habitats that provide for hunting, fishing, berry-picking, hiking, and outdoor interests.
 - e. Address traffic problems throughout the Town.
 - f. Provide an environment to encourage a variety of housing units to be available for all income levels with an emphasis on rehabilitating existing structures. Insure that the goals of the town plan to promote higher density housing in village areas are achievable, that there be sufficient land area in village zones to accommodate housing and that village areas be allowed to develop at traditional village densities.
 - g. Provide public services (e.g. roads, solid waste disposal, schools) while recognizing the limitations of the property tax system. The negative impact high taxes have on the viability of agriculture and on maintaining a community open to all levels of income must also be considered.
 - h. Continue to provide excellent educational opportunities for all ages.
 - i. Provide an environment that encourages safe and affordable child care.

- B. Provide opportunity for creative and flexible design of traditional village centers that allows for a mix of housing, commercial, governmental, community, recreational and social uses.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR PEACHAM

Population

(Vermont Indicators Online latest data available in 2010, Table QT-P1)

Categories	Peacham	Caledonia County	Vermont
Population	732	31,227	625,741
Male	351	15,509	308,206

Female	381	15,718	317,535
Age 5 and older	697	29,500	593,789
Under Age 18	158	6,793	129,233
Age 24 and Under	197	9,825	194,106
Age 65 and older	127	4,793	91,078
Median Age	48.5	42.1	41.5

Selected Housing Data

(Vermont Indicators Online latest data available in 2010)

Categories	Peacham	Caledonia County	Vermont
Total Households	263	11,633	240,634
Average Household size	2.53	2.46	2.44
Total Number of Families	185	7,901	156,763
Average Family Size	3.04	2.95	2.98
Total Housing units	503	14,504	294,382
Owner Occupied	223	8,499	169,784
Renter Occupied	40	3,164	70,850
Seasonal	224	2,001	42,979

Categories	Peacham	Caledonia County	Vermont
Total Households	299	12,553	256,442
Avg. Household Size	2.45	2.38	2.34
Total Number of Families	213	8,153	160,360
Avg. Family Size	2.90	2.86	2.85
Total Housing Units	542	15,942	322,539
Owner Occupied	263	9,233	181,407
Renter Occupied	36	3,320	75,035
Seasonal	218	2,376	50,198

Economy

(Vermont Indicators Online latest data available in 2010; 2006-2010 Americal Community Survey Five Year Estimates)

Categories	Peacham	Caledonia County	Vermont
Median Income/Household	\$ 56,563	\$ 42,706	\$ 51,841
Median Income/Family	\$ 65,000	\$ 51,503	\$ 64,135
Median Earnings for Workers	\$ 26,514	\$ 24,133	\$ 27,320

Education Attainment of Population

(Vermont Indicators Online latest data available 2010)

	Peacham	Caledonia County	Vermont
Categories			
Less than 9th Grade Education	1.3	4.9	3.3
9th-12th, no diploma	2.5	6.6	6.2
High School or Equivalent	22.8	34.9	32
Associate's Degree	12.4	8.5	8.4
Bachelor's Degree	20.8	16.5	20.2
Graduate or Professional	25	10.9	13.1

LAND RESOURCES

The Land Resources section of this plan provides insight into the town's stated vision for future growth and land use development.

Land Use Plan

It is the purpose of this plan to continue Peacham's traditional land use patterns. These include large areas of agriculturally productive land, productive forests and forested recreational areas, pristine waters, and active village centers. This plan intends to protect as much open agricultural land as possible. This plan intends to maintain Peacham's forests for productivity and recreation as much as possible. This plan encourages traditionally dense residential and commercial development in the village centers. The basis for implementation of these goals will be the Town of Peacham's Zoning Maps as developed by the Peacham Planning Commission and approved by the Peacham Selectboard. All additional sections of this Town Plan are intended to achieve the goals outlined above and those listed on page 7.

Physical Characteristics

Peacham lies in the geographic region known as the Piedmont. This area is characterized by glacial uplands with hilly terrain and the absence of true mountains. The town land formations are the result of ancient uplifting of geologic plates and the subsequent wearing down and erosion through time. The last advance of ice, known as the Shelburne drift, occurred during the Wisconsin glacial period approximately 12,000 years ago, and gave the region the last major change in land forms. At that time, the parent material for the present day soils was laid down by the churning action of the retreating glacier. Since this glacial epoch, the formation of specific drainage patterns, soil formation processes, and ultimately the development of plant and animal life formed pre-settlement Peacham. The advent of white settlers and the clearing of forest land for agricultural purposes shifted the predominantly forest ecosystem to one of nearly all cleared land in many areas.

Today, many of the marginal farm areas have reverted back to forest cover; The Town of Peacham contains approximately 30,000 acres of land. As illustrated on the land use map in Appendix #2, the town is primarily made up of six types of land and/or water; forests, agricultural, open non-agricultural, developed residential, ponds, and wetlands. Forests account for 23,365 acres or 78.0% of Peacham's land area. Agricultural accounts for 2,050 acres or 6.8%; Open Non-Agricultural accounts for 2,224 acres or 7.4%; Developed Residential is 627 acres or 2.1 %; Wetlands account for 1,066 acres or 3.6%; and Ponds are 636 acres or 2.1 %. 2,574 acres of the agricultural lands are

part of the agricultural overlay (defined later). Topographic elevations range from the peak of Cow Hill at 2,566 feet to a low of 888 feet (above sea level) along the eastern edge in the Peacham Hollow Brook; Peacham has the distinction of containing an important watershed divide. The range of hills starting with Cow Hill to the north and continuing southward including Mack Mountain, Lookout Mountain, Morse Mountain, Devil's Hill, and Jennison Mountain direct drainage on the west side primarily to the Winooski River and ultimately Lake Champlain. Drainage on the eastern slopes of these hills winds its way to the Connecticut River.

These hills have had a strong influence on the town's development. Population centers, agricultural, and business activity occupy the eastern half. Development in the west remains minimal except for occasional houses, and the recreational and seasonal use of shore lands, forests, and mountains.

Groton State Forest and other water areas

The Groton State Forest includes 7,212.58 acres of land and water or about 23% of the Town of Peacham and represents a major natural resource that provides nearby opportunities for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, swimming, and fishing, among other activities. The State Forest is actively managed and administered by Vermont's Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (DFPR). The State of Vermont provides payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) to the Town of Peacham. In 2009, that payment was \$18,842.60 for land and building holdings. Town zoning in the Forest is RR-2, Rural Reserve, and the relationship of the zoning ordinance to the State Forest needs to be examined. It would seem that the State's lands are outside Peacham's direct jurisdiction, but there are some Peacham lands that are in-holdings of the State Forest.

Because of the important resources shared with the State Forest, it is important that Peacham participate actively in the State Forest Plan process. Improving access to State Forest lands, advising on types of recreational use Peacham residents enjoy in the Forest, and enhancing Peacham residents' knowledge of the Forest and its resources are all important. Not only should the planning and conservation commissions maintain an active interest in the State Forest, but the planning commission should appoint a subcommittee to serve specifically as a watchdog for the Town on the future of Groton State Forest. Peacham has, partially or wholly within its borders, eight lakes and ponds. (1) Peacham Pond (341 acres) borders on Groton State Forest with extensive cottage development on about a third of its shoreline. (2) Martin's Pond (73 acres) has extensive cottage development on half of its shoreline, with the remaining undeveloped area residing in Groton State Forest. (3) Osmore Pond (51 acres) is completely within Groton State Forest, and has only a picnic area developed along its shore. (4) Kettle Pond is in Groton State Forest with 800 feet of shoreline in Peacham. (5) Foster Pond (56 acres), (6) Ewell Pond (40 acres), and (7) Keiser Pond (34 acres, most of which lies in Danville) have little development. (8) Mud Pond (31 acres), which is largely marsh land, is owned by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife. Public fishing access is available on Peacham, Martins, Foster, Ewell, and Keiser Ponds. The two notable bogs in Peacham are owned by the State. Stoddard Bog is on the northern fringe of town and Peacham Bog is in Groton State Forest. Devil's Hill, along the main mountain ridge, has glacial caves on its western slope. Owl's Head, in Groton State Forest, can be approached by car to within 1/8 mile of its summit, where there is a stone observatory with beautiful views. Extensive panoramas from the wooded summits of Cow Hill and Lookout Mountain have been available in the past. The Northeast Kingdom Audubon Society has provided land in East Peacham with an excellent platform for viewing birds and other wildlife along East Peacham brook.

Soil Characteristics

Soils in Peacham result from glacial activity during the recent geological past. The parent material

(the material from which soils are derived) was deposited through the violent action of the ice sheet as it gouged and ground along the earth's surface. Eventually melting as the climate became warmer, the glacier dumped this material randomly over the ground. Known as "glacial till", this heterogeneous material gives rise to a variety of soil types from very fine silts and clays to areas covered by large boulders, Soil types consequently can and do change over relatively short distances as the parent material, topography, vegetation, and water regimes shift. Soils derived from glacial till are known as loams and contain varying proportions of sand, silt, and clay. Soils are classified according to chemical and physical properties and are given common names usually associated with the locality where they were first mapped. The soil called "Peacham" is such an example, and in this case, the name refers to a poorly drained soil found in low lying areas along streams and drain ways. This soil is too wet for tillage, but is typically found in unimproved pastures. It is often suitable for pond building, and is scattered throughout town. Buckland is a finer textured better drained soil than Peacham, and is capable of supporting agriculture although it has a restrictive layer or "pan" occurring at about 20 inches. This pan can be a limitation to house siting as slow infiltration can necessitate a mound type sewage disposal system at added costs. The Glover and Lyman soil series are also commonly found in Town and, unlike Buckland, are shallow in depth thus not well suited to tillage. These thin soils lack sufficient water holding capacity for productive forage and are often found atop knolls and hilltops covered with sparse grass or forested.

