

Wallingford Town Forum Notes

Compiled from focus group discussions held with over 180 Wallingford residents and the VCRD Visiting Team on April 26, 2018

Although the prioritization work of the Wallingford Community Visit Program requires a town to decide what is most important as it moves forward with Task Forces, nothing is lost in the process from the long list of concerns and ideas expressed in early community focus sessions. Many interesting and diverse thoughts are represented here, and are presented as a reminder of issues explored, and a possible foundation for future projects.

Community Communications, Events & Celebrations

Visiting Team: Ben Doyle, Gary Holloway (facilitator), Jenna Koloski (scribe), Julie Moore, Haley Pero, John Sinclair, Tim Tierney, Kevin Wiberg

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Community newsletter, print and online, town clerk.
- Stone meadow, ballfield, playground, rec field.
- Active FPF group which has calendar.
- Town Public beach.
- Green Mtn national forest (Wallingford is a gateway).
- Close to Appalachian trail (through hikers).
- Conservation commission cabin fever fun day.
- The library.
- Rotary fishing derby and lobster fest.
- Family Fun day (hasn't happened for a few years).
- Christmas bizarre first Saturday in December.
- Memorial Day Parade.
- S. Wallingford grange hall activities for young families. Can accommodate a couple hundred people.
- The Rotary Building, town offices, school spaces.
- Community movie nights, art classes at Sparkle Barn.
- Boys Camp (can be rented) on the lake, booked solid a year in advance for weddings.
- Wonderful pub and restaurant.
- Closure of deli and loss of community bulletin board (near post office and atm).
- Town Rec Committee.
- Open studio weekend.
- Excellent artists and makers in the area.
- Existing maps of rec trails and fields, walking tour of historic downtown.
- Bike Safety Day.

What are the Challenges?

- Sporadic nature of events.
- Lack of event day coordination.
- No umbrella for communications.
- Bringing in younger people and new people.
- Can only post events twice on FPF calendar.
- Used to have a lot more events such as alumni parade, fun day (fire dept.).
- Lack of event organizers, volunteer capacity.
- Need the next generation of volunteers to step up.
- Volunteers don't know about opportunities, what other organizations are doing and need.
- Difficulty emailing to a large group of residents (spam filters).
- Limited time for parents who are transporting kids for extra-curricular activities.
- There are 3 villages.
- Loss of general store (now a dead spot) used to be a gathering place.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Single point of contact for calendaring of events.
- Town committee chairs should be sharing minutes with other committee chairs.
- Community Bulletin Board (near post office in addition to town hall).
- Sheltered bus stop with a bulletin board.
- Rotary youth programming and community service opportunities - Interact Club.
- Protect historic artifacts in spaces that are used for multiple purposes.
- Clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities/volunteer opportunity coordinator.
- Group e-mail chain of folks representing community organizations.
- Proactively communicate and engage with each other.
- Community newsletter (monthly) compiles list of volunteer needs.
- Town email list-serve to distribute newsletter (what's the best way/ways to distribute it) multiple means of communications.
- Town calendar on the website. Can that be an opportunity to communicate volunteer needs and opportunities.
- ServeGR (Grand Rapids) – model of posting community volunteer needs and connections.
- Bring back the bulletin board (building is owned by out of town private owner).
- Event reminders and alerts.
- Area sandwich boards, rotary banners.

- Wallingford Community Day at the ball field (fireworks, etc.).
- Tag and Craft Sale (Sunday of Memorial Weekend on Main St.).
- Coordinate when events should happen (and dates to avoid).
- Have a picnic/pot luck after the Memorial Day parade (parade use to end at the Boys Club on the lake).
- Rec committee would be happy to meet – Patricia Nash would be a point person.
- Explore using the town website for more communications, volunteer clearinghouse, events calendar. Maybe have high school students volunteer to support this.
- Create a Wallingford Community Face Book page. (Have a couple of administrators.) Conservation Commission has a FB page. Would like to link with other groups.
- Have lake access available longer (students operate concessions and lifeguard.) Post as swim at your own risk.
- Maybe the lake could be operated as an entrepreneurial enterprise.
- Update town maps of historic buildings, trails and rec opportunities.
- Fall harvest festival.
- Ice skating in the rec field (used to happen there).
- Community Concert Series.
- Making sure Appalachian Trail is feature on Website so that it comes up in web searches.
- Bring back Christmas stroll and engage more/new volunteers.
- Bike Safety day (May 12), plan for volunteer succession.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Great sense of community volunteerism.
- Great town staff.
- Wallingford High School students – there's a lot of overlap with what was discussed today. Rec activities, music activities.
- Other communities are getting behind more events and celebrations.
- Boys Camp that is town owned could it be utilized more.
- Trail Angel Day (for through hikers).
- Lots of resources, but coordination is needed.
- Calendar and volunteer coordination.
- The number of events and there seems to be capacity. Issue seems to be coordination. Can disparate groups be pulled together.
- Purpose of events, just for residents or do you want to bring in folks from out of town.
- Communications is a priority issue for a lot of small towns. Coordination. Could different group leaders meet quarterly, for example.
- Volunteers and leaders. Leaders train others to take the lead.

Wallingford's Identity

Visiting Team: Ben Doyle (facilitator), Gary Holloway, Jenna Koloski, Julie Moore, Haley Pero, John Sinclair, Tim Tierney, Kevin Wiberg (scribe)

What are the Assets in this Area?

