



Marlboro Community Visit Report and Action Plan June 2010

Vermont Council on Rural Development

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I. Introduction

At its best moments our country and our state act to serve as a “city on a hill” that model some of the best of old world virtues but experiment to advance democracy, freedom, and community innovation. To the VCRD Community Visit Team, Marlboro exemplifies the “village on a hill” with its strong sense of family, neighborhood and community, its prized natural resources and landscape, and its openness, creativity and dedication to the progress of the town as they define it.

Marlboro’s hill unites in efforts to conserve the land at its crest, in cultural activities, and, maybe most of all, in support of the Marlboro School. But the hill also divides residents into sometimes insular neighborhoods on different slopes with commuting routes down separate valleys feeding separate economies elsewhere.

The notion of a community center was a universal theme throughout the Community Visit process. The idea of a Marlboro center came out in a dozen ways, among them: the idea of building a Community Center Building; the idea of focusing zoning and investment in a center point for a future village; the hope of redesigning transportation routes (especially RT 9) toward developing that village setting; the plan to build new and integrate existing trails to unite the community; the thought of building better communications networks for community connectivity; ideas on agricultural marketing and incubating businesses in a central place, the idea of making Marlboro Vermont a branded center of ubiquitous energy development. The key priorities followed from all these ideas and were identified as levers, in a way, to advance the larger issue of building ways for the community to unite.

Inevitably, Marlboro’s challenges and goals are inextricable. Uniting around priority goals is a fundamental action in democracy, and a significant challenge to any community—including Marlboro. With all its talents, its terrific ‘human capital’—or great people—Marlboro can be confident that it will have success in meeting its key priorities. But in the end, it is all about leadership, and in a democracy no one is off the hook.

In some ways a VCRD Community Visit process is a test of local commitment and will. With over 150 people involved in the process, Marlboro has demonstrated the highest proportional commitment to exploring issues and setting priorities of any town that has participated in the program. We commend everyone who participated in the process so far, and every one who contributes to the success of the Marlboro priorities efforts to **Build a Community Center** and **Improve Walk-Ability by expanding Bike and Walking Paths**. We look forward to working with the Marlboro Task Forces as these projects advance.

The Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Visit Program is a structured process that enables a community to identify and prioritize goals, fosters local leadership, and serves as a catalyst for the development and realization of concrete, achievable action plans. The program consists of three phases:

1. On the **Community Visit Day** on March 25th, Visiting Team members heard testimony from Marlboro residents in nine focus group areas that had earlier been identified by the local steering committee. Notes and issues raised in these sessions are detailed in Part VI. Based on the testimony received, the Vermont Council on Rural Development identified an initial list of the key **Opportunities** before the community (Part II).
2. The second stage of the Community Visit occurred at the Marlboro **Community Meeting** on April 29th, when VCRD presented the Opportunities list and facilitated the review and prioritization of these issues by town residents. The resulting list of **Marlboro Priorities** (in Part III) were then the focus for the formation of two Task Forces established to build plans that would address them—namely **Building a Community Center** and **Improving Walk-Ability and Expanding Bike and Walking Trails**. Participants also wanted to strengthen two existing efforts: **To Generate Energy** and to **Advance New Zoning By-Laws to Include All Species Planning**.
3. In the third phase of the Visit, the **Community Resource Day** on May 24th, the Task Forces met with a second Visiting Team to get organized, build Action Steps, and consider state, federal, non-profit, and private resources that may be available to support their work. The resulting **Task Force Work Plans** are listed in Part IV. A subsequent summer session is planned to discuss Zoning, which was not on the agenda that night because of scheduling conflicts.

Resource Team Members (listed in Part VIII) signed on with a commitment to serve in an on-going way as sounding boards and referral agents for the Marlboro Task Forces. Many of these visitors can be partners in the work before the committees; others can be great sources of advice or connection to other resources. **Call on them for help.**

Members of the Resource Team listened closely to the issues brought forward by town residents and have made suggestions in support of Marlboro's efforts in each challenge area. Their **Recommendations** (Part V) are not prescriptions; community members are in the best position to make decisions about their next steps and strategies. Recognizing existing local efforts and the leadership of the Task Forces, these recommendations are offered, rather, as suggestions for next steps, and as lists of potential resources as the Task Forces make their way forward.

In the end, Marlboro has established solid priorities for action, built something of a new umbrella for coordination and set momentum toward the achievement of short and long-term goals that will lead to a great variety of successes in improving the Marlboro's life and prosperity.

The Vermont Council on Rural Development is dedicated to helping Vermont communities develop their capacity to create a prosperous and sustainable future through coordination, collaboration, and the effective use of public and private resources. VCRD is prepared to support the efforts of Marlboro as it moves forward and to provide follow up help to Marlboro Task Forces as called upon. VCRD will also serve as an advocate for Marlboro projects with appropriate agencies and organizations in Vermont. Call on us, and on Visiting Team members, when we can be of help.

VCRD deeply appreciates the time and energy of the Visiting Team and Marlboro community members alike. It has been inspiring to be part of the effort of the Marlboro community to address the

challenges before it. We need to thank especially Lucy Gratwick who was so good at rallying the community to invite us, the terrific Steering Committee that helped frame the process, the Selectboard and Planning Commission for their patience, participation and support, Marlboro College for its participation and leadership, and the school, town clerk and Marlboro Cares for lending space and hospitality to the Visit. We're grateful to David Holzapfel for his wonderful photographs, Susan Bull Riley for her beautiful painting on the report cover, and for the cool tweets from Kelly Salasin at each Visit. Most especially we appreciate the leadership of Forrest Holzapfel, the Community Visit Chair, who was terrific at helping before and behind the scenes to make the process effective, and even more for his work to support and help steer the priority efforts over the next year.

Marlboro is a fortunate town in many respects. But nothing can be taken for granted, and there is little room for complacency in our rapidly changing world. The work of community volunteers in advancing efforts for the common good of the community is essential to future vitality of Marlboro, and to all of rural Vermont. We deeply appreciate the opportunity to have been part of this community discourse and wish the town all success in fulfilling and surpassing its goals!



Dot-voting by community members at the Community Meeting determined the priorities for future action

PHOTO: David Holzapfel

II. Initial List of Challenges and Opportunities

Identified by Town Forums, March 25 2010

More than 150 Marlboro residents joined with VCRD staff and a 25 member Visiting Team for the Community Visit Day on March 25, filling meeting rooms in the Town Hall, the Whetstone Inn, and the Elementary School Outback. They took time from their workday and other commitments to attend forums and a community dinner, and to begin to work together in shaping the future of the town. The following issues emerged as initial challenges and opportunities. This list was presented back to community members at the Community Meeting on April 29th for voting and prioritization:

Advance New Zoning By-Laws to Include All Species

Marlboro has an opportunity to plan for and build zoning to support long term strategic goals of creating a village district and advancing conservation. Marlboro should adjust its town plan over time and develop new zoning ordinances to protect moose and bear corridors, to focus development density in a village area yet to be designed, and to preserve the rural nature of the town. Residents suggest that those working on this should consider density development on RT 9 and between RT 9 and the College as potential village center. Some suggest defining a limited area for commercial development on Route 9, and place for senior housing and for affordable housing for young families as part of focused development to build the village center.

Support and Expand Agriculture

Agriculture has limited scope in town, partly because of the limited opportunities to market fresh produce and goods within the community. Residents should build a task force to support the future of agriculture in the town. Such a task force could explore ways to enhance agricultural development and marketing including residents' ideas around building an agriculture center in Marlboro: a market place, place for farmer's market, community kitchen/food incubator, as a way to support existing farms and value-added enterprises and encourage new ones to develop.

Generate Energy

Marlboro's well established Energy Committee has led significant efforts to expand efficiencies in buildings throughout the community. But more mutual public education is needed to expand efficiencies and to inform the public about the potentials to cost effectively produce energy. Marlboro should adopt a vision to make itself the "Distributed Energy Capitol of Vermont" and then implement it by systematically expanding the number of households, businesses, and public buildings that generate the power that they use and contribute to the community's energy needs. Toward that end, Marlboro residents should: explore the implementation of a local PACE program (Property Assessed Clean Energy) to support residents' decisions to advance energy and efficiency projects; explore possibilities to build micro hydro sites in the town's watersheds, evaluate the potential for a community wind project or extensive small scale wind development, and systematically expand solar panels to near ubiquity on houses in the community. Residents would like to see a Task Force raise the flag around a Marlboro identity as a state leader in energy creation and sustainability.

Build a College/Town Arts and Events Committee

There is a real openness in the college community to participating more actively in the community and also inviting the community to participate in events at the school. Sometimes the lack of coordinated planning or systematic invitation leads to 'ships passing in the night'. A task force dedicated to building community events and leveraging the support and benefits of larger and integrated audiences would benefit the town and the school.

Build a Marlboro Localization Campaign

Marlboro residents express a strong desire to support local artists, artisans, cottage industries, farm operations, and local products producers. A team of residents could build a local directory of the local economy and include all products and services for sale, but also community services and the things people do or make that they would be interested in trading, donating, or bartering. Many Vermont communities have built “Buy Local” and Localvore campaigns around directories, and have also developed maps and tours of arts and agricultural cottage industries to serve local needs and to increase sales to tourists. A task force could produce a directory that could fit Marlboro’s needs, businesses, and community, and lead the way in supporting local economic development that fits the scale and nature of the town.