Dummerston is an excellent example of a deep, very fine sandy loam with excellent drainage. Well suited to tillage, this soil has been recognized by the State of Vermont as a prime agricultural soil of high potential. Many of Peacham's more productive forage and corn land fields are this soil type. Because of Peacham's geographic location in the "upland" drainage region, it is nearly void of the rich bottomland soils found in towns along the Connecticut River. A few areas along Peacham Hollow Brook and South Peacham Brook are subject to local flooding periodically and would constitute the only farmed land in this category. Landowners are reminded, however, that they often can produce loamy soil by planting crops such as legumes and barley and use rotation as a method to improve texture and richness. The above are examples of commonly found soil types and give a representative, but not exhaustive picture of soils occurring in Peacham, The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is currently updating the soil survey and changing the names and classifications of the soil. For an update on this work, contact the NRCS in St. Johnsbury at 748-2641.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *The Groton State Forest represents a valuable resource available to Peacham residents.*

RECOMMENDED ACTION: *The Planning Commission should gain familiarity with the present management plan and implications for Peacham.*

CURRENT LAND USE PATTERNS AND CONTROLS

Peacham is an example of the pattern of development for which Vermont is well known. Historically, development in Peacham has occurred in and around compact villages with surrounding land uses appearing as a patchwork quilt of open farmland, managed wood lots, and large tracts of forested land. The small amount of residential development that has occurred outside of villages has, for the most part, occurred as low density housing (housing lots of 10 acres or more). Peacham has also benefited from many land owners who have maintained open land even if it is not actively farmed. There is strong public support for maintaining slow growth and the existing pattern of development through the town planning and development review process. The primary and current land use controls available to help maintain the existing pattern of development are

listed and summarized below. (See the Town of Peacham Zoning Ordinance for specific details of zoning requirements.)

Application of Zoning Regulations

New land uses in Peacham are subject to the application of zoning regulations. The purpose of such regulation is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the populace; protect and conserve the value of property; and guide future development so it conforms to the town's land use plans. The zoning ordinance, through its terms, conditions, and guidance, is the principal vehicle by which the goals of the Town Plan can be realized. No division of a parcel of land or construction of any type or excavation or change in the use of a building or extension of any use of land can commence except in compliance with the regulations provided for in the adopted ordinance. The Administrative Officer is responsible for issuing building permits in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. The Development Review Board also has a role in zoning administration.

Zoning Districts

Through the Town Zoning Ordinance, Peacham is divided into zoning districts intended to identify the key resources, existing land uses, "allowed uses" (uses that may be conducted without need of a permit), and "permitted uses" (uses requiring a permit) of areas of town. For each district, the ordinance provides guidance and requirements intended to promote land use that is consistent with town plan goals. A municipal zoning map is prepared to clearly define district boundaries. There are seven zoning districts including an "agricultural overlay area" (discussed below) and a "wellhead protection" district. Each district is defined within the town zoning ordinance and outlined on the town zoning map. Each district has its own requirements and the ordinance outlines district uses that are allowed; uses that are allowed if minimum permitting requirements are met; and uses that may be permitted if higher "conditional use" standards (discussed later) are met. The intent of the districts is to promote certain types and levels of land use that are compatible with existing land uses as well as the goals of the town plan. Conversely, districts plainly and directly discourage uses that are inconsistent with plan goals. The Peacham Zoning Ordinance should be consulted for a complete description of each of the districts and their respective requirements.

Agricultural Overlay

Historically, a key goal of the Peacham Town Plan has been to promote and support the continuation of agriculture. One of the town's zoning districts is an "ag-overlay" district that spans a number of other districts and is "superimposed" over all of them except the Village One and the Wellhead Protection Zones. The "ag-overlay" district reflects those areas of town that contain undeveloped prime soils and other good land features as determined by a 1989 Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Study (LESA). The lands in this overlay district are considered to be essential to the long-term survival of agriculture in Peacham and thus are provided unique treatment.

Subdivision and Conditional Use Requirements

Minor Subdivision of land (division of a parcel of land into two lots) must meet the area and dimension requirements of the zoning ordinance and must be approved by the Zoning Administrator. However, in certain zoning districts a minor subdivision is considered a conditional use. Any Major Subdivision of land (division of a parcel of land into 3 or more lots) is considered a conditional use. A major subdivision is subject to review by the Development Review Board (DRB). Major subdivisions, and other conditional uses, must meet standards in addition to minimum lot size, dimension and setback requirements. These standards are intended to be rigorous since conditional uses, by definition, introduce potentially new impacts not necessarily envisioned under existing plans. Ultimately, the DRB shall not grant a permit unless it finds that the proposed

conditional use meets all criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. Supplemental consideration that must be exercised by the DRB on proposed conditional uses also covers: the economic impact of the project, the adequacy of minimum lot size, width and building setbacks; the project's impact on air and water quality, noise, light pollution, and wildlife habitat as well as soil erosion, proximity to stream considerations, topography, aquifer recharge impacts, floodplain impacts, storm water issues, and impact to adjacent property.

On Site Sewage Disposal Requirements

Any parties considering the construction or expansion of any type of building in Peacham must comply with the State of Vermont's wastewater rules and contact the St. Johnsbury Office of the Department of Environmental Conservation (Telephone 802-751-0130).

Planned Residential Development (PRD)

The Zoning Ordinance allows the modification of some district regulations to allow for planned residential development subject to conditions and in accordance with procedures. The purpose of the provision is simply to encourage flexibility of design and development of land in such a manner as to promote the most appropriate use of land. The PRD option offers the opportunity to cluster or better effectively locate housing so as to preserve the natural, scenic, or agricultural qualities of open land. The PRD option also can be used to achieve a better mixture of housing types at different densities.

Act 250 and State Subdivision Permit Law

Additional land use controls exist through state law. Act 250, passed by the legislature in 1970, requires that commercial and large residential subdivisions meet ten environmental and planning criteria prior to the grant of a state permit. Generally development requires an Act 250 permit under these circumstances:

- Construction for a commercial or industrial purpose on more than 10 acres of land;
- Construction of more than 10 housing units within a radius of 5 miles;
- Subdivision of land into 10 or more lots;
- Construction of a road (incidental to the sale or lease of land) if the road provides access to more than five lots or is longer than 800 feet;
- Construction by the state or local government if the project involves more than 10 acres;
- Substantial changes or additions to existing developments;
- Construction above 2,500 feet in elevation.

There are more criteria, and some exceptions for farming and for forestry activities.

Peacham is in District 7, which encompasses Essex, Orleans and Caledonia Counties. Although Act 250 rarely plays an active role in Peacham's development review processes, it can be argued that it does, indirectly, influence land use by acting as a disincentive to the creation of subdivisions. Vermont also has a Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Permit process that is triggered under a variety of conditions such as any subdivision, any new, modification or replacement septic system or well, construction of any new building, modification of any building or change of use that increases the design flow. This permit process is designed to prevent unsanitary health hazards and pollution, and to provide safe drinking water supplies.

***ISSUES/CONCERNS:** The Town Plan emphasizes protection of farmland and other land resources, and the Zoning Ordinance allows for the creation of 2 acre lots throughout town. While this is a classic contradiction that exists in many town plans and zoning ordinances, Vermont law may require an increased effort to bring the two documents into conformance. The slow erosion of agricultural,*

resource, and habitat areas can be affected by poor road maintenance and careless land development. The potential conversion of part-time or seasonal housing to permanent housing could have significant impact on roads, septic systems, wells, and land development patterns. State Environmental Protection Rules require attention by the Select Board, Planning Commission and Administrative Officer.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *The Planning Commission should review the appropriate acreage minimums for each district and appoint a special study group to understand the effects to farm and other open land. The Development Review Board should give greater attention to protecting development from soil erosion and sedimentation.*

LAND CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

Peacham is made up of a diverse mixture of landscapes. Its unique character comes from the variety of land types and land uses within the town. To maintain this special character, a conservation strategy should be designed to suggest local priorities for conservation initiatives and to provide general guidance to public and private funding sources so that the most valuable lands and attributes may be protected.

Conservation Easements

As of 2009, there were 2,386 acres of private land under conservation easement (through the VT Land Trust and Passumpsic Land Trust) in Peacham representing 7.9% of the town's land area. Continued efforts will yield steady increases in protected land. Fifteen acres of public land at Stoddard Bog are also under deeded conservation easement. When the land is placed under a conservation easement its deed is amended to restrict future development on the parcel. In general the property remains in private hands and stays on the tax rolls but is restricted from future development. It is important to note, however, that often the land owner will "hold out" one or more house sites located on the property to be developed in the future.

Conservation Priorities

In conjunction with the Conservation Commission, the Peacham Planning Commission suggests that some lands in town are more important to protect from development than others. The limited amount of conservation dollars should be focused on certain areas of town. The suggested local priorities are:

- Working Farms, including those practicing diversified agriculture and low-impact methods
- Open Land Used by Farms
- Undeveloped Lake Shore lands, Bogs, and Riparian Lands
- Critical Wildlife Habitat, Corridors, and Wetlands
- Hilltops and ridge lines

Conserving these areas is important to preserving the character of the town.