- A big part of our identity is that we have a strong community.
- People outside see Wallingford as having a strong community.
- We're the best kept secret – a lot of people don't know that we are so strong.
- I see Wallingford as three distinct communities (East, South, Wallingford) but they really are one community.
- The Green Mountain National Forest and White Rocks is a key asset that links all three Village Centers.
- Wallingford has an amazing conservation land and a lot of people aren't aware. We have 45 acres and within that there is lake, vernal, woodland, meadowland – this is a huge asset. Amazing environmental habitat.
- Thru-hikers go past Wallingford and they don't understand the value of stopping here, but it could be a huge benefit. Wallingford could be a destination.
- I appreciate the natural beauty and the peace and quiet.
- We used to be the "pretty place" on Rt. 7.
- We have a unique Main Street with architectural features. We used to have students come to study those buildings.
- It is a great place to grow up and raise kids. Small enough not to worry, but big enough that there are enough things for kids to do.
- The Boy with the Boot Fountain is word-known as part of our identity. He comes down in the winter.
- Elfin Lake – park, recreational assets – people come from all over.
- The people are a big part of Wallingford's identity. People are willing to step up when someone needs help. People wrap around each other.
- We used to have an amazing sense of community that has dissipated over time. The asset is the history of those events.
- Wallingford is in a bubble of safety for children. I am comfortable with my kids walking where they need to be in town. I made sure to stay in town because that was important to us.
- The rotary auction was key to Wallingford's identity in the past.
- We have various types of health care services in our town – dental, chiropractic, health center – Lenny Burke and Serenity House, Emmas House.
- Not too far from Okemo – "there are good bones here."
- We are the only traffic light between here and Bennington – we are a Village. It feels like we're a "place."

What are the Challenges?

- In recent years, businesses have closed and taken away from centrality of Village and the beauty of the village. We are losing our identity.
- We "used to do and have" a lot of things. Sustainability. As a town, we can't seem to keep up with all of the things we used to do. We aren't entirely sustainable. We are affected by outside economic forces - what are the things that are in our control? Are you children and grandchildren going to be able to live here?
- The 3 villages is a challenge. They have different character, but we are one town. We are not centralized.
- We are an aging community. The school is down to 1/3 the size of what it was 20-30 years ago.
- In 1975 realtor suggested they didn't want to live in Vermont. It was kind of a "wild west" that straightened out. The other day, someone said "oh you live in the ghetto" – maybe it's the empty houses around me, houses falling down...vacancies in the downtown.
- The Main Street is noisy due to traffic on Rt 7 - noise from trucks.
- Wallingford is dominated by land in the National Forest - our geography is limited by that. It limits affordable housing on small tracts, we are limited to where development already is.
- Not taking care of our town hurts everyone. We need to take care of our town's identity to make sure that people want to live here and do business here.
- We may not have a sense of what our identity is collectively. There isn't a common idea. For example, there are differences around the concept of affordable housing.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- We should build a dog park in Wallingford. There is a flat area crying out to be fenced in. It's good for dogs and people. It's a gathering place. (It could be built as a separate dog park, or could be on existing conservation land).
- I would like to have QR codes on historic houses and other highlights so people stop and can walk the community and learn about it. We have all of the information, we just have to put it on.
- The Rotary is a jewel - boyhood home of Paul Harris. That's important to share.
- We should do a project at the Elementary School to profile the town, interview people, take pictures, to show the community who we are.
- Example - kids at the school did an art project on the fence at the transfer station.
- We should have a mini farmers market in town once a month – farmers could sell, crafters could have crafts, bands could play, Sal's could sell pizza by the slice. Parking is an issue so we would need to address that.
- It would be nice to bring together other community members and artisans.
- If we can't do it in a place, we should figure out how to connect people in a digital way – time and skill trade.
- Rutland Rail Way rips the trees and branches apart every couple of years - a group could work to develop solutions to address concerns over spraying and cutting along the railroad
- The rail way could be an asset – we should.
- The town of Wallingford could do murals on village buildings.
- Soccer programs down at the park.
- Open spot at the park that could be for skating.
- Outdoor market.
- More events at the library.
- Swimming lessons.
- Fishing clubs.
- Downtown – coffee shops, deli.
- Pancake breakfast with Santa.
- We should have a student representative on each committee at the end to make sure there is more stuff for kids.
- We should leverage fishing opportunity to bring people in to town.
- We have great hunting as well.
- We should develop brochures on key assets - like in Brandon where they have several brochures. Brandon got a grant to put those together. Before that it was all up on their website. We should look at what other communities are doing and how they are sharing their identity with the world.
- We need to develop the Village to have something like a coffee shop and merchant presence downtown.
- Signage - we should point out key assets like Elfin Lake. It would be nice at the main intersection to read what is in town (especially since we have a stoplight). Improve wayfinding signage.
- We should hold events that let people get to know our neighbors.
- In Brandon they have an annual fair with a bounce house and contests. That would be fun to do here to celebrate Wallingford. We should bring back Wallingford day.
- We could do street/block parties. We should bring back the fireworks.
- We should bring back the Wallingford summer festival - booths lining both sides of Route 7, rides, horses, etc. We should have a community wide event that would include everyone.
- We are working to revitalize a small scale Wallingford day this year.
- We need to do something about the noise on the highway. Look into traffic calming or noise mitigation issues. We should talk to other towns on Rt 7 that have complained about this and see what they have done. We should form a task force to address this issue.
- Continue to revitalize the crime watch. It's an email subgroup now, but we still have some signs that exist.
- The Rotary and the school used to schedule trick or treating night so parents knew how many kids could come and it was safe. We should go back to that to make it safer for kids at Halloween. It could be an evening of community. Now that

our building is handicap accessible, we could bring back the costume party at the Town Hall.