Improve Transportation Efficiency and Sustainability

Marlboro is not an island, and most residents will continue to choose to commute for work, shopping, recreation and entertainment. But today individuals make untold trips in mostly empty vehicles, and ridership in public transportation is low. The committee could build a local Rideshare Program to connect people, maybe through an electronic and physical bulletin board. It could also work to encourage expanded use of the bus. There are limited places to wait for a bus, and the ‘Moover’ offers limited hours and frequency of service. This effort could work to boost ridership, thereby improving the business case for expanded services and frequency. It could also work with Moover to develop more and better bus stops and advocate for mini-bus routes in the community.

Develop an Elder Housing Project in the Village

The lack of senior housing facilities in Marlboro will become more pronounced as an issue over the next 10 to 20 years when householders reach a time when they can no longer independently maintain their homes in comfort and safety. It can be tragic when people need to leave their community and friends because of the lack of any senior housing. A Task Force could design and work to locate a potential site for development (in line with the future of a center point for the community) and work to attract a project developer to town.

Improve Walk-ability and Expand Bike and Walking Paths

Bike and walking paths can contribute to community interconnection, public health and community sustainability. A multi-use path from the school to the Town Offices, for example, could lessen the need for short car trips. A committee of Marlboro residents could look at the model developed by Kingdom Trails in the Northeast Kingdom for biking, walking and ski trails either for in-town personal transportation or to develop recreational assets for tourists and residents alike. The task force could map existing trails at the college and other community center-points, link them, map them, and encourage their use as ways to get around town, get exercise, and lower the number of regular car trips.

Develop a Marlboro Community Center Building

Residents could create a stronger sense of Marlboro and improve the connections with others in the community by building or adapting a facility to serve as a unifying Marlboro Community Center. Features of such a center could include programs and activities ranging from meeting rooms and senior services to a gym, tourist information and WiFi center, library and reading room, entertainment space, parent/children playgroup room, community kitchen, teen center, café, or even a pub. Provision for parking and connection by trails to neighborhoods, the college, and other center points will be crucial to success. A Community Center Task Force could evaluate existing buildings and opportunities (like the Skyline Restaurant) and work with other groups in town to design a structure for multiple community activities, from country dances to social service meetings, movies or senior meals.

Develop a Marlboro Creative Economy and Small Business Center

Another idea is for a Task Force to plan and open a shop in town featuring the work of local artists and artisans that could attract local residents and traffic off Route 9. The shop could feature a restaurant or coffee house with music and high speed Internet. The center could also serve as an incubator for local artists and cottage industry by making space available for small start ups or studio businesses. It could serve as a communications center point—a place where small cottage businesses could go for common services and to use equipment—community kitchen/computers/fax/copiers/etc. The center could be a clearinghouse of talents throughout the town and a vital center to attract young people and entrepreneurs who will invent elements in the future economy of the town.

Establish a Marlboro Farmers Market

Agricultural development could be spurred, and access to fresh local foods increased, by developing a Marlboro farmers market. The market could also be a place where local crafts, artisans and artists share and sell their wares and a great focus for entertainment and social life in town. A Task Force could design and implement a Farmers Market, starting it as a test with a few sessions in its first year to see if it build momentum enough to make it useful to local farmers. A successful market could be institutionalized as part of other ideas elsewhere in this list, and help entrepreneurs and younger residents with an interest in trying out farming, have a first place to sell some of their wares.

Build a Marlboro “Village”

Through planning, investment and recruitment, Marlboro could deliberately turn its historic district into the true center of town. A committee could be formed to look at potential ways to design for a village core, consider properties involved and develop a plan to focus growth in a center.

Offer High School Seniors a Special Marlboro College Program

Marlboro College provides innumerable benefits to the town, but the relation to the schools, and especially to high school students who travel outside of the community is limited and informal. Residents suggest that the college could build a bridge program for High School Seniors where they could spend part of their week at the college in study beyond the capacity of local high schools and, potentially, gain college credits before they graduate. A town/college task force could explore these opportunities and design ways to connect local students to the college.

Build Affordable Housing

Marlboro’s future vitality is challenged by aging population demographic and high land values. This is an immediate issue for the sustainability of the town school and a longer term issue for the diversity of the community in its next generation. As Marlboro looks to the future of a town center, a Task Force should be developed to consider the appropriate scale and place for affordable housing in town, and to work with potential developers to make it happen.

Work to Expand Internet and Cell Service

Internet and cell service are essential public needs at this point in our history. To attract educators to the college and young families to the town, and promote public safety and economic opportunity, residents need to continue to press for ubiquitous and affordable high speed broadband and cell service. Interim steps could include developing public WiFi centers or building a neighborhood network from connected points or satellite services and network to neighbors or investigate other ways to share services. The committee could serve as a center-point to share learning around

telecommunications and to advocate with the state, the Vermont Telecom Authority, and private providers to expand local coverage.

Systematically Involve the College in Community Service

A Town/College committee could be developed to extend “Marlboro Cares” opportunities for service to Marlboro College Students and involve them in community events, helping those in need and involvement with the school, the town energy committee, conservation committee and other local efforts (like those that emerge from the Community Visit process) where they can both contribute to and learn from the community and help it address strategic challenges.

Revive Neighborhood Watch

As a very rural town with limited police presence, Marlboro residents need to work together to ensure public safety. With many residents commuting downhill to work during the day, and over 30 percent of residences second homes, it is important for neighbors to watch out for unusual or potentially criminal activity. Marlboro had a Neighborhood Watch system in place at one time which has diminished over time; that system should be revived and residents should line up to serve as the first line in support of the health and safety of the community.

Improve Transportation Speed and Safety

A town committee could look into all aspects of speed and safety on Route 9 and build a set of recommendations for action for the town. It could also advocate with the state on behalf of the town to slow and better manage traffic and to guide the future development of the road to serve community needs. A Route 9 Transportation Committee could contribute to the dialogue on commercial district development, which might be one way to systematically slow traffic and increase safety. It could also contribute to the development of a system of paths and plan for a walking underpass to connect the two sides of town it bisects.



Community Visit Day forum
PHOTO: David Holzapfel

III. Marlboro Priorities

Determined by Marlboro residents at the VCRD Community Meeting, April 29 2010

Proving that those who live, work and raise their families in a community are best qualified to understand its needs and potential, Marlboro residents whittled down a list of 18 issues through discussion, reasoned arguments and thoughtful reflection. In the end, voting with red and blue stickers, over 100 participants chose four issues that offer opportunities to enhance existing resources, and to strengthen the town through exciting new ventures. Residents concluded the April 29 meeting by signing up for one of four Task Forces in the selected areas.

Marlboro residents selected two new priorities for future action:

✓ Develop a Marlboro Community Center Building

Residents could create a stronger sense of Marlboro and improve the connections with others in the community by building or adapting a facility to serve as a unifying Marlboro Community Center. Features of such a center could include programs and activities ranging from meeting rooms and senior services to a gym, tourist information and WiFi center, library and reading room, entertainment space, parent/children playgroup room, community kitchen, teen center, café, or even a pub. Provision for parking and connection by trails to neighborhoods, the college, and other center points will be crucial to success. A Community Center Task Force could evaluate existing buildings and opportunities (like the Skyline Restaurant) and work with other groups in town to design a structure for multiple community activities, from country dances to social service meetings, movies or senior meals.

✓ Improve Walk-ability and Expand Bike and Walking Paths

Bike and walking paths can contribute to community interconnection, public health and community sustainability. A multi-use path from the school to the Town Offices, for example, could lessen the need for short car trips. A committee of Marlboro residents could look at the model developed by Kingdom Trails in the Northeast Kingdom for biking, walking and ski trails either for in-town personal transportation or to develop recreational assets for tourists and residents alike. The task force could map existing trails at the college and other community center-points, link them, map them, and encourage their use as ways to get around town, get exercise, and lower the number of regular car trips.

In addition, Marlboro residents wanted to strengthen two existing efforts by bringing in new volunteers and building momentum to:

✓ Generate Energy

Marlboro's well established Energy Committee has led significant efforts to expand efficiencies in buildings throughout the community. But more mutual public education is needed to expand efficiencies and to inform the public about the potentials to cost effectively produce energy. Marlboro could adopt a vision to make itself the "Distributed Energy Capitol of Vermont" and then implement it

by systematically expanding the number of households, businesses, and public buildings that generate the power that they use and contribute to the community's energy needs. Toward that end, Marlboro residents could: explore the implementation of a local PACE program (Property Assessed Clean Energy) to support residents' decisions to advance energy and efficiency projects; explore possibilities to build micro hydro sites in the town's watersheds, evaluate the potential for a community wind project or extensive small scale wind development, and systematically expand solar panels to near ubiquity on houses in the community. Residents would like to see a Task Force raise the flag around a Marlboro identity as a state leader in energy creation and sustainability.

✓ Advance New Zoning By-Laws to Include All Species

Marlboro has an opportunity to plan for and build zoning to support long term strategic goals of creating a village district and advancing conservation. Marlboro could adjust its town plan over time and develop new zoning ordinances to protect moose and bear corridors, to focus development density in a village area yet to be designed, and to preserve the rural nature of the town. Residents suggest that those working on this should consider density development on RT 9 and between RT 9 and the College as potential village center. Some suggest defining a limited area for commercial development on Route 9, and place for senior housing and for affordable housing for young families as part of focused development to build the village center.