Farmland LESA Study

Conserving active, prime farmland is a top priority in town. In 1989, a committee appointed by the Selectmen undertook a major initiative to evaluate and score the open land in town. Using a Land Use Evaluation Site Assessment (LESA) system, evaluation criteria were developed and each parcel scored. This study considered a field for its agricultural potential and its value to the town as open land, comparing it to other fields in town. The criteria include soils, slopes, and views to and from each field and became the basis for the agricultural overlay to the zoning maps for the town. A complete copy of the LESA study is available from the Conservation Commission.

Undeveloped Lake Shore lands

In 1992 the Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA) completed a resource inventory of the undeveloped lakeshores in northern Vermont. The study identified undeveloped tracts of lakeshore on lakes over 10 acres. An "undeveloped tract" was defined as having a minimum of 1,000 feet of shore frontage with a depth of 250 horizontal feet with no human structures or 2-wheel drive roads. The study indicates that Peacham has six lakes with a total of 64,320 feet (or 12 miles) of Lake Shoreline. The Town of Peacham has more undeveloped shore land than any other community in the Northeast Kingdom with over 72% (46,150 feet) currently undeveloped. The Planning Commission believes that the large amount of undeveloped lake shore land offers the residents of Peacham many opportunities not enjoyed by other communities. These shore lands have many valuable attributes including critical wildlife habitat and help to maintain high water quality and recreation opportunities.

Therefore, the Commission suggests that undeveloped lakeshore be given high priority for the conservation efforts within the town. In fact; the current zoning ordinance differentiates between developed and undeveloped shore lands, requiring lower density residential development on the latter. While water quality monitoring of Peacham's lakes is not required, the Conservation Commission has a water-sampling program and the Planning Commission encourages lake front homeowners to keep the Commission aware of any water quality data collected so that future planning decisions can reflect changing conditions. Water quality monitoring is currently being conducted on Foster's and Peacham Ponds.

Natural Heritage Sites/Wetland

Natural Heritage Sites: In 1992, the Vermont Natural Heritage Program completed an inventory of the -natural heritage sites within Peacham. Although the study was not necessarily all inclusive, meaning there may be sites still not identified, it does supply a good first step at locating areas with special natural features such as rare and endangered plants and special wildlife habitat. The intent of the inventory is to make landowners aware of what they have on their land and actions they may take to preserve it. Working with the landowners to protect these sites is a priority for the Conservation Commission. The Peacham Base Map gives a general idea of the location of the sites including:

- Foster Pond Fen
- Osmore Pond
- Goslant Pond
- Owls Head
- Keiser Pond
- Peacham Bog
- Mud Pond
- Peacham Pond
- Stoddard Bog
- Big Deer Mountain

Wetlands: Peacham contains over 1,150 acres of wetlands. Due to protection already afforded by State and Federal regulations, only those wetland areas directly associated with a wellhead recharge area or the village water supply should be given priority by the town. The Planning Commission supports protecting all the sites listed under the Natural Heritage Sites Wetlands and encourages creating buffer zones for Water Quality. Information has been provided for the public at the library and town office on water testing and protection of this precious resource. Maintaining critical wildlife habitat (i.e., nesting areas of rare birds, feeding areas of animals) and the wetland areas associated with the public water supply are important to the town and should get priority in

conservation efforts.

Critical Wildlife Habitat: Peacham members of Keeping Track, a state-wide non-profit organization devoted to wildlife information has identified areas in town that are important to wildlife (i.e., deer yards, beech stands, spruce/fir forests) This information can be used to encourage landowners to maintain the areas most important to wildlife. It should also be used in an advisory fashion by the Zoning Administrator and Development Review Board.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *There is need for a local pool of money to be used as a local match when trying to obtain public conservation money. Residents often have the interest but lack the technical knowledge to carry out proper land management and conservation planning. Areas important to wildlife (e.g. deer yards, beech stands, spruce/fir forests) need to be identified and mapped.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *Encourage the expansion of the local conservation fund which can be used for conservation projects. The fund accepts donations and municipal funds raised at town meeting. The Conservation Commission can advise townspeople about where to go for the best information on natural resource management, wood lot management, and land conservation techniques. The Conservation Commission should cooperate with Keeping Track and Vermont Coverts Programs to develop a better understanding of the areas important to wildlife. Water quality testing may be needed to establish land conservation priorities, such as riparian strips. The Conservation Commission should create map that is available for reference by residents and public officials. The Conservation Commission should continue to work with the State in water quality testing in the ponds of the Town.*

AGRICULTURE

Peacham is a rural town where agriculture and dairy farming in particular, have long served as a touchstone for our rural identity. Increasingly, residents have expressed concern for the future of agriculture in Peacham. As dairy farmers become further challenged by higher production costs, tax burdens, and lower prices for milk, the likelihood of farms going out of business increases. In recent years the subdivision of lands formerly used for agriculture has heightened our awareness that agriculture needs to be strongly supported if it is to remain viable.

The Present Situation

While at one time most of Peacham's land area was in open farmland, in 2010 only approximately 2000 acres remain devoted to active use. In addition there is a lot of abandoned or underused farmland which will either become forested or once again be put into agricultural use. The farmland in Peacham plays an important role in providing a balance between forest cover and open land. Farmland, more than any other land type, is most vulnerable to conversion that results in a visual impact and permanent loss of agricultural uses. Dairy farming has been stable in the last decade in Peacham. The age of the current dairy farmer in Peacham is much younger than the state average. In 2010 there are 5 operating dairy farms accounting for approximately 565 milking cows. In addition to the milking cows, there are approximately 450 young stock to support the dairy herd. In addition to the 5 operating dairy farms in Peacham, one large dairy farm and several small ones outside of Peacham own and/or lease several tracts of land in Peacham which adds to the agriculture land base in Peacham used for dairy. Approximately 1050 acres of good productive land are used to support the dairy cows in Peacham. Approximately 1000 acres of low productive land are used to support other agricultural activities.

Year	Number of Dairy Farms	Number of Cows
1948	135	1,350

1958	47	780
1968	26	700
1975	14	639
1982	12	547
1988	11	625
1992	9	610
1998	6	550
2004	5	550
2010	5	565

The active farmland (crop land, hay land, and pasture) is concentrated in the southeast quarter of town, and includes the majority of Peacham's dairy farms. This core group of contiguous properties represents the most productive farmland in town, and is vital to supporting present and future agricultural enterprises.

PLANNING FOR AGRICULTURE

Recognizing that some development of Peacham's remaining open farmland will occur, it is critical local planning and development review processes guide development so as to protect important farmland and maintain its future potential for agriculture.

Other Approaches

The Vermont Department of Agriculture published "Sustaining Agriculture" in 1994. This handbook is useful in outlining varied approaches and creative planning strategies for keeping agriculture healthy and can serve as a planning aid to the town Planning Commission.

What the Town Can Do

Purchase Land

Through the Conservation Commission the town can purchase land with scenic, ecological, wildlife, or recreational values for use by town residents. The Conservation Commission should establish, advertise, and continually augment the Conservation Fund for such purchases.

Reduce Assessed Value of Conserved Land

Where the development rights to a property have been donated or sold to a conservation organization, the value of the property may decline, in which case the town can reduce its assessment to or beyond Current Use value levels, possibly lowering the owner's taxes if the property is not already enrolled in the Current Use (Use Value Appraisal) program. This provides an added incentive to landowners to conserve their land.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *The local zoning regulations should be designed to support local agriculture. This can be done by designing flexibility into the review process, and encouraging cluster developments. People often do not understand estate planning or the Use Valuation Program, or use creative ways to subdivide and develop land. High property taxes make farming more challenging and jeopardize the long term viability of farming, forestry, and maintaining open space.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *The Development Review Board process should ensure that the sites of buildings, roads and other structures have the least significant impact on agriculture. An example might be to locate a proposed house along the edge of a field instead of in the middle thus preserving the field's agricultural potential. The Conservation Commission should hold workshops and distribute written materials on estate planning, the Use Valuation Program, and on creative ways to subdivide*

and develop land to minimize the impact on the agricultural resources. The Conservation Commission should examine ways to encourage farming in Peacham.

VISION: Promotion of family farms is essential to the overall town objective of preserving open space, scenic qualities, rural character, and local food production. Ensure the potential for future agriculture by protecting prime agricultural soils.

FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE

Forests cover 78% of Peacham Town's land area, are significant in the town's economy and, along with mountains, ponds and streams, and working farms, are a major feature of the town's lovely physical setting. They also provide habitat for the Town's varied and bountiful wildlife, income from timber harvesting, maple sugaring, and tourism, and enjoyment for residents and visitors. Forests and other aspects of the physical environment are critical to the sightseeing, hunting, snowmobiling, and other recreation that are vital contributors to the State and local economies. The fall foliage season in late September and early October vividly expresses the meaning of Peacham to its inhabitants and others, when many visitors come from elsewhere in the U.S. and abroad to view Peacham's splendors. In the past two centuries our forests have come full circle. When the first colonists arrived, late in the 18th century, our area was almost entirely forested. By the 1830s and 1840s, it had been transformed into open land and subsistence agriculture, with more than double the present population. Then a few decades later the land devoted to agriculture began to recede, and over the next century the forest steadily reestablished itself as the dominant factor in the landscape.

Our forest is a mixed forest, typical of this region. The three major forest types are spruce-fir, pine-hemlock, and northern hardwoods. Among the latter are maple, beech, ash, and birch. The predominant softwoods are fir, spruce, hemlock, pine, and cedar. Wood products regularly harvested include saw and veneer logs, pulp, chips, and firewood. There are a few small, intensively managed Christmas tree plantations from which, in some cases, green boughs are also cut for seasonal ornaments. Maple sugaring generates income and satisfaction to sugar makers, and interest among Town inhabitants and visitors. Peacham is home to eight small lakes, all of which enjoy excellent water quality. This is due in part to the intact forest that makes up their watersheds. Around 7,000 acres, or roughly a quarter of the Town's area, is owned and managed by the State of Vermont as a portion of the Groton State Forest. About 740 acres of this total are in a wetland known as the Peacham Bog, which attracts much attention from forestry and wildlife scholars. Aside from small parcels owned by the Town and the Village Fire District #1, virtually all of the remaining forested land in Peacham consists of private holdings. The small forests owned by the Town and the Village provide protection for water supplies, wildlife habitat, and public recreational sites. In order to improve their visibility to residents and ensure proper long-term maintenance, the Town Forester must update the management plan for these parcels.