- Build more organization and structure around Little League and other sports.
- We need a volunteer clearinghouse so people can know what the opportunities are and connecting people with jobs that are needed.
- We should utilize the boys camp again during the off season or during the week for community events.
- Wallingford is a gem and people outside don't know it - do people want people to know it? Should we be marketing Wallingford outside of the community?

- We need to build community events. The Town Hall would be fantastic for a contra dance. That could help to build a tight community. We could do a chili cook off in September.
- The town should have a teen Facebook page. Someone would need to facilitate, but it could be pictures of the community. Teens could post on it and share ideas.
- We should do a teen dance here. The school doesn't have a Froshmore dance anymore and they took away other dances.
- Wallingford should have self-sufficiency with groceries, coffee, etc. Those types of institutions build identity.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- The youth in your town know what is needed and that is exciting. I hope everyone heard the idea to have youth representation on town commissions and councils. That is a fabulous idea and would be great to see it happen.
- We have seen in other parts of the state that businesses want to be 9-5 but that doesn't always work.
- Wallingford "the gem in the green mountains" – "stop at the only traffic light between here and Bennington" "Wallingford where nature, history, and recreation create community" – you know what you have, it's now about how to take action.
- ANR runs a program to make gear available for people to borrow to try something new. Maybe there is an opportunity to provide those sorts of experiences for people passing through – there are so many natural resource attributes. There was a theme about walking - trick or treating, school, library – what can you do to emphasize the walkable center as an attribute.
- I was struck by the strong sense of internal identity. It would be great to think about multi-generational things you could do – could be older folks to share skills with younger folks, while younger folks could share technology etc. A timebank could be multigenerational. A community coffee shop or general store would be great.
- You have so much going for you! There is passion in this community from kids in school to families bringing their kids back here to raise families. You have a sense of community. Gateway to natural resources. Alpine areas, lake – you're the gateway to natural resources, but also a gateway to a community people want to be in and engage in. The big

question – is it for yourself, outsiders? What is the message? The more I hear, I think you're trying to find it for yourself. One idea might be "National Night Out" – it's the first Tuesday in August. It is mainly in cities, but no reason you couldn't do that in a smaller community. There is a connection with crime watch/policy, but a way to connect with neighbors.

- You are already really far in the process around understanding your community. You want to come together and celebrate - there are differences but I'm hearing a lot in common. People have chosen to come to Wallingford for the quality it has – the community will need to address the purpose of events - attracting new people, or for our community? You could do both. You have to travel through town – it wouldn't take long to capture someone here if you want to and let them know what the community is all about. We want youth to be involved – now we see youth here and there is alignment around tangible ideas. Harness that energy!
- The walkability is a key asset. "Walking Wallingford" – there is something to that. Something to sell and celebrate. Towns can take what they love for their own citizens and share it – it's authentic and grew organically. If you're open to share it, people feel it and share it.
- Do it for yourselves! Build a strong community where people want to be here because they see a thriving community. Their investment will pay dividends and create a virtuous cycle.

Recreation & Natural Resources

Visiting Team: Ben Doyle, Gary Holloway, Jenna Koloski (facilitator), Julie Moore, Haley Pero, John Sinclair, Tim Tierney, Kevin Wiberg (scribe)

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Lake Elfin – summer recreation, belongs to the town.
- White Rock.
- Green Mtn National Forest.
- Otter creek for fishing and canoeing.
- The long trail and Appalachian trail.
- Green Mtns and the Taconics, beautiful valley with ranges on either side.
- Good cross country skiing in E. Wallingford.

- Vast Trails.
- Town Rec area, ball field, tennis court, playground.
- Stone Meadow series of trails for walking, hiking, snow shoeing, skiing.
- Boat launch for Otter Creek.
- Beautiful walkable country roads with view.
- Hunting and fishing opportunities.
- Wildlife.

- Wallingford Pond.
- Cool history.
- Summer rec program.
- Wallingford Rec Program.
- Boys Camp on Elfin Pond/Wallingford Lodge.
- Little League.
- Library, lego club, Yoga, Knitting, bone building, book discussion.
- Walking in town, sidewalks.
- Flyers with scenic walking routes, in village and for Stone Meadow.

- Flag football in the fall (6 feeder towns).
- Good afterschool at elementary school.
- Homer Stone trail head.
- Designated national recreation area established in the '80s.
- Rocky Pond.
- Griffith Lake.
- Community presentations on natural resources.
- Accessibility awareness, handicapped accessible trail at Stone Meadow.
- Annual bike safety day.

What are the Challenges?