*Voting priorities at
the Community
Meeting Day, April
29, 2010.*

PHOTOS: David Holzapfel

IV. Task Force Action Plans

Resource Meeting, May 24, 2010

Marlboro Task Forces are comprised of community members and an appointed chairperson. On Resource Day committee members worked closely with a facilitator and small resource teams to develop step-by-step action plans and to devise a list of human and financial resources to help achieve their goals. This final phase of the program marks the time when residents truly take ownership of the work, and begin the exciting process of turning ideas into action.

Task Force: ✓ Develop a Marlboro Community Center Building

Chairperson: **To be determined**

Facilitator: **Paul Costello**, Vermont Council on Rural Development

Resource Leaders: **Paul Bruhn**, Preservation Trust of Vermont

Ryan Torres, Vermont Community Foundation

Jon Muise, USDA Rural Development

Residents could create a stronger sense of Marlboro and improve the connections with others in the community by building or adapting a facility to serve as a unifying Marlboro Community Center. Features of such a center could include programs and activities ranging from meeting rooms and senior services to a gym, tourist information and WiFi center, library and reading room, entertainment space, parent/children playgroup room, community kitchen, teen center, café, or even a pub. Provision for parking and connection by trails to neighborhoods, the college, and other center points will be crucial to success. A Community Center Task Force could evaluate existing buildings and opportunities (like the Skyline Restaurant) and work with other groups in town to design a structure for multiple community activities, from country dances to social service meetings, movies or senior meals.

Action Steps

1. The Task Force will need to meet to build a functional set of criteria for the priorities activities of the Community Center. This will help clarify the vision for the Center and help define the space and location needed.
2. Because so many Marlboro residents are dedicated to moving forward to develop a Community Center, organizing as a team will be crucially important. The Task Force will need a strong chair to maintain organization and will want to develop sub-committees to advance its efforts: Three subcommittees are identified to advance A) Site identification and development, B) Content and programming of the Center, and C) Budget Development (and ultimately financial and fund development planning).
3. Members of the Community Center Task Force will need to look at models for the development of Community Centers that have been successful in other communities in Vermont; Preservation Trust of Vermont has offered to help organize a tour of the best of these centers to help the committee learn about the organizational and funding steps of successful Community Centers.
4. Three main ideas were shared in the group around locating the Community Center: A) Locate in the Skyline property, B) Work with Marlboro College to purchase or share "Marlboro North", C)

5. The Task Force will need to consider whether the Community Center is entirely a private entity or whether the municipality is involved in support of it or shares in contributing to its development. Ultimately, a business plan for the Center will need to be developed.
6. Good Communications throughout the community will be essential. The Task Force will want to gather all the data on options, plans and the “Story” of the Community Center development in one place and keep it in the news. It will also want to develop a presentation on the choices and involve the community in setting a direction.
7. The Committee will need help ranging from planning assistance to discussion with transportation experts about how the location connects to the Route 9 traffic corridor and to consider the implications of this development in future growth that could become more of a village center.

Resources

1. **Preservation Trust of Vermont**, Paul Bruhn, *Executive Director*. 802-658-6647. paul@ptvermont.org.
 - For consultation, project development assistance, fiscal counseling and potential grant support if a building over fifty years old is selected for re-development.
 - Offered to develop a tour of Community Center facilities statewide to share best practices, steps they undertook, and fiscal models. Several projects were pointed to as models for Marlboro to review: Putney Cares and the development of their Congregational Church, River Arts in Morrisville, the Town Hall Theatre in Middlebury, Brookfield Town Hall, North Hero Community Hall, the Labor Hall in Barre.
2. **Vermont Department of Libraries** for assistance if including a Library in the Community Center is a priority. Marty Reid, *State Librarian*. 802-828-3265. Martha.Reid@state.vt.us.
3. **The Vermont Community Development Program** at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development may be able to help with a small grant for planning, evaluation of options, feasibility study or building a business model. Beth Boutin, *Community Development Specialist* for Windham County, 802-828-2998. <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/VCDP/>.
4. **USDA Rural Development** might have grants or loans that could support the project and have staff with experience in facilitation and project development that could provide on-going assistance in advancing the project. Jon-Michael Muise, *Area Director*. 802-257-7878 x106. jon.muise@vt.usda.gov.
5. **The Vermont Community Foundation** has a Small Grants Program that could be applied to for planning, facilitation or to subsidize tours. They may also have fund-holders in the Marlboro area who could be interested in helping with some of the up-front planning or participating in a capital campaign. Ryan Torres, *Philanthropic Advisor*. 802-388-3355. rtorres@vermontcf.org.
6. **The Windham Foundation** could be an additional philanthropic partner. John Bramley, *President*. 802-843-2211 x16. john.bramley@windham-foundation.org.
7. **Marlboro College** is a tremendous resource.
8. **The Windham Regional Commission** and **Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation** could provide help as facilitators or as experts in planning and fiscal aspects of development. James Matteau, *Executive Director*, Windham Regional Commission. 802-257-4547. jmatteau@sover.net. Jeff Lewis, *Executive Director*, Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation. 802-257-7731. jlewis@brattleborodevelopment.com.

Task Force Members

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Task Force: ✓ Improve Walk-ability and Expand Bike and Walking Paths

Chairperson: **Mike Purcell**

Facilitator: **Eric Deluca**, *Neighboring Food Coop Association*

Resource Leaders: **Jennifer Waite**, *National Parks Trails Program*

Michael Smith, *Pine Hill Trails and Rutland Creative Economy Partnership*

Sue McMahon, *Windham Regional Commission*

Bike and walking paths can contribute to community interconnection, public health and community sustainability. A multi-use path from the school to the Town Offices, for example, could lessen the need for short car trips. A committee of Marlboro residents could look at the model developed by Kingdom Trails in the Northeast Kingdom for biking, walking and ski trails either for in-town personal transportation or to develop recreational assets for tourists and residents alike. The task force could map existing trails at the college and other community center-points, link them, map them, and encourage their use as ways to get around town, get exercise, and lower the number of regular car trips.

Action Steps

Trails:

1. Inventory:
 - Trails
 - Control points
 - Private landowners
2. Create information packages:
 - For landowners (especially for new landowners) – point of contact established
 - For trail users
3. Well-designed stakeholder meetings with info prepared in advance; try to move toward consensus on key issues:
 - Landowners
 - Mountain bikers
4. Trails Committee as subset of planning

Route 9:

1. Collect how other communities have dealt with state highways cutting through their town
2. Scout areas for 1) good crossing and 2) animal corridors
3. Research Vermont Dept. of Transportation rules and funding opportunities

Resources

1. **Scenic Byway Funds**, for Route 9 underpass / pedestrian crossing, shoulder and safety improvements, etc. Matt Mann, Transportation Planner at the Windham Regional Planning Commission. (802) 257-4547 ext 120. mmann@sover.net

2. **GIS Resources**, Jeff Nugent, Windham Regional Planning Commission. (802) 257-4547, ext 111. jnugent@sover.net. Can print out mapping of wetlands, put together database of landowners.
3. **National Park Assistance Program, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance**. Jennifer Waite. (802) 457-3368, ext 21. jennifer_waite@nps.gov.
4. **Vermont Youth Conservation Corps** for trail building, signage, community crews assistance. 802.434.3969, ext 200. info@vycc.org.
5. **Vermont Trails and Greenways Council** for information on funds. Sherry Smecker Winnie, *Recreation Trails Program Administrator*, Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation, 802-241-3690 sherry.winnie@state.vt.us. <http://www.vermonttrailsandgreenways.org>.
6. **Hogback Mountain Conservation Association**, hogback1@sover.net; <http://hogback.org/>.
7. **Pine Hill Park Partnership**. Michael Smith, *President*. 802-683-9807. pinehillpark@me.com.
8. **Volunteer community resources:**
 - **Landowners** who are open to allowing town residents to access trails on their land are a key resource: North/South near Mercedes Rd; Far side of Route 9, in contrast with school side
 - **Local builders and carpenters.**
 - **Marlboro College** students / interns into real world.
 - **Retirement homes or senior group** could do signage craft project.
 - **8th grade community service projects.**
 - **Restorative juvenile diversion:** great workers and they benefit from being outdoors.
 - **Athletic groups / teams** – “give back” days.
 - **People who bequeath funds as their legacy** – for bike paths, etc.

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Patty Webster	464-8153	pattylwebster@gmail.com

Flip chart notes from brainstorming discussion:

Route 9:

- Signage, such as Agency of Transportation signs near Bennington: Watch out, Walkers, etc.
- Need more impact than blinking lights.
- Affordable / senior housing along Route 9.
- Slow lane.
- Wide shoulders / bike lane.
- Landowner / private access.
- Sidewalk to/from store.
- Under/overpass Route 9 to school, South Road, post office.
- Some spots along Route 9 need creative solutions, like boardwalk on wet areas.
- Determine which side of Route 9, openness of landowners.
- North/south connector to Mercedes Road.
- Slow down cluster, make drivers realize driving through a town.