Here and there in the Town are undeveloped and relatively undisturbed forest areas of several hundred to two thousand acres, these are important for wildlife and also for the sturdy hiker and skier who likes to explore the wilderness. The current predominance of forest cover in Town makes this resource less threatened at the moment than open agricultural land. But the forestry sector does have two principal problems, both of which have aroused wide public concern: poor management on the part of a few, and fragmentation through subdivision of large timber tracts into smaller lots. The former problem results either from neglect, lack of knowledge of good forestry practices or, from the desire of some landowners and loggers to extract maximum immediate financial return at the expense of long-term forest health and income. The second problem stems from the purchase and subdivision of land for profit or from residents who see in subdivision a

means of enlarging their income or financing their retirement. The health of the forest is of paramount concern to Peacham. The Town looks with favor upon wise forest management on the part of both private and public owners because it enhances timber quality and beauty as well as higher long-term financial returns to owners when it is harvested. There is a need for a greater awareness in Peacham of the availability, without charge, of County Forester and State District Biologists, and possibly nonprofits like the Vermont Coverts, for advice and assistance in forestry and wildlife matters. Conservation and improvement of the forest and wildlife habitat are essential to the preservation of Peacham's character. Important specific objectives include maintaining forest beauty, improving forest quality and economic potential, holding fragmentation and destructive logging practices in check, fostering wildlife habitat, and ensuring access for recreation.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *Private land owners may need advice and assistance to improve the quality, beauty and economic value of their timber. There is need for more constructive ideas on effective forest management. Wildlife habitats are evermore threatened by new development and insufficient knowledge regarding what Wildlife is in the woods, their likely habitat locations, and what can be done better to protect and enhance them. Fragmentation of the forest will reduce wildlife habitat for such species as bear, bobcat, and certain birds that rely on unbroken forest. Conservation of forest and meadow is important to maintenance of the beauty and unspoiled character of Peacham. High property taxes often prove unduly burdensome for land owners committed to long-term ownership and management of their forest lands.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *Forest land owners can obtain free assistance and advice from the County Forester, State Biologists and several local Vermont Coverts "Cooperators". New forest land owners should be provided packets containing information on sources of advice and assistance. One of the best sources of helpful information and advice is the paperback *Working with Your Woodland: A Landowner's Guide* by Mollie Beattie with Thompson & Levine, University Press of New England. The Peacham Conservation Commission can promote the education of landowners regarding the forest management practices. Those owners in the Vermont Current Use Value Appraisal Program are required to arrange any logging in accordance with their State-approved individual management plans. Land owners should be encouraged to engage only loggers dedicated to acceptable agriculture practices and State rules, particularly loggers who have completed the LEAP certification program established by the UVM Extension Service. Thorough treatment of this subject is available in the Congressionally-sponsored Northern Forest Lands Council study (1988-94), particularly in Council recommendations to Vermont and the other three participating states. Free advice and assistance can be obtained from the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife District Biologists in St. Johnsbury (phone 751-0100). The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service offers the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) to help landowners implement management practices (Telephone 748-3885). Also local Vermont Coverts cooperators can be consulted. The Town should consider zoning rules that discourage subdivision of large forest tracts, which introduces housing, industry, and other human activity into the wilderness. Conservation arrangements with the Vermont Land Trust and the formation of voluntary neighborhood woodland owners' associations should be encouraged. The Peacham Conservation Commission should explore the use of the FLESA system to develop criteria better to assess forest parcels relating to town planning issues. Grants are available to the Town to help cover the costs of such a project. Forestland owners can participate in the State's Current Use Value Appraisal Program and more Town input is needed in the management of the Peacham portion of the Groton State Forest, which occupies nearly 25% of the Town's area.*

The forests owned by the Town and Village offer opportunities that are currently underutilized. The Town should consider additional incentives for sound long-term private forest management. The Peacham Conservation Commission or a committee of the Planning Commission should monitor the State Forest's long-term management plans and maintain a dialogue with the Vermont Department of

Forests, Parks and Recreation planners. Peacham residents should be encouraged to participate in Groton State Forest hearings and other public meetings involving the State Forest. The Town Forester should develop and keep current long-term, multiple-use management plans for the Town forests.

VISION: Maintain in Peacham a healthy and vibrant forest and forestry industry as well as foster wildlife habitat through improved forest practices, long-term stewardship, and protection of the land resource from degradation and fragmentation.

RECREATION

A variety of recreational programs and activities are available in Peacham. The town provides recreation through elementary school programs and furnishes financial assistance to the swimming program which serves town residents at Harvey's Lake. There is a small poorly maintained tennis court located adjacent to the former Peacham Academy gymnasium, near the town municipal building. The Town of Peacham manages the Luther Fletcher Parker Memorial Field and sponsors a number of recreational and educational programs using the talents and skills of residents who serve as instructors. The Historical Association occasionally sponsors programs of old-fashioned games and recreations. Other organizations such as Scouting and 4-H are encouraged; nature programs run by citizens have been held during the summer. The Town of Peacham Trails known as Peacham Pathways is now in place. The plan and trail network is mapped and reflects the approach and goals of the Vermont Trails and Greenways Plan and represents an important step forward for the town in providing a healthy recreational outlet. The Peacham Pathways utilizes old and new trails and is expected to expand and improve over time. Maps of the network are available to the public. The Bayley-Hazen Snowmobile Club maintains trails in Peacham. These trails which are interconnected with the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) system are enjoyed by snowmobile operators and cross-country skiers alike; they are a valuable asset to the Community. Hiking, fishing, swimming, horseback riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling and hunting are enjoyed on public lands and on much of the privately owned land in Peacham. Public fishing access is available at five of the town's ponds. The Peacham Fire District #1 has its own picnic grounds on Mack Mountain Road at which at least one village event takes place in the summer, the village picnic. There is increased interest in bicycling by children to and after school. Local residents as well as bike tour groups are more commonly seen biking on our roads.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *The town tennis court is in sad repair. Abuses by boaters may detrimentally affect wildlife habitats on small ponds. Infestation of Eurasian milfoil into our lakes is a growing concern. The trail network throughout town should be maintained. Particular consideration should be given to the possibility of a nature/cross country ski trail connecting the three villages. The recreational needs of residents change and facilities require maintenance.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *The town should either repair the existing tennis court or consider building a new one. The town should support the State of Vermont's efforts to determine and regulate appropriate use of ponds and lakes. Encourage boaters to check their boats and motors for Eurasian milfoil before using Peacham's ponds. A nature/cross country ski trail was completed in East Peacham. An extension is being considered to reach Peacham Corner. Other trails are being considered, both nature and cross country ski, such as a trail into Peacham Bog. Encourage the Conservation Commission to complete the nature trail, cross country ski and additional trails as interest and need arise. Work with the Groton State Forest to promote and integrate trail development and maintenance. The Conservation Commission should work to maintain the trail network throughout town. The existing public rights of way and legal trails should be maintained. The residents should be encouraged to support the Conservation Commission primarily through volunteer action.*

VISION: Continue to improve and encourage the use of present recreational facilities primarily through voluntary efforts. Responsible public use of private lands for recreational use is important

to the town.

VILLAGE ISSUES

There are three village centers in the town of Peacham: Peacham Corner, South Peacham and East Peacham. This type of development with homes clustered tightly together surrounded by open farm land is the essence of the vision for the future of Peacham and should be encouraged in every way possible. However, the close proximity of homes and business in a village setting raises issues that are not shared throughout the entire community. These issues have been traditionally dealt with by the Peacham Fire District #1 made up of residents from within the village area. See other sections throughout the plan (continued in housing) for additional discussion of village-related matters. All three villages are concerned with safety and especially with road traffic exceeding posted speed limits. In Peacham Corner parking is inadequate for some events. Peacham Corner has been designated as a Village Center by the State of Vermont. This designation can enhance the opportunities for state financial support in the Village and carry some tax credit possibilities for houses being rehabilitated to commercial use. A land survey of the Village roads, buildings, trees, and other facilities has been undertaken and will help to form one basis for improved planning. In regard to the villages an overall plan that takes advantage of coordinated planning and economies of scale is the goal. The Town also received State funding from the Department of Forest Parks and Recreation (through the Urban and Community Forest Program) to assist in conducting an inventory of the conditions of trees in the villages, cemetery and Town Forest.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *The historic character of the village adds to the community and should be maintained. Future development around the three villages could substantially change the current character of the town. Recently trees have been planted in and around the village under the Tree City USA Program.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *The town should continue its relationship with Tree City USA. The Peacham Planning Committee, the Fire District, Businesses and Citizens should formulate a game plan for addressing the challenges and opportunities that have been documented in the villages.*

VISION: Maintain the historical character of the village centers while encouraging economic and social vitality of Peacham Corner.

PEACHAM CEMETERY

Peacham contains five public cemeteries. There is one on the Peacham/Groton town line, the Worcester Cemetery, the Old Cemetery, Woodard Cemetery, and the current Peacham cemetery that is on a beautiful site overlooking South Peacham. The main cemetery has been enlarged to accommodate future needs. The Select Board is the Cemetery Committee and appoints sextons. Cemetery maintenance is a continuing challenge and involves expenses for cutting, trimming, removing, planting, and replacing trees, The Select Board is in the process of developing a long-range plan for all of the Town's cemeteries.