- Fishing hole under Elm street bridge is overgrown with barberry also a host for deer ticks.
- Most of otter creek inaccessible because of poison ivy.
- Chervil growing Sugarhill Road.
- Wild parsnip.
- Japanese knotweed.
- Public safety. Dark and hard spots to monitor, vandalism.
- Parts of town have discarded needles. Elm St. Bridge is one spot.
- School St. sidewalk is dangerous especially for those in wheel chairs or have trouble walking.
- Crossing Rte. 7, cars running red light. Only place there's a crosswalk.
- People using side streets to avoid the light.
- Difficult biking on Rte. 7 and Rte 140, no shoulder. Creek Road as well.
- No real mountain biking opportunities.
- Lack of summer bike trails in the forest.
- Recreation resource leaders are kind of burn out, lack of coordination.
- Don't have a local soccer program.
- Trail to Wallingford pond used to be a road. Now washed out, destroyed. It's nearly impossible to hike on. Used to be a beautiful road. Beyond the parking lot.
- A gap in communicating back country rec opportunities.
- Inadequate parking at rec field. Same with going up to the pond.
- Heading north on Route 7 there is no shoulder whatsoever. Not safe for walking or biking.
- No real signage for rec opportunities.
- No places for visitors to stay.
- Dog waste on rec fields.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Develop mountain bike trails, multi-use trails, in partnership with GMNF
- Develop signage for rec assets/opportunities.
- Wallingford website for rec assets/opportunities maps. ID good places to walk, hike, bike, etc.
- Investment opportunity for entrepreneur to create places for visitors to stay.
- Use rec assets as a marketing message to attract new residents.
- Hire and pay someone to manage town's rec activities.
- Getting our own kids outside to experience rec assets.
- Snow shoes available at the library for people to check out—expand to include skis and fishing rods, etc.
- Create an AP rest stop. Trail angels.
- We don't have organized rec events for adults.
- We need another boat launch at Hartsboro bridge.
- Traffic calming to make Rte 7 safer for kids to cross to get to rec opportunities. Cobble crossings and sidewalks (like in Brandon).
- Two additional crosswalks on Main St.
- Committee to improve pedestrian/bicycle safety on Main St.
- Little free library boxes around town.
- Develop more partnerships with the National Forest.
- Outing Club for back country. Team up with Green Mountain Club and other organizations and approach National Forest collectively. RASTA example.
- Space for an off leash dog park.
- Develop a group of people who could help write grants. Where to go to apply for grants.
- Select board and prudential committee to determine what to do about sidewalks. Someone needs to take ownership of the maintenance.
- Motivate residents to take care of rec areas.
- Create a more cohesive structure to engage new volunteers to support rec assets. Organize town volunteers. Have a volunteer coordinator to collect and maintain volunteer information and opportunities.
- Investigate partnership possibilities with VYCC. Crew of local youth.
- Dog waste bags dispensers and receptacles.
- Security cameras/monitoring systems lighting/ to supplement policing.
- Create more opportunities for the community to come together to discuss community issues and ideas.
- Movie night, Sparkle Barn is doing this.
- Fire Department's Wallingford Night, bring it back.
- Explore opportunities for arts and performances.
- Outdoor club. Monthly meetings (with hot dogs).
- Explore opportunity to work with VYCC on invasive eradication.
- Identification of areas of invasive problems. Labeling of specific invasives.

- Work with the state invasive specialists to create community education opportunities.
- Creating a sustainable buffer zone, riparian areas.
- Keep people communicating with each other. Coordinate consistent messaging strategies, FB, FPF, town website, etc.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Enthusiasm for sense of community. With outdoor rec, that's an incredible opportunity to attract and retain a younger group of people.
- Strong community with great sense of place and connection to the local environment. People are out recreating. Safe access seems to be a concern. Need for coordinated management of resources. National forest/public lands – gateway in Wallingford.
- Compact downtown and natural resources, Communications common them. Comprehensive and multi-modal, consistent.
- Impressed by how much people love this area. Asset mapping and inventory. Cadre of outdoor enthusiasts can. Arts was only brought up twice. Build a pump track for bikes.

Restoring Historic Buildings

Visiting Team: Ed Bove, Ted Brady, Katie Buckley, Mary Cohen, Paul Costello (facilitator), Liz Gamache, Martin Hahn, Lyle Jepson, Jenna Lapachinski, Pollaidh Major (scribe), Megan Roush

What are the Assets in this Area?

- The block at the intersection of School Street and Route 7 is the village focal point.
 - The Odd Fellows building is at the center of town. It hosts Sal's Restaurant and a Thrift Store but is otherwise vacant. The building was recently purchased by a community member with plans to renovate the building. The new owner is looking for community input as to how to use the space.
 - There is a new business opening across from Sal's
 - Odd Fellows Building has a structural study by the historic society and the Preservation Trust of Vermont. It was the original town post office and country store.
- Historic Buildings of note
 - The Victorian Inn is an asset.
 - The Library is an asset.
 - The Odd Fellows building.
 - Churches, four to six of them in the town. However, it is unclear if all the congregations can sustain them.
 - The Old Red School House/ Rotary Building.
 - The Old Grange Hall in South Wallingford – still run by the grange and rented out for community functions.
 - Masonic building in East Wallingford.
 - The Harth and Cricket Store in East Wallingford – Recently purchased by Eric.
 - The first Quaker Meeting site in the 'Ralph Root Farm' first property north of Danby line. It is occupied but needs renovation and repair.
 - The Town Hall.
 - The Fire House.
 - The Fork and Hoe Factory.
 - The Wallingford Lodge.
 - The Masonic Hall.
 - Chimans Lodge – the Masons could no longer maintain and own it.
 - The White Rocks Inn in South Wallingford.
- Wallingford is the birthplace of the Rotary Club.
- Collectively the main street and its historic character is an asset:
 - People come to Wallingford to visit or retire in part because of the historic buildings and character.
 - There is a registered historic district.
 - There is a historic architectural guide to Rutland that highlights Wallingford buildings.
- Proximity to Okemo.
- There is a Park and ride by the ball parks, but it is not well marked or accessible.
- Prudential Committee – in charge of water and sewer downtown, fire protection, sidewalks.
- There is a canoe launch on the Otter Creek.
- East Wallingford has buildings, a post office and a store.