Safety, landowner concerns

- Identify incentives for landowners to open trails.
- Save linkages.
- Setbacks.
- OK for managed land. See example of Putney letter to new landowners re the local culture of being OK for trails to be open (get copy of Putney letter)
- 50-acre purchase kits for new landowners: syrup, current use resources, who to call, information on Landowners Liability Act: if private owner signs on, largely protected.

Trails Network

- Local public network of trails
- Not spreading or marketing to tourists
- Anchors and control points (lists)
- Connect far sides of town (now clustered, need road)
- Anchors and linkages
- To farmer's market
- Class 4 road to trail
- Lots of paths in town but one formal one
- Connect up with trails in adjoining towns
- Maintenance (ice storm)
- Task force
- Adopt a trail
- High school students
- Grants → Safe Routes to School (grant program but currently suspended, may re-open)
- Reassure landowners about liability protection

- Find right person to talk with landowners → community sense
- Private → recreation
- Public → transportation: get where need to go
- Eco corridor view
- Check out class 4 roads inventory, control point
- Ancient roads, committee product
- Good to have a map
- Get map of college trails
- Inventory trails, flag issues, property safety

Concerns

- Motorized vehicle use
 - Use volume concern
 - Walkers as ambassadors to keep motorized off
 - Signage
 - Pinch points → large rocks
 - Trail design → two small trees
- Seasonal trail vulnerability
 - Some places no mountain bikes
 - Educate mountain bike community about seasonality
 - Horses on wet trails

Mitigating Concerns:

- Education & stewardship opportunity (eg. Horse group)
- Ask landowners whether OK to allow horses, bikes, cross-country skiers, snowshoeing
- Motor categories: ATV, snowmobile → OK for emergency and maintenance purposes
- Landowner meeting as way to mitigate concerns and educating all stakeholders

Short-term steps

- Inventory trails / control points: what private landowners involved
- Create welcome / information package for landowners
- Education for trail users
- Route 9 / public trails
- Look at how others communities have dealt with the problem of major road cutting through town.
- Scouting areas along Route 9 that would make good crossing and also bad places (environment / safety)
- Research DOT sidewalk rules
- Start town group to address trail concerns / signage
- Trails committee as sub-set of planning commission

Task Force: ✓ Generate Energy

Chairperson: **Tom Simon**

Facilitator: **Sue Allen**, *Renewable Energy Vermont*

Resource Leaders: **Andrew Broderick**, *New Generation Partners*

Brian Shupe, *Vermont Natural Resource Council*

Marlboro's well established Energy Committee has led significant efforts to expand efficiencies in buildings throughout the community. But more mutual public education is needed to expand efficiencies and to inform the public about the potentials to cost effectively produce energy. Marlboro could adopt a vision to make itself the "Distributed Energy Capitol of Vermont" and then implement it by systematically expanding the number of households, businesses, and public buildings that generate the power that they use and contribute to the community's energy needs. Toward that end, Marlboro residents could: explore the implementation of a local PACE program (Property Assessed Clean Energy) to support residents' decisions to advance energy and efficiency projects; explore possibilities to build micro hydro sites in the town's watersheds, evaluate the potential for a community wind project or extensive small scale wind development, and systematically expand solar panels to near ubiquity on houses in the community. Residents would like to see a Task Force raise the flag around a Marlboro identity as a state leader in energy creation and sustainability.

Action Steps

1. Inventory with help from someone who's done it:
 - Hydro and impaired waterways
 - Fuel inventory → other sources, wind, incentives, PV
 - Time: human capital
 - Permitting → scale to ease permitting, seasonal changes
2. Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE program):
 - micro hydro → let people know who has ability, H2O Wheels?
 - Grid > GMP/CVPS both have MAP Joint net metering
 - Visit houses to look at other projects
3. Town Energy Plan
4. Talk to other communities. Early Dec. meeting of community energy groups, where information could be shared and obtained; increase regional collaboration
5. Public discussion: keep public informed and involved through a regular column in the Mixer, energy committee – workshops / subcommittee

Resources

1. Co-op power
2. Inventory → open invitation
 - Students could help with research
 - Renewable Energy Atlas has much information at www.vsif.org.

- Renewable Energy Vermont (REV) → has information on power sources, contact information for other communities already doing this work: www.revermont.org.
 - delegate tasks for study
3. Potential funding sources include the **Clean Energy Development Fund** (<http://publicservice.vermont.gov>) or the **Windham Foundation** (www.windham-foundation.org).
4. **Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)**
- Town vote
 - Vermont Energy Investment Corp (VEIC) has information: www.veic.org.
 - Quick start –the community should do this quickly.
5. **Town Energy Plan:**
- Planning commission – receives plan from energy committee

Task Force Members

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Flip chart notes from brainstorming discussion:

Major issues:

- Large scale micro hydro
- Permitting challenges
- No inventory of local H2O supply
- Unclear about existing grid
- Don't want polarized discussion
- Wind – concern about Hogback, no inventory of locations
- How structured? Co-op? Provide capital?
- Financial issues.

Community discussion of options:

- Inventory
- look at economics of options
- expert advice, PACE experts
- look at PV opportunities; house by house; municipal buildings; net metering

Task Force: ✓ Advance New Zoning By-Laws to Include All Species (meeting 8/4/10)

Marlboro has an opportunity to plan for and build zoning to support long term strategic goals of creating a village district and advancing conservation. Marlboro should adjust its town plan over time and develop new zoning ordinances to protect moose and bear corridors, to focus development density in a village area yet to be designed, and to preserve the rural nature of the town. Residents suggest that those working on this should consider density development on RT 9 and between RT 9 and the College as potential village center. Some suggest defining a limited area for commercial development on Route 9, and place for senior housing and for affordable housing for young families as part of focused development to build the village center.

Facilitator: **Paul Costello**, *Vermont Council on Rural Development*, 223-5763;
pcostello@vtrural.org

Resource Leaders: **Jamey Fidel**, *Vermont Natural Resources Council*, 223-2328; jfidel@vnrc.org
Jeff Nugent, *Windham Regional Commission*, 257-4547; jnugent@sover.net
Eric Sorenson, *VT Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*, 241-3714; eric.sorenson@state.vt.us
Suzanne Blanchard, *Smart Growth Vermont*, 864-6310;
suzanne@smartgrowthvermont.org

Action Steps

1. Community Engagement

- Marlboro's planning effort needs the support, input and work of community residents. Optimal zoning will need to have a foundation in macro-level conversations with the public. The Community Visit is a start, but the committee will need to manage public outreach to draw input from all parts of the community on the vision of what planning and zoning should be working to accomplish. Toward that end, the discussion described two parallel processes:
 - A. Holding some facilitated and public meetings that effectively bring the community to review and consider potential planning and zoning directions.
 - B. Reinvigorating the Neighbornet effort to hold conversations about the planning/zoning vision with different neighborhood groups throughout town to ensure that all points of view and parts of town are actively included.
- Community members could be also be drawn in to support the planning and zoning effort in other ways. A member of the Conservation Commission has been developing wildlife siting maps, but most residents don't know about them. One idea was to involve students from Marlboro school to study wildlife sites and corridors in town. Another was to make an active website for residents throughout the community to contribute animal sitings [linked to <http://www.marlboro.vt.us/>]. Information gathered in these ways could be useful to the planning process.

2. Connection with Community Committees

The Planning Commission should continue its annual Marlboro Meeting of Committees and should continue to farm out sections of the plan for the inputs of various leadership committees (like the

Conservation Commission, Energy Committee, Hogback Committee, etc.) and should build strong communications links especially with the Conservation Commission, whose research and on-the-ground efforts could be directly informative of the town plan and zoning regulation development process. The Conservation Commission seems eager to contribute and could provide key inputs on wildlife corridor issues in the planning and zoning process.

3. Technical and Organizational Assistance

- The Planning Commission has a huge mission statement to work from in the points of vision from the Community Visit. It has a daunting job to translate key elements of the town plan into zoning regulations that represent the will of the community.
- They need process assistance, expert technical assistance related to planning and zoning strategies, legal advice, and help with public engagement and facilitation: “knowledge, money and time.”
- It was pointed out that the Subdivision Regulations already have most of the elements needed to minimize adverse impacts to critical wildlife habitat, but the Planning Commission needs to define (and map if possible) the critical habitat in the town for it to be legally defensible and applicable to the development review process. Incorporating wildlife corridors and large un-fragmented forest blocks into the critical wildlife habitat definition are two options to potentially achieve desired results. (Both ANR and VNRC can consult to help build appropriate definitions).
- There was a discussion that there is some hesitancy to change the Zoning Bylaws due to political or property rights concerns. It was noted that there are creative ideas for dealing with density standards or minimum lot size through zoning to achieve habitat or natural resource protection. For example, a wildlife overlay district could be created that would define critical habitat resources such as corridors, and build in development review standards to minimize adverse impacts and fragmentation of the resource. In addition, density could be dealt with by allowing for the creation of smaller lots by separating the lot size from overall density, or by looking at basing density on site development capacity.
- Several times during the meeting technical or mapping needs would come up, like riparian corridor maps, and another participant would let folks know that these were either obtainable or in the process of development. The Committee needs someone’s help just to gather all these materials together for orderly review and inclusion in planning and zoning processes.
- The Planning Commission is also interested in having more systematic understanding of non-regulatory opportunities to condition land-owners decisions in line with the town plan.
- The planning commission, lastly, feels the need for a critical editor with planning expertise to help bring writing to effective conclusions.
- To advance all these goals, the Commission could choose an appropriate partner from the resources below and, with their assistance, engage in a grant search to fund technical assistance for the next steps in the Marlboro planning process.