PEACHAM FIRE DISTRICT #1

The Peacham Fire District #1 supplies water to all homes, apartments, businesses and public buildings in Peacham Corner (as defined in 1927). This service is managed and paid for by those to whom water is provided in Peacham Corner. In addition, the Fire District provides and maintains the street lights within the Village, the Village Picnic Ground on Mack Mountain Road, and the

Village Green Christmas tree. The Fire District's major responsibility, the water system, was originally put in place in 1927 using spring water from Kettle Springs on Mack Mountain Road to supply a reservoir located just below the Kemble property and near the Shenck property. As supplemental sources, two wells were created, one in 1968 and a second in 2000. The springs that provide water to the Village normally flow October through June without supplement from the wells. Most years the wells are needed in the drier, summer months only. A major upgrade to the system was completed in 2000. There are no plans at this time to replace the old pipes within the Village. The costs would be significant to the users of the system. Additional users could be added when the mainline passes their property and a curb stop is in place. If there were to be new residents within the Village boundaries, the system would be obligated to serve them. Any expansion beyond the Village limits and significant changes and improvements to the system would require approval from the Village residents. A state funded analysis of septic issues for Peacham Corner was completed in 2010.

EMPLOYMENT AND LOCAL ECONOMY

Background Information

When travel was hard and people stayed close to home, small communities thrived. People were reliant on their community for their education, entertainment and survival needs. Bartering was common. One can only imagine living in Peacham when there was over twice the population as today, 2 gristmills, 4 operating saw mills, a flax mill and tannery. Almost anything one would need was available in your community. Your neighbors were blacksmiths, tinsmiths, tailors, shoe makers, hat makers, and harness makers; some working from their homes and most everyone had a hand in farming. Stores, taverns and saloons were lively meeting places. And the production of alcoholic and malt beverages was a lucrative business. Despite the transportation and the modernization of industry resulting in a decline of industry and commerce in Peacham, there are still a variety of home based businesses: Christmas tree, dairy, organic vegetables and alpaca farms, maple sugaring, saw mills, small scale textiles, specialty foods, children's day care, and bed and breakfasts. There are antique shops, carpenters, furniture makers, a variety of artists and craftsmen, an insurance agency, a farmers market and an astronomy center in town.

Commercial Development, Tax Base and Other Economic Matters

While the vision for Peacham is often considered in terms of its natural beauty, the warmth of community life, and a continuation of the working landscape, it is important that attention be given to the economic realities and prospects for the town and its residents. Peacham is largely a residential community with few businesses providing jobs or taxes to run town government or the school system. In order for the town to continue providing the services its resident's desire and for residents to find employment, income-generating jobs either in Peacham or the surrounding region are essential. While there are a number of summer residents and retirees in Peacham who do provide valuable tax revenue and tend to demand few services, there is a difficult balance to maintain among jobs, personal income, and local tax revenues.

Employment

Most of the workforce in Peacham is dependent on jobs outside town. St. Johnsbury, Montpelier, and other smaller communities provide a large portion of the employment available to Peacham residents. An increasing number of jobs, however, are found within Peacham. In addition to teachers and other local government employees, there are several in the construction trades, agricultural enterprises, retail trade, and home occupations. As communication technology

advances, it is assumed that a larger number of home occupations may grow. Currently, the job opportunities revolve around the regional economy centered in St. Johnsbury and to a lesser extent the Upper Connecticut River Valley and the Capital Region (Barre and Montpelier). Prospects in these regions for the near future are uncertain; however, the growth in the Northeast Kingdom is projected to be the lowest in the state in the next few years. The Town of Peacham must remain attentive to the region of which it is a part in projecting its own growth in population, its school age population, and its tax base.

There currently are limited, but important opportunities for commercial growth in Peacham. Retail business could benefit from increased business through regional cultural heritage tourism programs, bicycle tours, or snowmobile travelers as well as the annual fall foliage activities and other holiday celebrations in town. Regional cultural heritage programs hold promise because they can divert tourists from typical routes that skirt Peacham in favor of those that have Peacham as a destination. Developing and advertising the historic and cultural resources of the community and providing information for self guided tours of the community for those who visit Peacham could be important elements of these programs. Participating as part of a regional effort could also pay dividends in terms of commercial revenues. Home occupations are another area for growth. These span traditional "cottage industries" to a range of professional services. These opportunities result largely from the communication revolution. There may be steps that can be taken by the town to further encourage and support these businesses. Favorable zoning bylaws should exist that provide substantial flexibility for commercial, industrial and home occupations.

Capital Fund for Future Expenditures

Peacham has a capital funding program to help spread the costs of certain new expenditures over a number of years. Setting aside money on an annual basis to meet future anticipated capital expenditures is a tool for the Town to use. This can be financially beneficial if the Town can take advantage of sales incentives or minimize costly annual repairs. Moreover, because there are often cost-share programs using state or federal programs, having a capital fund allows the town to be flexible in responding to such opportunities.

Planning for Future Road and Related Investments

The Select Board has prepared a ten-year plan to guide decisions and timing of investments and repairs. Annual updates of this plan will greatly assist the town in making cost-effective investment decisions.

***ISSUES/CONCERNS:** Lack of Broadband*

***RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:** Seek out and support bringing Broadband to rural areas.*

VISION: Peacham should strive to be a place to live and work. Commercial activities and home industry should be encouraged as long as it meets environmental and aesthetic objectives of this plan. Commercial activity provides employment, and a sense of well-being, and community. Peacham will strive to maintain a tax burden that is moderate.

LOCAL SERVICES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Energy

Energy resources in Peacham include electrical service provided by Green Mountain Power for most of the area and Washington Electric Co-op for western and northern parts. A few people have incorporated solar energy in their homes, and many homes use wood as a source of heat.

Increasingly wood pellet and bio-char technologies have gained interest and use. In the town plan development discussions on energy issues there was considerable testimony that Peacham should be open to piloting energy concepts, like pellet and bio-char that make use of our own local resources, create local employment and alternative use of farmland, and produce by-products that can be used to enhance soil thus creating a local energy carbon cycle. There is a growing awareness of the long-term economic, environmental and social costs of our energy choices. The use of energy is an important consideration in local decisions about municipal services and facilities, land use, building standards, and our local economy. Most of the money Vermonters spend on fossil fuels leaves the local economy. Only 20 percent of the dollars spent on non-renewable fuels stay in the state, while 80 percent of that spent on wood remains in Vermont. Reducing fossil fuel systems with wood energy and possibly supplemental wind and solar systems would keep the energy dollar within our local economy. There are no real energy resource scarcities in Peacham. Some residences have chosen not to be linked to a public electrical system, either from choice or cost, a personal photo-voltaic system is often the choice of these people. The opportunities for conserving energy are limited to voluntary choices made by individuals and organizations in reducing personal energy consumption. These opportunities are encouraged.

Transportation

Peacham residents are dependent on a well maintained road system, summer and winter. They are also concerned with safety for travelers and pedestrians and that the roads support and enhance the rural and scenic character of the town. Except for travel along the Groton-Peacham, Danville-Peacham and Mack Mountain Road there is little through traffic. The major routes in the region (1-91 and U.S. Rte. 5 to the east, U.S. Rte 2 to the north and west, and Rte. 302 to the south) provide excellent access to the region, to Canada, and to other parts of New England.

Status of Major Roads Into and Out of Peacham

Road	Current Status (2004)	Future Status (2008)
Danville-Peacham Road	Resurfaced in 2004	Maintain as is
East Peacham-Danville Road	Reconstructed in good condition	Maintain as is
East Peacham Road (East)	Gravel in good condition	Maintain as is
Peacham-West Barnet Road.	Resurfaced in 2004	Maintain as is
Mack Mountain	Road Gravel in good condition.	Maintain as is
Peacham-Groton Road	Pavement in poor condition	Resurface soon
Bayley-Hazen/Main Street (Peacham Corner -South)	Paved and in fair condition	Maintain as is

The road network consists of:

- *Class I Town highways - 1.6 miles:* Class I town highways are those town highways that form the extension of a state highway route. The Agency of Transportation shall determine which highways are Class I highways. The only Class I highway in Peacham is the 1.6 miles of the Groton-Marshfield highway - Route 232.
- *Class II Town highways -10.0miles:* These are the most important highways in each town. As far as practicable, they shall be selected with the purpose of securing main lines of improved highways from town to town and to places which by their nature have more than the normal amount of traffic. They are designated by the Select Board and approved by the Vermont

State Highway Board.

- *Class III Town highways -51.6 miles:* These are all traveled highways other than Class I or II. The Select Board, after conferencing with a representative of the State Agency of Transportation, shall determine Class III highways. The minimum standards for Class III highways are that they be negotiable under normal conditions all seasons of the year. This would include, but not be limited to, sufficient surface and base, adequate drainage, and sufficient width to permit winter maintenance.
- *Class IV Town highways -7.9 miles:* Class IV town highways include all other town highways as designated by the Select Board. These roads are typically 3 rods wide (unless otherwise recorded), are not eligible for state aid funds and are not maintained for winter use. These highways are maintained for summer service only; persons erecting dwellings served by these roads cannot expect winter service. There has been little change in the classification of roads in the past five years, and there is no anticipated change during the current planning period.