What are the Challenges?

- The village general store closed suddenly last fall.
- Route 7:
 - Lack of parking in the village.
 - Heavy traffic downtown brings customers, but can detract from the village.
- Sometimes there is a lack of money, resources, and/or energy.
- There are legal barriers to reconstructing historic buildings.
- Maintaining the historic aesthetic
 - People may purchase a building and then do things that detract from the building. For example, the stone shop – had a full slate roof and now it has solar panels and an addition.
 - People may own a building, but they do not have the means to maintain it in a historic nature.
 - Differed maintenance on old homes with old owners. When they are vacated, they are hard to fix up.
 - Capacity: how many 'historic' buildings can the town's population support?

- Lack of businesses
 - Okemo concierge can't send people to Wallingford because no attractions like a bake shop.
 - There is no place to get food besides the Meat Locker which has cold cuts.
 - The general store closed – the community missed the store, the owner passed away suddenly.
- No place for the Long Trail hikers to stop.
- No place to sit gather and get a cup of coffee.
- South Wallingford used to have a coffee shop (Old Tea Room?) and a general store. Now that building is ready to collapse.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Have all historic buildings listed with QR codes to tell their story.
- Local tax incentive for preserving historic look and feel. Example) Woodstock, VT.
- Odd Fellows Building Ideas:
 - Hostel space for hikers in the Sal's building and a farmers' market in the open space upstairs.
 - You may need an elevator to the upper floor.
 - Have a general store on the first floor.
 - Have a public gathering place.
 - There is a stage on the third floor – have New York creatives come in and do a residency.
- Store/ Café/ Deli
 - On the corner, the hair place, open a deli and a store.
 - Country store with a bulletin board, local advertisements and communication central for the town. Like Olivia's in Rutland. Need something that will catch people going down the road. Everyone would have to use it.
 - Is the space in the country store big enough to be a deli? Maybe use an old house and turn it into a deli. Such as the house on south main, a couple down from the library.
- Relocate the Post Office into a central historic building.
- Wallingford received a grant in the 1990's to redo the sidewalks. There was a slate sidewalk but it is no longer walkable. Need a grant to redo the sidewalks.
- Map Ideas
 - Create a map that has a walking trail highlighting the lake and the historic buildings. Connecting the town to the Long Trail.
 - The Conservation Committee has a trail map of village center and the trail on the conservation land outside of downtown.
- Create a map that is accessible by phone.
- Map walkability.
- Map Parking.
- Evaluate parking in the village.
- Wallingford is mentioned as a mail stop in hiking guides. It could provide and highlight other hiking services as Manchester does. Create a committee to connect trail hikers with other assets in town.
- Eric purchased a building in east Wallingford. He has/ is looking for a few ideas for the space such as a brewery but that needs infrastructure.
- Parking ideas:
 - Take off the back portion of the Odd Fellows building, it is empty, and turn into parking.
 - Map Parking.
- Look at the districting to understand how all the historic assets work together to comprise a historic district and develop how the town can tell use its historic character to tell its story.
- Historical asset idea: There is a museum in the town hall and the town is the birthplace of Rotary. Find a way to attract people because of its unique assets.
- Focus on making a walkable downtown.
- Explore applying Downtown and Village Tax Credits to the newly purchased building in East Wallingford.
- Cooperatives – a neighboring town turned the store into a coop – the Shrewsbury Town Store. Research how the village store could be communally supported.
- Develop all four corners of the downtown, not just the Odd Fellows building. There is a pub and deli coming soon to that intersection.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Wallingford is competing with other communities that are doing the exact same thing. Themes: consistent need for gathering space, the Odd Fellows Building as a focal point. Coops are difficult, easier to support someone in purchasing and using tax incentives. Focus on your internet. Downtown is where young people live.
- The Odd Fellows building holds potential. As someone who hiked the long trail, maps are key, as is internet. Need a place to meet people and need signage.
- The General Store – many communities are working on the Community Supported Enterprise Model. With this model, the uncertainty of private ownership is out of the equation.
- Look at all four corners of the intersection. The collection of buildings and the downtown is an asset. Focus on South and East Wallingford. Focus on being a recreational hub. The town zoning does not touch the historic character, but does allow for density. Parking versus walkability – keep in mind that it is a balance.
- Reusing community spaces in Gilford. Sees a lot of energy around historic buildings and number of buildings. Eighteen different buildings were mentioned, pick one or two to start with that can start a movement. Having a country store is key and a catalyst. The Long Trail is an opportunity.
- The Long Trail is a key asset

- An asset is that people value the historic buildings. Focus on affordable housing.
- Unique. Figure out the one thing. Is it the historic nature? Tie the 'one thing' into the regional economy.
- Focus on the opportunity of being on Route 7. Focus on a community center.