Resources

Volunteers seemed ready to work to reinvigorate NeighborNet as an input source and place to review planning and zoning elements. A suggestion was made that a **student volunteer** (or paid college student intern) could be indispensable in helping to staff this organizational effort.

The Planning Commission has a full agenda; with the challenge of dealing with ongoing questions of interpretation of development projects it is hard to step back to engage the public fully or articulate the big picture of zoning regulations for the future.

The Commission also needs expert help in building definitions in Zoning regulations that clearly articulate elements in the town plan so that they are effective in development decisions. The committee needs some funding to support technical assistance to support these three functions.

There are resources available:

1. **Vermont Natural Resource Council (VNRC)** could help, especially by providing expertise and assistance around forest and wildlife issues, planning and zoning strategies, and a model definition for critical or corridors in the zoning. They have a grant related to planning for corridor protection that could assist this effort, or a broader initiative to provide habitat connectivity with adjoining towns and the Green Mountain National Forest. Jamey Fidel's phone and email are listed above.
2. **Agency of Natural Resources** can assist with mapping and consultation on wildlife corridor issues. Eric Sorenson could be a useful contact for their information; his contact info is above.
3. **The Windham Commission (WRC)** has expert staff available to provide some assistance and **Smart Growth Vermont (SGV)** has expertise on planning for village center development among other planning issues, and works with towns to facilitate and enhance public participation, as well as handling project coordination and management. WRC and SGV contact info is also listed above.
4. Funding could come from an **Agency of Commerce Planning Grant**, or there may be potential resources from a number of other sources: **The Windham Foundation, VT Community Foundation, New England Grass Roots Environmental Fund**. Organizations may be able to find some matching support.

Task Force Members

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VI. Resource Team Recommendations

In response to the Marlboro Priorities for Action

Resource Team members represent a wide array of professionals from across the state, and agree to serve as partners and advisors to the Marlboro Task Forces. Their recommendations below encompass their experience, past success, and consideration of the community's unique assets and needs. It is hoped that community members will turn frequently to these pages for concrete ideas, resources and support. Resource Team members are eager to support the Task Forces as they begin their work.

✓ Develop a Marlboro Community Center Building

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS

Here are some steps the town may want to take as you move forward, especially if you decide to build rather than use an existing site.

- Evaluate/inventory current buildings and available land that might fit priority needs.
- Contact Windham Regional Planning Commission for possible maps and technical assistance. 257-4547.
- Seek assistance from an architect for preliminary designs and costs to develop a building.
- Seek out similar models that could provide insight and information and go visit them (Jericho, Rochester, Bradford, Putney, Morrisville).
- The Task Force should define the most desired uses or occupants of a Community Center building in priority order (not all may fit).
- Then create a business plan for the operations/activities that community wants to have so that sustainability is evaluated.
- The committee will want to build support in town through frequent updates.
- And identify funding sources for building purchase and rehab (see below).
- It might pay to review the Town Plan to ensure there is clear policy support for creation of a Community Center. This can help with funding sources.
- The Task Force could also work with the Planning Commission to review the town zoning bylaw to ensure there is specific language about a community center as a permitted use in appropriate zones. This will help with location decisions.

The Selectboard should consider formally creating the task force and giving it a clear mandate and time frame for regular reports back to Selectboard and public. This sounds overly formal but it can help avoid “mission creep” and provide incentive to get things done.

The Task Force may want to investigate the option of writing a planning grant from Vermont Community Development Program to support all the work analyzing the feasibility of options (the municipality needs to be the applicant).

Community centers and public spaces are most successful when they are self-financing--that is more regular than annual fundraising appeals. Space rentals or the sale of some product or service created at the facility often generate cash that helps balance the budget.

This idea will benefit from early involvement of the many stakeholder groups that may use such a facility, including Marlboro college students. Consider engaging in some visioning sessions to allow the public to flesh out what they might want in a center. Then you will have a “wish list” that could potentially be budgeted out. The sooner you put dollar signs on this, the sooner you will be able to adjust your proposal to what is possible.

One idea would be to look at how other towns without centers use the web to build ‘Virtual Community centers—see the Town of Middlesex’s “Operator’s Manual” at <http://www.middlesex-vt.org/index.html>.

Partnership with the College in development of the Community Center could help it serve multiple needs and improve project viability.

Also, consider getting the county’s regional service entities on board. The center could become a satellite location for many of them, and maybe they could pay rent.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING TASK FORCE

Contact **USDA Rural Development** regarding their Community Facility Loan program. 802-257-7878 x106 for Jon Muise, Area Director, or x113 for Andrea Ansevin-Allen, Area Office Specialist. Jon is eager to help!

The **Vermont Community Development Program** out of the Agency of Commerce may have planning funds or the ability to connect Marlboro to Community Development Block Grant Funding. Call 802-828-3211 for more information The Vermont Community Development Program has grants available for municipalities to develop community facilities like the one Marlboro seeks. This is a very competitive program with success measured by the degree of benefit provided to low and moderate income people. This source would be appropriate if the new community center included space for human service agencies. Call Beth Boutin, Community Development Staff for Windham County @ 802.828.2998.

The **Vermont Division for Historic Preservation** can provide information about how to rehabilitate and use an historic building, and provide information about any financial resources available for that purpose. If older structures are potentials for rehab, Call Devin Colman @ 802-828-3043.

Likewise, **Preservation Trust of Vermont** can provide invaluable organizational and maybe financial help if the building has some history. Paul Bruhn and Ann Cousins can be incredibly helpful in offering advice or assistance. Preservation Trust has set up tours in some cases to showcase best practices around the state and might be willing to organize a “Community Center” tour to help Marlboro see models around the state. Call Paul Bruhn at 802-343-0595 or Preservation Trust at 802-658-6647.

Efficiency Vermont – if Marlboro rehabs an old building as a community center, this organization can do an energy audit & help with recommendations for energy conservation improvements. Call them at 1-888-921-5990 or see their webpage at www.efficiencyvermont.org.

Sue McMahon at the **Windham Regional Commission** could be an invaluable facilitator and supporter of the project (257-4547)

Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation may also be able to lend development and fiscal planning expertise; contact Jeff Lewis at 257-7731.

✓ Improve Walk-ability and Expand Bike and Walking Paths

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS

Survey town interest in biking and walking options — are residents more interested in options for transit, recreation or both? Walking, skiing, biking, motorized recreation? Develop solutions that support community interest and will be used.

The Task Force may want to hold a meeting of land owners and stake holders to discuss walking/biking path to gain feedback and opportunity for the connection of existing trails or placement of new paths.

Seek grant funds (e.g., Safe Routes to School) to study/develop pedestrian and bike facilities.

Connect with the Conservation Commission, Planning Commission and other local groups; convene a meeting to discuss paths and trails once the beginnings of a plan are in place.

Review the town plan to ensure that the transportation chapter calls for development of bike and walking paths as a priority, and ideally sketches out their approximate locations.

Review the zoning bylaws to ensure that such paths are identified as conditional uses. This will provide town review of proposed paths and offer property owner some sense of security that the paths won't be forced on them without providing an opportunity for their formal input.

Identify a starting point for real and physical work so you have a short term accomplishment. Set up a couple of signs for trails, or have a volunteer workday to clear, mark and post one a trail for use.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE “IMPROVE WALK-ABILITY AND EXPAND BIKE AND WALKING PATHS” TASK FORCE

Visit Vtrans site <http://www.aot.state.vt.us/progdev/Sections/LTF/ltf.htm> for information on planning funds and implementation of safe routes to schools program – if deadlines for submission are past, keep everything done and get ready for the next funding cycle opportunity.

Consult the VTRANS Local Facilities Transportation Program for technical planning & possible financial assistance. See their web page for a bike/pedestrian path planning manual and other important information about creating such paths.

<http://www.aot.state.vt.us/progdev/Sections/LTF/BikePedProgram.htm>. Contact Jon.Kaplan@state.vt.us who may be able to lend technical assistance.

Consult Matt Mann, the Windham Regional Commission transportation planner, for technical assistance at 257-4547. They may be able to help with maps and facilitation. www.rpc.windham.vt.us They can also guide you on how address rights of way issues.

Nancy Schulz, Executive Director, Vermont Bike and Pedestrian Coalition support and encourage this work statewide; can reach her at (802) 225-8904. <http://www.vtbikeped.org/>

A great resource is **Local Motion** in Burlington, which works on bike and pedestrian trails around the state. They have good information about funding, mapping, planning and encouragement along the way. Chapin Spencer is Executive Director: (802) 861-2700, www.localmotion.org.

Sherry Smacker Winnie could also help. She's the Recreation Trails Program Administrator at the Vermont Forest Parks and Recreation: (802) 244-1481

The National Park Service "Rivers and Trails" Program <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/index.htm> helps groups well beyond the parks themselves plan, map and develop trails. Call Jennifer Waite or Christina Marts at 457-3368. Finally, federal dollars may be available for small trails through the **Land and Water Conservation Fund** in Vermont—Jennifer or Christina can advise: <http://www.vtfpr.org/reclwcf/index.cfm>.