Road and Roadside Safety

The quality of roads and their surfaces affect their safety for vehicular traffic as well as the safety of pedestrians, and bicyclists. In addition to effective signage in the villages, other techniques for traffic control and calming should be considered. Guidelines have been developed by the Local Roads Program of the State of Vermont to assist the road crew including guidelines for erosion control, the issuance of driveway permits, and cost effective solutions to protect water quality near town roads. Peacham should continue to take full advantage of these materials and others provided by the Agency of Transportation, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, NVDA, and others.

Storm drainage

Storm drainage is a significant problem on a few roads in Peacham. Without adequate facilities, such as drainage ditches or underground pipes, erosion can and does occur, consuming time and expense in road maintenance. Areas that consistently suffer from erosion or drainage into streams and other water bodies should be identified and corrected.

Road Policy

The Select Board has adopted the town road policy and it appears as an Appendix to this Plan.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *Safety is the primary transportation concern in Peacham, but every effort should be made to preserve (and enhance) the beauty of the roadways. The long-term costs of road maintenance are substantial. New driveways can produce erosion and drainage problems. The classification and maintenance of roads affects development patterns and access for recreational vehicles.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *Tree removal along roads should be minimized. Guard rails throughout town are replaced where appropriate to help ensure safe travel. The Planning Commission should develop a scenic byways plan to guide road management for scenic purposes. The Select Board should continue its no new roads policy for Peacham, and consider the long term costs and effects of upgrading roads from one class to another. State guidelines are considered in issuing new driveway permits. Travel speed is a major concern in the villages. The Select board should consider strategies for controlling the speed of vehicles.*

VISION: *Safe vehicular and pedestrian traffic is assured while travel routes are maintained in a manner consistent with the rural character of the town.*

CHILD CARE FACILITIES

There are three daycare facilities in Peacham: Backyard Daycare can take up to eleven children ages one month to thirteen years, the older ones going after school. Little Miracles Child Care can take up to eight children ages six weeks to thirteen years. Kerryanne's Day Care can take up to six children. At this time there is adequate day care provided in Peacham.

EDUCATION

History

In 1795, Peacham voted to be the home of the Caledonia County Grammar School rather than the County Courthouse. The Town has maintained schools since that time, including various one-room schoolhouses, Peacham Academy, and presently Peacham Elementary School. This historical tradition is evidence of the commitment Peacham has shown for providing high quality education at a local level.

Present situation

The Peacham School District is a member of the Caledonia Central Supervisory Union (CCSU), which maintains administrative offices in Danville. The CCSU includes the Towns of Barnet, Danville, Peacham, and Walden. Peacham shares administrative and program service with the other districts and members of the Peacham School Board serve on the CCSU Board of Directors. The Peacham Elementary School operates a pre-school through grade six program. In 1993, through a bond vote, the school facility was enlarged to include two new classrooms, a multi-purpose room, a library, an office, teacher's conference room, and a nurse's station. The school is on a 12-acre site. The school population is approximately 48 students (K-6). Bus transportation is offered to and from school along routes defined by the School Board in conjunction with the service provider. Pupils in grades seven through twelve attend a school of their choice including Danville High School, St. Johnsbury Academy, St. Johnsbury Middle School, Blue Mountain Union School, Barnet School, Riverside Day School, Highland School, Stevens School and Cabot School. Pre-school children and their families are served by the Caledonia Rural Early Education Project, CREEP, which provides shared experiences, structured activities, parental guidance, and developmental screening for three, four, and five year olds. This program is administered through the CCSU office located in Danville. The adjacent Northeast Kingdom Astronomy Foundation observatory adjacent to the elementary school provides great opportunities for Peacham and other area schools. The statewide education funding law, Act 60, combined with the 2003 amendment, Act 68, will inevitably continue to present opportunities and challenges to the Town.

VISION: The Peacham Elementary School is a community of learners and teachers dedicated to developing the ability of each individual to think and communicate clearly, to solve problems creatively, to explore the world, to make responsible decisions, and to have concern for the common good. To that end, Peacham School strives for the continuation of excellent educational opportunities for students in grades K-6. Peacham benefits from the intrinsic value of its school in maintaining the vitality and community engagement of all citizens. Quality educational services contribute to the enticement of young families to Peacham and assists in maintaining the current population of families with school-aged children. These young families are essential to the future of Peacham, as they benefit the town in a multitude of ways. The Peacham Planning Commission should undertake a study on the need for preschool child care and education and review the Town Zoning Ordinance regarding child care centers.

HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES

The unique character of a community comes from both its natural and built environments. Peacham is blessed with rolling topography and fertile soils that provide for a variety of land uses. The community is also fortunate to have many historic and interesting buildings. These add to the specialness of the community as much as the scenery. This plan's intent is to work toward protecting both the natural and built environments. In order to do that, a comprehensive inventory and plan need to be developed. The inventory should identify those areas with historic or cultural qualities such as cemeteries, monuments, buildings, old cellar holes, spiritual grounds, and the like. In December 2003, Peacham Corner was officially listed as a Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places which is administered by the US Park Service. The listing of Peacham Corner recognizes the architectural and historic significance and documents historic resources in Peacham. Full text and photo documentation of the District is available through the Historic Association and specific buildings are identified on the Historic District Map (see supplement). Several other areas in town contain homes and barns dating back to the early settlement period of the town. A series of past and ongoing preservation activities has enhanced the historical integrity of Peacham. In 1998 the Peacham Historical Association purchased and began restoration of the square brick building located in Peacham Corner behind the Town Clerks Office. This building, a relic from 1820 formerly housed the Ashbel Goodenough Blacksmith Shop. Guided by professionals, the Association conducted archeological digs in the summer of 1998 and 1999. The Association restored the building to a working blacksmith shop fitted with antique tools which opens on special occasions and serves as a museum and teaching tool for the Northeast Kingdom communities. As part of a grant from IBM and Verizon, the Historical Association, the Peacham Elementary School and the Stevens School entered in to a partnership to take a detailed census of the barns remaining in the year 2000. Twenty barns had been researched measured and mapped by 2003. The Historical Association was given the East Peacham School house in 2008. It requires a lot of structural and decorative work before it can be safely used.

General Description of Peacham Corners Historical District

The Village of Peacham is a relatively intact late 18th century/early 19th century Vermont hill town. It is set on a rise of land 1310 feet above sea level and 800 feet in elevation above the Connecticut River several miles to the east. The initial clearing of the forests opened up vistas to the White Mountains of New Hampshire to the southeast, and Mount Washington some forty miles to the east, providing a dramatic setting for the new settlement and a broad geographical orientation. Originally organized around a Common at the high point of the village, the settlement by the 1840s had become concentrated at the crossroads just down the hill to the east. It was here that the road from the green joined the Bayley Hazen Military Road (1776), one of the important north-south thoroughfares of the time. The settlement pattern and the architectural character of the village were well defined by 1860 and have survived substantially unaltered to this day. Two important layers within this early development give the village its physical distinction, the Federal style houses, barns, and church of the late 1700s and early 1800s and the predominantly Greek Revival homes and institutional buildings of the 1840s, 50s, and 60s. A few large homes were built on the edges of the village during the late 19th century and a few summer homes were built at higher elevations in the early part of the 20th century.

In recent years a few additional new homes have been built around the edges and in some of the vacant land created by the loss of the central Peacham Academy building. However the pre-1860 buildings are still predominant and provide the essential character and community within the village. Nearly all of the properties in the district retain their integrity in regard to location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. 1861 marked the beginning of the Civil

War period and the emigration of many young men from Peacham; many never returned. It was also the beginning of a shift in population to the newly emerging industrial centers which tended to be in the river valleys and not up in the hills. With little in the way of subsequent population growth, the formal shape of the town has stayed somewhat frozen through time since the mid 19th century.

From an architectural point of view, what is equally interesting is that 1860 marks the end of a primary use of handmade and hand finished materials for buildings and the beginning of a new era of manufactured structural and finish materials. These new materials spawned the increasingly complex and ornate Victorian buildings of the 1870's, 80's, and 90's, many of which replaced simpler earlier buildings in towns like St Johnsbury. This layer never appeared in Peacham, so the earlier architectural character continues to be remarkably consistent. The continuity is farther reinforced by the Colonial Revival style of the sprinkling of new homes and the uniform choice of white as the exterior color for the homes and institutional buildings, many with dark green louvered shutters. Occasional contrast is provided by red brick and by red or natural siding on a few of the homes and barns. Although the white color may not always be the original it reflects a collective 21st century preference for interpreting early Vermont architecture in a particular way. The light color also highlights the fine detailing of many of the buildings.

Federal Layer

The early layer of buildings is concentrated at the crossroads and in the scattering of early village farmsteads. The homes are mostly timber frame side-gabled buildings, one-and a half and two and a half stories, with central chimneys or pairs of interior chimneys. The majority are gable-roofed examples of the Cape Cod and Classic Cottage house forms. A striking exception is the handsome Governor Mattocks home (# 1), a substantial hip roofed Georgian house form with Adamesque detailing, set at the main crossroads and helping to define the village center. A similar hip roofed farm residence (#31) survives on the northern edge of the village, although modified. Most of these early homes have attached wings and barns, and fit the general pattern of big house, small-house, back house and barn. Many show signs of evolution with more recent shed dormers, bracketed door hoods, and extensions. However, much of the original fabric survives in the stone foundations, featheredge horizontal wood siding and finely crafted doors windows and transoms. A brick blacksmith shop dates from this period as does the original Methodist Church which has been transformed several times through its use by the Peacham Academy to its present role as a town building with post office, town clerk's office, and gymnasium The Peacham Congregational Church was also built during this initial phase (1806). It was moved soon after (1844) from the upper village green down to the crossroads area, and was overlaid with Greek Revival detailing characteristic of the next dominant architectural layer.