Economic Development & Infrastructure

Visiting Team: Ed Bove, Ted Brady (facilitator), Katie Buckley, Mary Cohen, Paul Costello, Liz Gamache, Martin Hahn, Lyle Jepson, Jenna Lapachinski, Pollaidh Major, Megan Roush (scribe)

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Transportation/Road:
 - Route 7: Approximately 17,000 cars pass through the town each day.
 - 7 miles south of Rutland with newly paved roads.
 - Commuter paradise.
 - Bus transportation
 - Manchester to Rutland.
 - VTrans and Marble Valley.
 - Albany VTrans near Cumberland farms.
 - Trains. East Wallingford has a separate railroad line.
- Water and Sewer:
 - Wallingford Village about 355 hook ups.
 - South Wallingford about 26 hook ups.
 - Church Street about 12 hook ups.
 - Well by otter creek that feeds South Wallingford.
- Restaurants:
 - Wallingford Locker (butcher meat locker); lots of smoked meats options.
 - Sals.
 - Victoria Inn.
 - New deli is going to be opening this month.
- Recreation:
 - Boys clubs.
 - National forest/ Green Mountain Forest.
 - Beach.
 - Sparkle Barn: arts and craft, movie nights, and classes.
 - Appalachian trail/Long trail.
- 3 ponds – Elfin Lake, little rocky pond, one other.
- Beautiful area for biking.
- Parks.
- Services/Employers:
 - Front porch forum.
 - Doctors and dentists.
 - Child care available above church.
 - Basic services - gas, library, post office, and family dollar.
 - fire & rescue - safe family town.
 - Active senior's activities.
 - South Wallingford – VTell fiber optic.
 - Head trauma center.
 - Maple Leaf Center.
 - Head industry stroke project.
 - True Temper – American fork and hoe company started in 1800's makes handles for hoes and employs approximately 25 people on two shifts.
 - Quarry fully operational -gravel part of Vermont Marble Corporation.
 - Large elementary school with a good reputation.
 - Driving School.
- Lodging/Housing:
 - Munson house.
 - Air B&B.
 - Senior housing.
 - Spring lake ranch – serenity.

What are the Challenges?

- Businesses:
 - Lost the hardware store that used to be in town.
 - No retail options available.
 - No community stores.
 - People of Wallingford must make many trips to Rutland because there are no vegetables or fresh food available in town.
 - A trip to Rutland takes 2 hours with stops, traffic, and parking. This "rips the heart of the day out" for many people.
 - The town's size makes it hard to sustain business.
 - People aren't willing to work into the community.
 - Less able-bodied workers, elderly population, census smaller each time.
 - They need the numbers to support stores they want and workforce.
 - No daytime customers.
 - Losing dairy farms and farmers. One working dairy farm in town is closing.
- No industrial development even though there are good sites. Do people want it?
- Roads/Transportation:
 - Stop light by Cumberland farms -traffic issues.
 - Dangerous for bikers.
 - State owns RT 7 and the town needs state permission to do anything surrounding it.
 - The town is so close to Rutland -Why stop in Wallingford. People just stopped in Manchester before so why stop before Rutland.
 - Geographically the town is spread far apart. Different sections of town not walkable.
 - Transportation for elderly. There is a transportation service but high demand.
- Parking:
 - Parking for trucks - Cumberland farms only parking.
 - Cannot come in to town quick, park, get coffee and get out because there is no parking.
 - Touristy stores keep closing - traffic and lack of parking.

- Water/Sewer:
 - 3 or 4 cisterns not corrected and not utilized why is it not extended to the north end of the town? Unknown if politics plays a role in this?
 - Municipal sewer is only available to a few.
- Community/Housing:
 - Needs of the community are changing because the population is changing.
- Schools are not in town. Two years ago, it changed. High school in Stafford.
- Sad compared to Rutland, need a niche.
- Lack of rental properties. Even if people wanted to move here, there are no options.
- No more net metering solar panels so giving away energy if you put panels on your home.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Parking:
 - Railroad old station- parking? SLC uses it. Slurry transported on it. Schedule to be upgrade. Possible station staff on the table for the committee.
 - School Parking lot in Summer/weekends, In front of family dollar, Library, open real estate?
 - Study to figure out what private places can do parking spots.
 - Parking by Wallingford pond.
- Roads/Transportation:
 - Sidewalks and bike paths and making the town easier to walk in. North Wallingford needs sidewalk. Sidewalks on School Street.
 - Roads need shoulders in South Wallingford.
 - Two lane roads to make safer by Cumberland farms. Round-about to refocus the traffic.
- Housing:
 - Affordable housing for hikers – odd fellows.
 - Hostel in east Wallingford. Senior housing.
 - Land for senior housing areas and employing young people to take care.
 - Rental Apartments- affordable housing.
 - Resources for senior living.
- Development/Community/Marketing:
 - Publicity/ Marketing:
 - Should we market Wallingford? Advertising.
 - Internet site. Facebook page and listed activities.
 - Website tying in maps, activities, food, connect to Facebook and YouTube.
 - Recognize the region and identify with Killington and other areas.
 - Industrial development yes or no?
 - Where to develop? 0.8-acre lots subdivision in town to make more room for new buildings. Must go somewhere. Infill development.
 - Understand the identity of the town.
 - White rocks identity.
 - Bigger better downtown.
 - Renewable energy.
 - Buildings with flat roof in town to have solar.
- Charging station for cars – but what do you do for the time that the car is charging?
- Find the assets with clear guide.
 - In town signage at stop light.
 - Be efficient on signage.
- Services/Employers:
 - Attract young farmers for the rural areas.
 - Great internet- Tech projects possibilities?
 - Attract young families and to take over the business's.
 - Café or gathering place.
 - Tourism off the trail and tourism off Route 7.
 - More business-like sparkle barn or attract the businesses?
 - Green Café – Marketable sustainable.
 - Green collar jobs. Wallingford maintenance jobs.
 - Market to sell the vegetables in towns every day not just once a week.
 - Farmers' market currently one stand- grow this? No walking to this farmers market how to get there?
- Water/sewer:
 - Expanding water system.
- Recreation:
 - Electronic historic building tour.
 - Develop more trail resources- under-utilized.
 - Trail around the pond hike/bike trail.
 - Snowmobile trials, Mountain bike and trails. Forestry likes to work with organizations.
 - Back country skiing.
 - Events for through hikers.
 - Wallingford town snow trails coming into town.
 - Gravel road cycling trending “adventure cycling.”
 - Elderly want to bike on nice roads to markets and cremes not just adventure cycling.
 - Maps and signage. Directions to forests and lakes. Stone Meadow Park.
 - Build on to public beach, places for events, outdoor activates.
 - Good access to public to national park. Signage and facilitate access.
 - Forest service is trying to put signs and working on highlighting assets.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Outdoor recreation, bikeways, walkways. No one is working on it. No working groups. No economic development committee in town. What do you organize around and how can you get things done if you don't have this? What are your priorities? Need tasks forces to organize so you can get things one.
- Affordable housing and economic development one in the same. Housing can be development. There is a lot of opportunity for affordable housing in this town.
- Visibility of community from RT 7 is very important. Brag about your great internet get that out there. Collaborate, form groups and create action.