The Vermont Department of Forests Parks & Recreation "Trail Grant Program" <http://www.vtfpr.org/recgrant/trgrant.cfm> could be a source of some funding.

VTrans "Safe Routes to School" and Enhancements Programs could also be useful.

Vermont Mountain Bike Association, Patrick Kell — VMBA helps communities identify and create recreational mountain bike trails, like the Kingdom Trails. patrick@vycc.org

And then there's Kingdom Trails in East Burke. The team may want to make a visit to East Burke to see their system. Marlboro may not choose to go in the commercial direction that Burke has, but it is worth studying the exciting economic and recreational model they have developed. Tim Tierney is the Executive Director, (802) 626-0737.

Residents of Woodstock and Rutland both established goals like this one for Marlboro and have accomplished great things. Woodstock has mapped, marked and expanded trails throughout the community; Sally Miller, director of Sustainable Woodstock can share how: spm@sustainablewoodstock.com, 802-457-2911. In Rutland Paul Gallo (802-236-7173) or Michael Smith (802-683-9807) can tell the story of the mountain bike network and the downtown bike/walking path project. Rutland has done a great job siting a new bike path through the City and building bike trails in their Pine Hill Park, and the Rutland RPC is behind it. Michael Smith could tell you about the steps they went through and resources they pulled together. The town of Lyndon has also gotten behind trails in town, and may be a good resource. You might want also to contact the Town of Springfield regarding the bike path that they developed several years ago. 802-885-2104

Pedestrian and bike paths will make a great addition – will encourage community, exercise, and green transportation.

✓ Generate Energy

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS

Review the Town Plan to ensure it sets forth clear policies and goals supporting local renewable energy facilities. This is a really important step because it creates an arena for the town to debate the size and location of these facilities, often controversial and in apparent conflict with other town plan policies on conservation, the rural nature of the town, etc.

Review the zoning bylaw to ensure that renewable energy facilities are conditional uses in the appropriate locations.

Consider meeting with energy committees in neighboring towns such as Dummerston that also have active energy committees for sharing ideas and experience. Generating power may best be done through larger, multi-town projects.

Consider sponsoring an “energy fair” in cooperation with neighboring towns and WRC & invite firms that manufacture and/or install small scale generating gear for micro-hydro, wind, and solar for residential and small commercial applications to show their wares and offer workshops or seminars on their potentials. Middlebury got a good boost by doing this—Netaka White from their energy committee could explain how 802-828-1260.

Here are a set of actions that could be undertaken by the Task Force:

- Do an initial assessment of existing and potential renewable resources in Marlboro by using the new Renewable Energy Atlas of Vermont: www.vtenergyatlas.com. Look at opportunities beyond Marlboro’s boundaries that might work too – regional renewable opportunities.
- Undertake a town-wide ‘survey’ with the initial info generated by the Atlas to compare potential resource areas with people’s interests and willingness to consider projects – in general – and on their land.
- Continue to stay connected to the coordinated PACE effort, being led by the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network, and others to receive as much help and support as possible.
 - Raise awareness about PACE in preparation for the needed town-wide vote – on Town Meeting Day or another voting day.
 - Work closely with the Selectboard on PACE efforts to ensure they are part of the process and to ensure their buy-in, and championing of the program.
 - Ensure that energy efficiency and conservation strategies – paired with PACE projects/effort and in general – remain at the top of the list for first-step investments.
- To assess hydro opportunities, challenges, and need action steps, contact a hydro expert/resource to help identify the likely issues and obstacles – as well as to ground truth the projects that the town is interested in advancing.

- To assess wind opportunities, challenges, steps needed contact a wind expert/resource to help identify the likely issues and obstacles – as well as to ground truth projects – the town is interested in advancing.
- Identify community leaders (maybe members of the energy committee) who will steep themselves in the process for energy projects — the regulations, the steps, the likely timing, the balancing act etc — to ensure folks know what you are undertaking and avoid, as best as possible, any problems or issues before they arise. Part of this is understanding and learning how other communities have succeeded or stumbled with hydro, wind, solar, biomass or other efforts.
- Review the town plan and bylaws to ensure that it reflects and supports the kind of projects the community envisions.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE “GENERATE ENERGY” TASK FORCE

The Vermont Clean Energy Development Fund (through the VT Department of Public Service) or municipal planning grant funds (through the Agency of Commerce Community Development Program) could potentially provide resources for very early stages (\$5k or less), but also much larger amounts for feasibility studies which would help them figure out where their priorities should be and what is possible. Review the CEDF website and call Andrew Perchlick their director:

http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee_cleanenergyfund.html.

A Community Development Planning Grant may be available from the Agency of Commerce and Community Affairs to help with this project. Call Beth Boutin, Community Development Staff for Windham County @ 802-828-2998. A Municipal Planning grant may be available to help with this project. Call Faith Ingulsrud at the agency at 828-5228

The Task Force could reach out to Vermont Energy Innovation Center to put a PACE program in place – VEIC can share information about setting these programs up and what is being done in other communities (Middlesex, Thetford, Putney, and Waitsfield got EECBG funding to help start projects – and Burlington is very actively pursuing PACE). A good contact at VEIC on this is Peter Adamczyk—Go to padamczyk@veic.org or call him at 88-7631.

Consult Susan McMahon at Windham Regional for assistance with town plan and zoning bylaw amendments. 257-4547 ext 114.

See the Vermont League of Cities and Towns website for information on funding and technical assistance: <http://www.vlct.org/municipalassistancecenter/grants/>.

Someone could check out REAP Grants as a potential at <http://www.nerc-vt.org/>.

The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund could be a great resource to help understand and utilize the Renewable Energy Atlas (www.vtenergyatlas.com).

VECAN, VEIC and VNRC are resources for technical and communications/awareness-raising/organizing support around PACE. Call Johanna Miller at VNRC to learn the best way to access their resources at 802-223-2328. Vermont Natural Resource Council is a resource for strengthening the town plan and for crafting a community plan/vision for moving renewables forward with public support/elevated public

awareness. VNRC, in conjunction with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, is in the process of drafting a 'Energy Planning and Implementation Guide' that will serve as a tool for crafting strong town plans (and will be working with the VSJF on their Renewable Energy Atlas to pair planning with the Atlas to help lay out a comprehensive energy action plan. www.vnrc.org - 802-223-2328 or jmiller@vnrc.org.

VNRC's Potential Support in Your Efforts: As a partner in VECAN and in general, VNRC is interested in supporting town energy committees — and communities — who are interested in moving energy efficiency and renewable energy projects forward, quickly, in a way that balances diverse interests and valuable natural resources as well as maximizes the benefit to communities. VNRC lends communities organizing, communications (awareness and interest-raising), networking and technical support and likely could do this in Marlboro:

- On the PACE effort (helping raise community awareness and support for the tool, including prior to any needed town vote).
- Energy planning.
- Figuring out to best utilize the Atlas.
- Connecting community leaders to resources – financial and expert – for projects of interest.

Many residents have expressed an interest in various renewable energy sources, including small hydro and wind power. There are concerns with each, and it's clear that the community feels it lacks the information needed to make smart decisions moving forward on this front. Obtaining reliable, comprehensive information about energy options available, supports and incentives, and potential pitfalls appeared to be a top priority. Renewable Energy Vermont (Sue Allen, 802-229-0099) is a huge resource for renewable information, how to start the process, info on contractors etc: Renewable Energy Vermont (www.revermont.org) (also a resource on financing opportunities — <http://www.revermont.org/incentives.htm>)

Other hydro and wind resource leaders are Lawrence Mott and Andy Broderick of New Generation Partners (<http://newgenerationpartners.net>), – for hydro projects, Kim Greenwood, VNRC, kgreenwood@vnrc.org and the ANR Dam Safety Program, <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/fed/damsafety/safety.htm>.

VPIRG has a Clean Energy Financing Guide on its website at <http://www.vpirg.org/cleanenergyguide>.

✓ Advance New Zoning By-Laws to Include All Species

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS

Build a robust outreach program to bridge gap between all geographic sections of town, as well as the college/non-college groups, the new folks and the old-line Vermont households and any other socio-economic divisions in town.

In addition to required, formal public hearings, convene small informal gatherings for the Planning Commission to “listen” held in various part of town to gather input and ideas from residents in settings they find comfortable.

Ask people how they want to be notified about Planning Commission meetings to work on the bylaw draft or what would be the best way to send them drafts of bylaw changes.

Set up “idea drops” in places around town where residents routinely do business such as the town office, the convenience store on Route 9, the school, etc, where people who are not comfortable talking in public can leave written feedback.

Set and stick to (as much as possible) a schedule for taking input, for drafting and for draft revising so it’s predictable. Make sure the Planning Commission holds its meetings when townspeople can attend.

Make sure all work on the bylaw is done openly in public meetings to build trust and confidence. The Planning Commission might formally adopt a list of principles they will follow throughout the process to reassure residents that it will be done openly and fairly.

Gather the very best information available about corridor and habitat, then consult specifically with landowners in the corridor or habitat area to describe the data and get their input on how best to preserve the wildlife values while respecting their property rights. (See third bullet above).

Undertake a land use analysis and planning process to identify existing settlement patterns, development constraints, ecological and habitat resources, coupled with a public outreach effort to discuss goals for a village center and habitat. Village center goals should include a physical plan to communicate vision for the area.