Greek Revival Layer

The Greek Revival buildings reflect the widespread interest in Classical references within the emerging American Republic. Some of the earlier Classic Cottage house forms were simply ornamented with Greek Revival detailing (#7, 10, 13, 15). But the full expression of the style came when houses were reoriented with the gable end to the street, allowing the development of pediments and corner trim. Some homes, particularly those along the upper side of Main Street (#45, 8), displayed fully developed Greek temple references with elaborate pediment gables above colonnaded verandas. Other homes (#19, 21, 35) had more modest Greek Revival details in the pediment gable treatments and the detailing of corner trim as applied pilasters. Almost all of these homes featured fine entranceways, many with six paneled doors surrounded by transoms and sidelights encased within classically detailed architrave moldings. As indicated, the Congregational Church (38) took on Greek Revival characteristics. This was also the style chosen for the main

building of the Peacham Academy in 1843 (since demolished) and for the William Mattocks House (3) which became an Academy residence. All but one of the Greek Revival buildings were built of wood, with horizontal siding, the other (#18) was done in brick with stone lintels. Most of the Greek Revival homes continued to have associated barns and outbuildings.

Connected Architecture

The majority of homes from both the Federal and Greek Revival periods have connected outbuildings in the big house, little house, back house, barn tradition of northern and eastern New England. Some of these connections are not original (#41) and in some cases the main house has been rebuilt or altered while the outbuildings have remained unchanged (#44). The connected outbuilding pattern seems to have been well established by the early 19th Century, and the pattern has been sustained by subsequent owners even when the original agricultural uses have disappeared. The main house and rear wing are generally clapboarded with matching trim; the back house and barn have simpler trim and some have unfinished vertical siding

Subsequent Developments

Later 19th century homes were few in number and relatively simple in detail. They were mostly gabled front houses that continued the Greek Revival influence of the earlier period. The only notable change was the addition of verandas with scrollwork detailing. The village is generally without the elaborate Victorian layer that characterizes Danville, St. Johnsbury, and a number of other nearby centers. Some early 20th century summer homes on the edge of the village adopted very distinct styles more in the shingled Arts and Crafts tradition, which reinforced their separate identity. Late 20th century buildings within the village have been very limited, and have tended to imitate the early 19th century architecture with simple side-gable forms horizontal wood siding, and doors with transoms and/or sidelights.

The Village Landscape

The village landscape continues to provide an important and appropriate setting for the early homes and out buildings. The boundaries of the village today are much as they were in the mid 19th Century. They remain clearly defined by the surrounding rural landscape, with its mix of open agricultural land and forest. Active dairy farms sustain the traditional field patterns and uses. Further afield, the distant views to the White Mountains remain a dominant feature of the village and help explain the early appearance of inns, rest homes, and summer residences. There is only one paved road, the through road from Groton to Danville that incorporates part of the early Bayley Hazen thoroughfare. The rest of the village roads are dirt and gravel as they always have been. The only sidewalk is a gravel path separated from the paved road by a grass boulevard. The soft edges of these roads combined with the mature trees and bushes maintain a predominance of soft landscape that has always been characteristic of Peacham. Individual plantings, including terraced flower gardens on the sloping lawns of Peacham Corner, also sustain traditional landscape patterns.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *The recent designation as a historic district evolved from a process of study. Understanding and appreciation of this process should continue. Changes to historic buildings could alter the current character of the town. Barns are an important part of the town's history and working landscape and should be protected. A comprehensive inventory and preservation plan needs to be developed to identify and protect historic and cultural features in town.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *The information developed for historic district designation should be generally available to residents. The Planning Commission should encourage this process in other parts of town if there is interest. Provide information about historic preservation to owners if interested. The Historical Association should publicize the Vermont State matching barn grants*

program and continue to provide information to interested owners about maintaining their barns. Work with interested groups, including the Peacham Historical Association, to inventory and develop a preservation plan for the historic and cultural features in town. This could be achieved in phases including: (a) Identification of historic and cultural features; (b) Description of these features; and (c) formulation of a plan for preservation of these features.

VISION: Maintain and enhance the historic and cultural features in town.

LIBRARY

The Peacham Library exists for the enrichment of the Peacham community. It provides free access to library materials and information services. It promotes reading for enjoyment and self-education for library users of all ages. It also serves a point of access to inter-library loans, and as a center for community activities and concerns. The Library Board and Staff believe that: 1. Reading and study are essential to individual growth and enrichment, and are among the most enjoyable forms of recreation. 2. Free and reliable access to information and cultural resources is a right of citizenship in a democracy and fundamental to the preservation of democracy. Interest in a library in Peacham can be traced to December 21, 1798, when a notice appeared in the Green Mountain Patriot, convening a group that eventually called itself Proprietors of the Federal Library. There are records of books arriving in July 1799, but there is no indication as to how long this first library in Peacham lasted. It is known that a debating society, organized August 9, 1810, in preparing for their debates, keenly felt the lack of a library and therefore organized the library which continues to exist. A major benefactor was Thaddeus Stevens, who in 1868 left the town \$1,000, with the interest to go to the library. Some of the money needed to operate the library today is the result of similar gifts.

The first library building, built in 1909, and a collection of approximately 3600 books, was destroyed by fire on January 27, 1959. A new building was erected in 1960 which included a meeting room used by groups in the community. In 2001 an addition was added to the existing building thanks to a bequest from Horace Gilmore and the generous contributions of local residents and other long-time supporters of the library, and the State of Vermont. In 2003 a Freeman Foundation Vermont Public Library Foundation Grant provided funds to refurbish the 1960-era portion of the building. The Library currently has four high-speed public access computer stations. The collection numbers over 9,000 items. The Library is now open 20 hours per week, and the number of patrons using the library is increasing and is expected to continue to increase. Because public funds are contributed toward the Library's operating budget, the Town elects one member of the Board of Trustees. Since 1900, the library has been free to all residents of Peacham.

VISION: The Peacham Library is an important part of the Peacham community's intellectual, educational, leisure and cultural life. It provides space for small group meetings. The Library Board envisions a future in which all of the community's interests are represented in the Library's collection and all residents use the Library to enrich their lives. The Board envisions meeting the needs of all residents for information and other library resources, either from its own collection or through networks to which it belongs.

HOUSING

In 1989 the Peacham Housing Committee, now known as the Peacham Community Housing, Inc. (PCH), studied the needs of moderate income residents, especially the needs of elderly residents. They found there was not a very large need for additional housing at the time. In 1997, a resource directory for Peacham senior residents was published by Peacham Community Housing, Inc. following a survey done in 1996.

In addition, the Planning Commission reviewed the 1990 and 2000 Census data, the latest available information, to identify the trends in the Town. Some of the conclusions are stated below:

- Peacham's population grew rapidly in the 1980's (18.1%) despite a slowdown in county growth (7.9%) and statewide (10.0%). From 1990 to 2000, the growth rate dropped to 6%.
- In 1990, 19.6% of Peacham residents were over 65 years old, this compares to 13.2% county wide. In 2000, 15.3% were over 65, compared to 14.4% in the country.
- Over one-third of Peacham's houses have been built since 1980, with over 15% from 1990 to 2000.
- In 2000, there were 263 units of year-round housing while 224 units were used for seasonal houses. The number of seasonal housing units increased nearly 20% in the 1990's.
- There were only 40 renter-occupied dwellings in Peacham in 2000. There are twelve apartments in Peacham Corner.

Discussions have been underway between Peacham Community Housing (PCH) and Housing Vermont to review the current amount and conditions of the Village Apartments and the needs of the accessibility to its residents. These discussions should continue within the larger Peacham Corner planning community.

VISION: Ensure a variety of housing units for all income levels and age groups within the town, emphasizing the rehabilitation of existing structures in favor of building new ones.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Public Buildings

Peacham has many public buildings that serve the different community needs. They include:
Town Hall (including gymnasium and tennis court)
Roller Barn
Fire House
Cemetery Tool Shed
School
Town Garage

Peacham's public buildings are vitally important to the functioning of town government and must be maintained and upgraded periodically. Evolving issues center on the Town Hall (gymnasium access), crowding at the Town Garage, and the possible need for a Sand Storage Shed. To an increasing extent, the town depends on the generosity of the Peacham Congregational Church for town events. A plan for future town facilities is needed and should be reflected in a realistic capital budget. Such a plan should take into account state and federal guidelines and standards, growing demands of town organizations and commissions and the need for functional offices and meeting space.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *Many of the Town's buildings are of an advanced age. A storage shed for sand may be required near the Town Garage in the next few years. The Town Garage is increasingly inadequate for the maintenance and storage functions it serves.*

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: *The Select Board should continue to review municipal assets and capital plans.*

VISION: Maintain and enhance the current public buildings to meet the needs of Peacham residents.

Public Lands

Town owned lands include the school yard, cemeteries, the town forest, the athletic field, the area around the municipal building, and the Peacham Fire District # 1 (Fire District) picnic area. In addition to rights-of-way along the town highways, the Fire District also has easements for underground water supply pipes from Kettle Spring to the Peacham Fire District #1 reservoir and from the reservoir to the water main near the store in Peacham Corner. The town also has an easement for sewage disposal across the main street (Bayley-Hazen Road) from the municipal building to the septic field. The school secondarily shares this septic field with the municipal building. The school's primary septic field, installed when the school built an addition in 1993, is located southeast of the school on the Davis property. On town roads, many of the public rights-of-way have been determined through surveys and are of varying widths (typically 2, 3 or 4 rods). Others have not been surveyed. Of these, most are assumed to have a right-of-way width of 3 rods (49.5 feet), measured from the center of the road. It's important for landowners as well as the town to know the location of boundaries of rights-of-way. This can assist the landowner in knowing what land he/she has a right to manage, and the town (particularly the road crew) will know in what areas the town has jurisdiction (see also Transportation section of this plan). There are no plans for new public roads in Peacham, or for new public rights-of-way. As land surveys become available, however, more accurate information on these public rights-of-way may emerge. A long-term goal should be to have a directory and map of all the right-of-ways in the town. Public and private rights-of-way for telephone, electricity and cable services also exist throughout Peacham. The companies responsible for those services also are responsible for the rights-of-way. They should be encouraged to continue to work cooperatively with the town and individual landowners as these rights-of-way and the services they accommodate are modified or expanded over time.