- General store and community development are lacking. Walkable bike friendly town could be a possibility. Transportation study could be useful. Identify the natural resources to use. INTERNET scream it to everyone! Economic development committee and park and rec committee would be great additions. Housing is also a great component.
- Tons of stuff/asset but Wallingford is still not a destination. Local marketing and regional marketing. Transportation has asset and challenges. Vtrans owns and runs RT 7 so that could be a challenge but there are options.
- Focusing on right things, get organized, and create groups. Realize you don't have to sacrifice historic downtown to have a thriving community.
- Assets that make people want to live here not just tourism. People using those assets that live in the town.
- Marketing for the region so that people can see you. Tell us what you want to be seen and how you want to portray the town. Turn age into a positive for the aging community and use the youth to get fresh ideas.
- Greatest infrastructure you can do is things that benefits you and tourists makes the place better for you as a resident and it attracts the tourist. Why do things? To better your life and that authenticity will draw in people into the town. INTERENT! Why isn't there a picture of a techy working in the mountains to show the ability to remote work?

Main Street

Visiting Team: Ed Bove, Ted Brady, Katie Buckley, Mary Cohen, Paul Costello, Liz Gamache (facilitator), Martin Hahn, Gary Holloway, Lyle Jepson, Jenna Lapachinski, Pollaidh Major, Megan Roush (scribe)

What are the Assets in this Area?

- Services/Employers
 - Library.
 - Library has Wi-Fi.
 - Three churches.
 - Rec facility – stone meadow nature trails boy's camps.
 - Gas station.
 - Hair Salon.
 - Retail shops include artesian, Sparkle Barn, artist goods, used clothes, pottery in village and south village.
 - All-star day care.
 - Doreen's ice cream - best cremees in the world.
 - Pat Stone sells vegetables once a week.
 - True Temper factory.
 - Used car dealer.
 - Williams micro farm.
 - Possible Deli coming this month.
 - Bed and breakfasts.
 - Elementary school.
- Large meeting room Banquet space at the Victorian inn, second floor on the town hall, rotary hall.
- Fire department and rescue squad.
- Fire department boot drop coin collection yearly.
- Funeral parlor for the fastest aging community
- Professional services:
 - Holistic health.
 - Dentist.
 - Acupuncture.
- Restaurants include Victoria Inn, Sal's, Butcher.
- Transportation/sidewalks:
 - Sidewalks are good on Main Street.
 - Main Street is walkable
 - Traffic Light causes people to stop and see the town.
 - Traffic is an asset.
- Sights:
 - Tree line beautiful.
 - Architecture; stretch of historic buildings all over.
 - Boy in the boat statue in the fountain

What are the Challenges?

- Transportation/Sidewalks/Parking:
 - No traffic control – no police presence.
 - No Responsible driving or respect.
 - Must drive elsewhere else for everything they need.
 - PARKING:
 - if you have more than 2 customers at a time there is no place to have them park.
 - Access to post office, parking to get there is a nightmare.
 - No transportation between three villages.
 - Pedestrian safety crossing the road.
 - Don't want to lose what makes a village a village.
- Services/Employers:
 - No stores, building residence buildings. We need to have stores that supply local daily needs.
 - Chain stores – Family Dollar does not present what we want.
 - Coffee only at Cumberland farms no place to gather.
 - No Jobs, business space, no work space available.
- Farm stand is not used in the summer.
- Communication/community development:
 - Sense of arrival – town sign doesn't stand out and is falling over.
 - No Visual language between three town centers - signs, sidewalks, planters.
 - One community not three separate.
 - Volunteer fatigue- burnout.
 - Aging community.
- Recreation:
 - Work to maintain trails is hard work.
 - No outdoor sitting space.
 - No children outdoor space for younger children.
 - No reason for young people to come here.
- Housing:
 - No affordable housing- apartments, small house, homes under \$200,000.