Meet with neighboring communities. Strong conservation, habitat and wildlife protection plans require integrated plans and bigger thinking for success.

Identify implementation tools, including infrastructure and regulatory tools necessary to implement village plan. (We strongly recommend that Marlboro – the Planning Commission and Conservation Commission – consider both regulatory and non-regulatory tools needs to address protection of key habitat.)

Draft plan and zoning to implement plan. (Different considerations include creating a wildlife overlay district, conducting wildlife inventories and protecting significant wildlife habitat through subdivision regulations or the development review process, and outlining non-regulatory strategies in the town plan.)

Adopt capital budget and program for planned infrastructure or other capital facilities – make sure that the Community Center Building discussed above is located within village center to serve as a community focal point.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE ZONING TASK FORCE

Technical assistance from the **Windham Regional Commission** staff, call Susan MacMahon @ 257-4547, ext 114.

Contact the **Vermont League of Cities and Towns** for information about funding assistance and technical training workshops for planning commissioners to strengthen the knowledge of laypeople on the Planning Commission. <http://vlct.org/>

Seek a **DHCA Municipal Planning Grant** to help with the cost of professional assistance from the **WRC** or from a private, for-profit consultant. For information on the program, call Faith Ingulsrud @ 802-828-5228. <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/MPG.htm>

Village Center Program (through Vermont Department of Housing & Community Affairs). Call Joss Besse at 828-5212 and see: <http://www.HistoricVermont.org/programs/downtown.html>

Village Planning: Smart Growth Vermont has guides and staff to help. See <http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/>

Habitat inventory & planning: **Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife Community Assistance Program** -- http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/cwp_home.cfm

Regulatory and Non-Regulatory options for protecting habitat – see VNRC’s *Strategies Matrix For Forestland and Wildlife Conservation*. VNRC’s Forests & Biodiversity Program and Sustainable Communities Program have teamed up to provide assistance to select communities to develop municipal plan policies and implementation strategies to protect wildlife habitat and avoid forest fragmentation, and to implement plans through regulatory bylaws (i.e., zoning and subdivision regulations). VNRC has worked with communities through all aspects of these efforts, including public outreach and education and technical drafting and bylaw adoption. Often times this is fee-for-service work at an affordable rate. VNRC is in the process of preparing a Planning Manual for Habitat and Forest Conservation that we anticipate publishing in early 2011 which will be available to Marlboro and all Vermont communities.

During the VCRD Team visit a number of folks indicated that it was people who had some relationship to the college that tended to be most involved in community volunteer activity, including service on the selectboard, planning commission etc. To ensure zoning bylaw revisions really reflect the interests and have support from the whole community it will be necessary for those leading the bylaw update process to make sure they implement an effective public participation program.

Vermont Natural Resources Council - <http://www.vnrc.org/programs/forest/forest-program/>

Agency of Natural Resources - http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com/cwp_home.cfm

Windham Regional Commission - <http://www.rpc.windham.vt.us/about/index.htm>

Smart Growth Vermont – <http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/help/>

Vermont Council on Rural Development - <http://www.vtrural.org/>

VII. Town Forum Notes

Compiled from focus group discussions held with Marlboro residents and the VCRD Visiting Team on March 25, 2010

Although the prioritization work of the 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.

Sustainability: (Self-Sufficiency, Local Economy, & Agriculture)

Resource Team: Paul Costello (facilitator), Roger Allbee, Julie Jacque, Jeff Lewis, James Matteau, Johanna Miller, Jenny Nelson, Sarah Woodward (scribe).

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

Assets

- There is a lot of open land in Marlboro that could be tilled, though it is not premium soil.
- Hogback Conservation Area, 600 acres purchased by the town, is a wonderful recreational resource.
- Our topography is an asset. We have a lot of high places with the potential for use for wind power.
- We have high water quality and export this quality water to six different watersheds.
- The community pond is an asset.
- Educational assets, both the elementary school and the college are tremendous. The support of Marlboro's institutions is wonderful.
- Sweeties, the store on Route 9, is a gathering place where you often run into people.
- The Mixer, bi-monthly town newsletter, and the town webpage are important resources for information sharing.
- The bus service up and down Route 9 is an asset. The school bus is an asset.
- Fire station is an asset. We need to keep it in mind for future.
- Our annual Town Fair is an asset.
- Small scale, family-sized agricultural operations is both an asset and a challenge. Many people have produce to sell, (have set up farm stands) but there isn't really enough of a market and not enough people are buying. We're in the habit of driving to get our food.
- The rural nature of towns like ours requires collaboration with neighboring towns.
- The mindset of the college and the involvement and willingness to participate in town happenings.
- Our institutions should not operate in a bubble, and the college should and would like to be engaged with the town.

- It is not possible for Marlboro to supply everything we need, which is a reality. We are not like Brattleboro or Wilmington, we are unique here.
- There are many creative people that live here.
- We have leaders who can galvanize our community as well as a town that can be galvanized.
- A sense of community pride.

Challenges

- We have a lot of land that is currently not being used, but could be used in a beneficial way.
- Getting products to market (for example to Brattleboro) requires a lot of effort and time.
- Marlboro is close to Brattleboro and is at risk of becoming a suburb of Brattleboro. How can we preserve our town identity?
- We lack an inspected slaughterhouse and have to go as far as Westminster for this.
- Ensuring that borders are not strictly dividing us from our neighboring towns, because we need to share resources.
- There is a major section of Route 9 that is missing a T9 Line, something that would need to be worked out with the power company, but is essential for electrical generation.
- The cost of housing is a concern. Our schools have fewer kids, but we fear that our kids won't be able to afford to live here. We want to sustain our human population here as well.
- Majority of Marlboro is lacking high speed internet. Most people do not have broadband, people use dial-up. Lines are strung in a bizarre fashion and there are many gaps, "black holes" in service. The same holds for cell phones.
- Changing activities on the land, changing land management practices, and more intensive land use are threats to our water quality.

- A large part of our total energy use is driving into town. We often run into friends and family in town doing the same things, but transportation is not coordinated. We are a suburb of Brattleboro.
- How can we better utilize our existing public transportation?
- It takes a long time to get to your destination taking public transportation.
- Huge truck traffic along the highway is not an asset it is a threat to pedestrians.

Opportunities: What Should be Done?

- Improve and formalize communication with one another, the college should be engaged in the dialogue as well. Potential vehicles for communicating include The Mixer, the website.
- Develop a local resource directory that includes where / who is selling produce, who has chainsaws. This would help facilitate/coordinated resource sharing.
- We should support and encourage cottage industries in cloth, pottery.
- Promote collaboration between the college and the town. We need more formal interaction, for example attendance at selectboard meetings.
- The State should put a noise limit on traffic. This should be Town enforced, and fines imposed.
- A lot of issues and natural resources are shared and expand between towns. Sustainability requires talking with other towns.
- We would like to see a community gathering space, where people can come together, and a place where people can market produce and other products.
- Our streams hold a lot of potential and should be used for hydropower.
- The concept of "Local Money" (concept being used in England).
- Sustainability of the arts and crafts should be considered, especially in regards to town/Marlboro College relations.
- Conduct a trial 2-3 times during the productive summer months bringing produce to market at Brattleboro Farmer's Market. Organize our own Farmer's Market, but make sure it's not on the same day as the Brattleboro Market to reduce competition.
- A potential location for a farmers market could be the parking lot near college housing on Route 9. There is good traffic, it's a big location, and there's a lot of parking. The space is currently underutilized.
- There is a great interest in canning and root cellars here. A community kitchen, or small business model could be used to better share resources and knowledge.
- Education and raising community awareness of where to find local foods is important. We need to be able to advertise our assets.
- Many sustainable stores sell a variety of products, how can we get a greater variety?
- Needs to be more communication and knowledge sharing related to alternative energy options. Some people want to be engaged, but don't know much about it. (People don't recognize that I have a solar panel on my roof...think it is a sun roof)
- Establish a barter system for exchanging goods.
- Through zoning, we should encourage density. This is challenging because I want to live away from people and you always run into the issue of individual property owner rights. So how can we encourage a different mode of development that's sustainable?
- We need to find areas in town and designate them for high density. College maybe makes sense? Where is town core? Needs to be defined?
- We should create a sustainability plan, including lake stewardship, watershed knowledge, mapping rivers, understanding of South Pond and how to take care of water bodies. (Someone in room has this expertise, Kate Morgan.)
- How can we ensure housing remains affordable and preserve our school. We don't want to see consolidation of schools.
- We need to know how to identify and find resources related to the conservation of natural resources, specifically resource conservation, wildlife identification, etc. We need access to information.
- The State Department of Agriculture website is a great resource. I am an entrepreneur and have ideas, but don't know how to push them forward.
- Develop a Micro-hydro plan, as well as be involved in energy committee meetings.
- The local mover bus is an asset, but is underutilized. Scheduling is an issue, it is an issue of economizing use. We need to be communicated with to create the most fitting bus schedule, and the most appropriate locations for stops.
- A higher gasoline tax would stimulate efficient traveling.
- The farm over the hill may have the potential for methane generation.
- Our rivers flow out of Marlboro and we want to ensure we have clean water flowing out.