Fire Protection

New equipment has been purchased and a much-needed expansion of the firehouse has been built. The next several years will feature more modest, yet important, improvements. Using Homeland Security funding has permitted the purchase of some communication equipment, and it is assumed that with continued funding from this source that additional radios can be acquired. Currently, the fire department has three dry hydrants in different parts of town. These are ponds that can be used in emergencies to refill the tanker. Two of these are in operation; one at the Hartong's farm outside South Peacham and a second on Old Cemetery Road. The third, on Thaddeus Stevens Road in East Peacham, is not currently in operation. The long-range plan is to have these three ponds operating and to add two additional sites, one of which would be located in the northern part of town, toward Danville. As for personnel, the department now has 14 members and no junior members. These numbers are down from the last plan report of 18 members and two junior members. The department is always looking for, and in need of, others who are available to join their efforts. Volunteers who remain local during the day continue to be a priority. These needs include those who can play a secondary role (e.g., traffic control and maintaining supply lines). All firefighters are required to attend formal training sessions. Additional help, especially for daytime fires, is needed.

***ISSUES/CONCERNS:** The fire department will continue to upgrade its equipment. The plan for fire hydrants around town needs to be completed.*

Police Protection

Police protection is currently provided by the Vermont State Police, Caledonia County Sheriff, and local constable. Road safety and the effect upon it of traffic speeds, intersections, and the size of trucks continues to be an issue in Peacham, especially along the main road through Peacham Corner.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: Improved surveillance, road signs and new sidewalks and pathways can all contribute to reducing the risk to both pedestrians and vehicles.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: The town occasionally borrows speed radar equipment to inform travelers of their speeds and cautions them to be more attentive to the neighborhood through which they are driving. The Select Board should consider providing additional police protection to these trails and rights-of-way.

Solid Waste

Peacham maintains a solid waste transfer facility and recycling center in an enclosed, secure area located on the East Peacham Road. There are dumpsters for trash that is not recycled. Recyclables are collected in a separate building. Two large 30 cubic yard containers are provided for metal and construction materials. Tires may also be left off. The Town has set up a collection center for used oil at the transfer site. The used oil is then burned at the Town Garage to provide heat. All of the above are available to Peacham residents for a nominal fee. The per-bag fee for trash is currently \$1.00 for kitchen bags and \$2.00 for 30-gallon bags. The recycling effort has been on-going for 20 years. Currently, plastics, glass (all colors), tin and aluminum cans, and various papers are gathered inside the trailer and are picked up when the containers are full. Below is a table for the average tonnage of trash and recyclables reported in the last town plan compared to the most recent 5-year period:

Year	Bulk (Tonnage)	Recycled (Tonnage)	Percentage
1999-2003 (Ave.)	235	38	16%
2005	277	79	28.5%
2006	180	80	44.4%
2007	190	71	37.4%
2008	156	75	48.1%
2009	181	67	37.0%

Source: Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District

The solid waste that is collected each week in the dumpsters is removed by a contractor and disposed of at the Waste U.S.A. landfill in Coventry, VT. For the period 2005-2009 Peacham recycled approximately 33.6% of its solid waste, a vast improvement over the previous period of time reported. In 2009, the Town generated over 181 tons of trash in the regular dumpsters. The cost to dispose of that trash alone was approximately \$32,000. The two 30-yard dumpsters generated nearly 50 tons of waste. The cost per ton to dispose of the material is the same as the smaller dumpsters. Each time one of the larger dumpsters is emptied there is a hauling fee and a fuel surcharge adding \$2,200 to the cost of the construction debris. Including the salary of the attendant, rental of the dumpsters, recyclables removal, miscellaneous fees and maintenance, the total cost to the town for 2009 for the transfer station was approximately \$41,461. Income for 2009 was about \$31,147.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: Increase awareness of the importance of recycling and investigate methods of encouraging the reduction of waste and more recycling.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: The Select Board should increase awareness of the costs of solid waste disposal and carefully monitor the costs and revenues of the transfer station operation. It should also consider incentives and techniques for separating recyclables from other trash.

Sewage Disposal Systems

Peacham has two small community sewage disposal systems: one private and one town-owned. Statewide, many private systems have annual periods of failure, causing pollution of the ground surface, the surface waters, and the atmosphere. Failure usually results from the system's being located in soils that are naturally saturated during wet periods, inadequate capacity of the system in relation to the volume of sewage and the soil's ability to absorb the effluent, and/or faulty installation. While a survey of systems in Peacham has not been undertaken, recent statewide research has discovered that up to one-third of septic systems constructed in an average year are installed to replace systems which have failed. The State of Vermont has revised its on-site sewage regulations. It is important for the Town of Peacham to keep abreast of these changes, especially those that affect provisions of the Town Zoning Ordinance and the Town's management of septic system design and management.

***ISSUES/CONCERNS:** There could be significant public health threats due to failed septic systems. Revised state all-site septic system regulations have changed the way potential developers determine the size of lots. **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:** The Planning Commission and Vermont State authorities review zoning by-laws to ensure that it adequately protects water quality. The town should consider the impact of state rules and the effect they have on the potential locations for new development in town.*

Emergency Services

Medical services are provided at the Danville Health Center and in nearby communities of St. Johnsbury, Monroe, Woodsville, and Littleton. Emergency medical services are provided by Danville Rescue Inc. and in the Peacham Pond area by Cabot Ambulance, which are supported by the town through an annual appropriation. Peacham Fire Department provides medical first response to the Town of Peacham. These services are adequate at this time.

911 Programs

Since the town plan was adopted in 1993, efforts have been underway to develop dependable emergency services for Peacham through the Enhanced 911 program. In this program, developed primarily to assist in medical, fire and police emergency situations, all the roads of the town have been named, and all residences and businesses assigned a number related to their location on town roads. All streets and roads in Peacham are designated by signs. Emergency services need cooperation from residents in posting their house numbers to make them easier to find in an emergency, especially at night. A list of the revised town road names, past and present is available at the Town Clerk's office.

Disaster Contingency Planning

In May 1999, the Peacham Select Board adopted a Rapid Response Plan for disaster management. In 2000, the Town, the Peacham School, and the Peacham Congregational Church entered into "Shelter Agreements" with the American Red Cross. Unforeseen circumstances, such as the disastrous ice storms that severely impacted parts of northern New England, New York State, and Canada in 1998, could result in an extended period of the loss of electric power, telephone, and other such essential services in town. The town has prepared for such an event by considering alternate means for providing its citizenry, particularly those most vulnerable such as the elderly, the infirm, and the very young, with heat, food, adequate shelter, and access to emergency medical care and firefighting support. Public buildings located in town designated as shelters and emergency operations center will be staffed with personnel to dispense such services. In planning for catastrophic events the town needs to identify not only sources of emergency food supplies, equipment such as electric

generators for power and emergency cellular phone service, but personnel to be trained and organized in advance of a disaster to operate equipment and to provide guidance to townspeople on obtaining such services. (These services and material will be provided by the American Red Cross, Vermont Emergency Management and local personnel). Disaster planning is coordinated with local, county, and state law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical service providers, and other such professionals to maximize use of available resources.

ISSUES/CONCERNS: *There is a need to make the Disaster Plan for Peacham known to its residents and leaders and to revise it on an ongoing basis. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:* *The Selectmen should work with the Emergency Management Coordinator or the Town of Peacham Volunteer Fire Department to ensure that the Rapid Response Plan is known and revised on an ongoing basis.*

Telephone Service

Telephone service is provided for the most part by FairPoint. FairPoint, as well as Charter Communications (cable) and the power companies should continue to work with the town in the expansion of services, the maintenance of poles and other facilities, and the modification of services over time. There is an increased potential for wireless communication towers to be sited in Peacham, as has been the case in other communities, resulting from the demand for cellular phones. The town needs to remain aware of new technological advances in the communications industry and be prepared to respond to requests for additional or modified facilities. Hilltops and other high altitude sites in town are particularly prone to eventual tower construction. Amendments to the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 place communities in a vulnerable position regarding wireless communication facilities. Peacham has developed a communication tower ordinance in anticipation of possible proposals.

Adjacent Communities

Peacham depends on the adjacent communities for many services. The town is part of a mutual aid agreement for firefighting, the high school students all go out of town for their education and nearly all the jobs that residents rely on are in other communities. Peacham shares boundaries with Danville, Barnet, Ryegate, Groton, Marshfield, and Cabot. The development pattern of Peacham is compatible with that of its abutting towns in almost all directions. It is unclear, however, how compatible the town's zoning ordinance is with that of adjoining towns. After adoption of the revised plan, when a review of the zoning ordinance is appropriate, the Planning Commission should communicate with adjoining towns to ensure that the land use regulations, especially those in effect near border areas are as consistent as possible. This coordination should extend, as it already does, to cooperation on reviewing and regulating, where appropriate, development that occurs at mutual borders or on land parcels with boundaries that lie within two or more towns.