- There are neglected properties on Main Street (historic buildings). Items for sale in people's yard.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Parking:
 - Back portion of Sal's block come off to provide parking for visitors.
 - Piece of ground behind the library and has in the past has been designed and thought for possible parking. Library and neighbors not happy about that spot being used.
 - Real estate to buy in town to create parking space close to town. To the south and west of the library. Other available spaces to access food and stores.
 - Parking on the four corners - Explore parking options.
 - Parking behind the church is empty all the time can that be purchased?
 - Old laundry mat – parking? Rumor is the Dunkin Donuts is going there.
- Marketing:
 - How much do we want to attract visitors? Visiting destination or residential area?
 - How to draw people to the town?
 - Sustainability by just the town vs the visitor. How many people can we attract?
 - Understand how to attract and retain young people?
 - Understanding the needs of all generations.
 - Using social media effectively and other media - Facebook, Front porch forum:
 - Coordination of social media to coordinate town events and other town knowledge.
 - Online presence helps to attract visitors.
 - Make people aware of Wi-Fi locations.
 - Three village town what is Main Street? Incorporate all three.
- Visual language - signs.
- Public outdoor space to communicate community information.
- Town bulletin board to share events downtown.
- Bus stop - bench, bulletin board.
- Strengthen our gateways. Establish gateways through signage and beautification.
 - Killington has Huge Welcome to Killington signs with flowers. BIG to make a presence.
 - Landscaping and the look of Wallingford. Stronger impression.
 - Have residents of Main street do planters to enrich the look of Main Street.
- Housing:
 - Micro unit apartments affordable housing.
- Businesses:
 - Coffee shop in the Sal's building owner is open to ideas.
 - Bigger local farmers market.
 - General store and hardware store.
 - Business that are open when people want to shop.
 - Why we don't have a café – people in town don't have the means to run one. Coop would be a great option to rely on each other to serve everyone's needs.
 - Café needs to be workable with large area.
 - Café needs to sell coffee not a workable space.
 - Spaces with good Wi-Fi and space to work.
 - Are independent people looking for business space or do we need an employer to come it to create jobs?

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Great day for people to see this character in the Main Street. Character in the buildings, Wi-Fi zones, everywhere, everything. You need to get organized. The select board cannot handle everything. It's about the citizens. Energize the new generation. Human capacity of the town is the trick.
- Look at other Coop model's around the state. You want people to stop here- Beautification. Welcome to Wallingford signs and main street improvements are needed. Portable approved cross walks during the summer might be an option.
- Physical things- Design Main Street. Use an architect to see the imagery that you have created tonight.
- There are solutions to the parking problems- that is low hanging fruit. What is different about your main street? There are businesses starting up soon and what are you going to do as a town to help these companies? A town of about 2000 and 10% of them showed up today to support this. Magic participation element.
- Unable to capture the remaining comments (computer died) - missing Tyler, Katie, Ed, Jenna, Pollaidh, Lyle.

Wallingford Youth Forum Notes

Compiled from a discussion held with Wallingford students at Mill River High School on April 12, 2018

What do you like about living in Wallingford? What is working well?

- Wallingford has a community of artists. We have two pottery shops, a woodshop, the Sparkle Barn, and other artists and crafters.
- Shaw's Sales and Service car sales and repair is an asset.
- We have several rivers and streams that are really beautiful.
- Wallingford has a local firehouse.
- Dory's Snack Bar and Ice Cream is really good.
- Cumberland Farms is a convenient and inexpensive place to get snacks and drinks.
- We have a stoplight in town! Unlike some other Vermont towns, we have an actual downtown center.
- Sal's restaurant is an asset.
- We have a Thrift Store in town called Hands for Hope.
- The Park is really nice.
- We have recreational resources such as Stony Meadow and Elfin Lake with a boat launch, trails, and swimming.
- Elfin Lake provides summer jobs.
- Wallingford has White Rocks National Recreation Area with hiking, pools, rivers.
- We have some commerce in town including multiple Inns and the Handmade in Vermont shop in the old stone house building.

What are the things that you don't like about living in Wallingford? What would you like to improve?

- There is a noon siren that goes off at the Town Hall every day that is really annoying.
- There are a lot of potholes and the roads are in poor condition.
- The Village Center needs some improvements to look nicer and be more inviting for locals and people driving through.
- There are no places to hang out together in town. We need some kind of gathering place or hang out spot.
- The local store closed so there is nowhere to go for lunch or coffee.
- The road safety and enforcement is too strict – they give out tickets all the time.
- When the town puts traffic signs in it takes way longer than it should – we should be able to take action more quickly as a community.
- The solar radar sign is annoying.
- We have a drug problem in Wallingford.

What are the things you and your community can do to make Wallingford a more vibrant place to live?

- We should work together to clean up the Lake. There are farms nearby that let the cows into the water. We should protect and clean the water for recreation.
- Wallingford could have more community events such as music and other events to build town unity.
- We should build a gazebo in the park. It would look nice and could be a place to hold events and music.
- We should build a community compost site and pick up program.
- We should work on downtown beautification. We could work with master gardeners and other volunteers to design and plant flower boxes. Maybe local businesses could help donate materials.
- Fruit trees could be planted in town and in parks. They would be pretty but also serve as a source of food for the community.
- We should fix the basketball courts.
- There used to be a water pump at the park, but it is no longer there. We should replace that water pump or water fountain.
- The park needs improvements. We should improve the look and safety of the park by controlling the tree and weed growth, and should put in more field space for recreation.
- We should build a dog park in Wallingford.