Reflections from Visiting Team

- Recently I was visiting a Farmer's Market in Groton, VT. What I learned there was that it was more than just a Farmers Market, it was an opportunity for people to sell crafts, it was a point of connection between community members, enjoying food and each other. It is clear that the strengths here in Marlboro are the people, the arts, and the land.
- I can envision a Farmer's market being held here in the Town House. I would be great for the College to connect with the community in this regard. Can the college purchase local foods? The directory idea is great. Utilize the town fair and the concept of "Marlboro First".
- This gathering today and brainstorming will lay a great foundation for work to be done in town. Zoning is a difficult issue, because we hesitate to put on limitations on our neighbors. We don't want to tell our neighbors what to do.
- Planning is essential. People here are committed. Renewables, renewable energy, and planning falls into the larger concept of sustainability. Perhaps it would be best to identify zones (the best places) for renewable energy operations.
- The town population parallels growth of the college. Distribution of homeownership, second homeowners account for 30% in Marlboro, well above the Vermont average and many of our second homeowners may not live in town. The idea of regionalism is important, we do travel out of town, and so, we must regard issues of density, investment in infrastructure, and the return and value of density.
- Today was important to identify what we stand for, to develop ways to organize ourselves in ways to achieve our goals and identify what action steps we need to take. To do this, long term planning is required. Community intentionality is required as is unity. There is a need for people to step forward as leaders, for example, building sustainability committees, or teams to work on issues of food systems and the community directory. Human capital here is huge.

Growth and Development (Zoning and Conservation)

Resource Team: Paul Costello (facilitator), Roger Allbee, Julie Jacque, Jeff Lewis, James Matteau, Johanna Miller, Jenny Nelson, Sarah Woodward (scribe).

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- We have several core wildlife areas here. It is difficult because the areas of habitat are fragmented by road crossings. Many of our wildlife areas are gone and others are at risk.
- In regards to land use, our buildings are spread out, which makes it difficult to foster a sense of community and makes cluster development a challenge. There are also limited kinds of land that can be used for agriculture.
- The Town acquisition of Hogback (600 acres) has been a success and a wonderful opportunity for the community to think about.
- Currently there is uniform 2 acre zoning everywhere in the community and the Zoning commission is working on changing this. At Town Meeting, we did a survey of residents regarding differential zoning and density issues. Generally density is accepted by people as okay, though we have confronted challenges with individuals strongly in favor of their personal property rights not wanting the town to regulate what they can and cannot do. Some of our goals are to reduce the impact of development on wildlife and streams and do not want development to be a drain on town services.
- 700 people have moved into Marlboro in the past 70 years, so people are concerned about the potential growth. The ski industry draws people to the area. But growth in the cities is easier to see, here, growth can occur and be far removed from others and go on with little notice. This is a potential problem.
- Before we used to use the septic excuse, we thought "septic would save us" because formerly sewer couldn't reach many places and prohibited development. Now you can get sewer most places, so we can no longer use that as a crutch and we have to stop pretending.
- Cluster housing isn't really being done, but is a potential option that could be an asset for us.
- Like the rest of Vermont, we are an aging population and we feel strongly about staying in our homes.
- Housing affordability and the price of land is a major concern in town. There is certainly a price differential between properties with direct access to Route 9 and those that do not have direct access. We certainly want our children to be able to afford to live here. Some people, some related to the College choose not to live here due to lack of services, primarily lack of internet.
- Marlboro Elementary is a fantastic school, which is a great asset, though school enrollments are down. (Enrollment around 80? for K-8) The infrastructure was built to accommodate double the enrollment in earlier years, though now the infrastructure is costing residents

- Our town government is good, a great resource and rather uncontroversial. The involvement of people from the college with the RPC is a strength.
- It is challenging for young adults to afford to stay here after graduating, and it is difficult to find jobs, though a lot of Marlboro College alumni live here.
- The recent growth rate has been about 5 new houses constructed per year.
- There is a lot of vacant property.
- Second home ownership drives property prices up in the area and locals find housing prices unaffordable. Many second homeowners tend to retire in Marlboro.
- The Conservation Commission is doing a good job. We have large undisturbed areas and are blessed with South Pond, the large abutting property, and the modest human impact here. It will be a challenge to keep large tracts of land intact.
- The organization “Marlboro Cares” deals with issues of housing for the elderly.
- We have a vision map for areas for future conservation efforts as well as a town plan. The vision map has been perceived as a threat and an attempt to legislate, which has caused some people to speak out. People against conservation planning don’t participate in the discussion until it comes time to vote. So we have a challenge putting teeth on the community vision, without angering the “silent majority”.
- Marlboro is an oasis lacking the development of the nearby neighboring cities and towns. We like it that way, want to remain hidden and prevent creeping development from Wilmington and Brattleboro.
- The town did plan to adopt resource conservation zones, coincided with areas that had already protected, but how can we use this start to expand resource conservation zones?
- Preservation of wildlife areas is a challenge, but we need to look into incentives to offer landowners for the transfer of development rights.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- The Conservation Commission has been studying the land, so is able to make informed decisions. One town cannot do a good job protecting bears, however, so our goal is to work more at the county level, because we need to think at a landscape scale.
- Key wildlife species requiring attention include bear and moose especially at particular road crossings on Route 9.
- We are grappling with policy related questions. Is larger zoning per acre a good thing? Bad thing? Does it make things worse? Do we keep 2 acre zoning, but implement wildlife reserve? Do we make it difficult to build far away from roads to protect core wildlife areas? How do we change zoning? What incentives to offer? Taxation for conservation? State level efforts?
- We should restrict development in isolated areas far from roads.
- We need more information and more information sharing to help inform landowners of their options and available tax incentives. This will enable them to better participate in conversations and make them aware of wildlife corridors.
- We need to change the “spin” and approach we take to talking about conservation, because the discussions are threatening to people.
- Planning and zoning maps are not visible to the public and are perceived as being inaccessible.
- Information made available to the public needs to be simplified and streamlined so that it is understandable to the public. Not dumbed down, but accessible. Available high speed or lack thereof is an issue.
- Zoning maps and minutes are on the town website.
- We would like to see efforts made to make people aware of conservation options for their land, especially for large land owners. Approaches to action must be both bottom-up and top down which will require state involvement. We should conserve what is already owned.
- Hogback is a great model of community involvement. We can learn a lot from that. We have a responsibility to share information regarding Hogback, so we can document and learn from that process.
- Are there funding resources for conservation? Vermont Land Trust?
- We are concerned about some large tracts of lands, owned by elderly, whose children live out of state. We would like to reach out to these people and start conversations with them.
- We envision a growth center which has elderly housing and combine a variety of uses.
- We should bring out those controversial issues that cause the “silent majority” to come out. This could be a strategy for getting them involved earlier in the process.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- Planning and zoning help us design the type of community we want. When it comes to action, it is easy to face a lot of opposition. Regulation is often perceived as bad, but there is a public benefit to regulation, so it is important to understand the value in that. It's a challenge, but zoning and regulations need to be communicated well to the public. Your experience with Hogback seems very positive and a potential rallying point. When Internet is more available Front Porch Forum is a great tool used in several communities for communication. There seems to be interest in preserving what you have here.
- It looks as if we are reaching a Renaissance of the past, where people want to connect with their food system and understand where their food comes from. According to one study, 95% of Vermonters want to maintain a working landscape, but this is a very complex issue. It is challenging to find ways to keep that land productive but this is where some of the tools of the state can help, for example regulation and help to encourage keeping the land productive. It is encouraging that Marlboro wants to conserve natural areas, pursue cluster development.
- We plan for what we are afraid of. Conservation is forever, so taking away development rights may not be best thing in long run in some cases. There is a lot of uncertainty in the future including job availability, our shrinking workforce, and overall recession in southern VT. These are tremendous problems and so we must find human capital to build resilient communities.
- Status quo regulations lead to some serious problems. If we gain affordable housing, you are going to lose the agricultural production of land and preservation of areas important to the bear population. If present regulations remain, then is stagnation a success? Expensive second homes are often converted to retirement homes. In spite of these problems, people continue to come here, and our visitors don't perceive traffic here as a problem, as we do.
- Windham County has a high percent of second home owners, and finding landowners to participate in conservation programs has been a challenge, especially with out-of-state landowners. The FSA does do some outreach to out of state landowners. There has been a 7% growth of farms under 50 acres in Windham County.
- Congratulations on your success with Hogback, it seems this achievement has brought your community together. You clearly value the youth and older members of the community. This Town Office and community center is a great resource to build upon. Getting maps available to the public seems to be something important to consider, perhaps using The Mixer as a means of communicating land conservation options and possibilities to landowners. Consider doing an "exchange of officers" exercise, we have done this in our office, where for one day public officials take on the role of another officer to see what goes on in a different capacity. This could be an eye-opening experience.
- It is wonderful to hear today that the planning commissions have been doing great work here. Planning is key component of democracy. It is clear that there is a divide, between those members of the community that come out and participate and those who do not participate in the process. It is sometimes easier not to make decisions and gain consensus, but decision making is essential, because in deciding for yourself, you then prevent outside forces from determining your future.

Renewable Energy Projects

Resource Team: Paul Costello (facilitator), Roger Allbee, Julie Jacque, Jeff Lewis, James Matteau, Johanna Miller, Jenny Nelson, Sarah Woodward (scribe).

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- We have a high potential for hydro power and waterwheels given the amount of stream in the area. State ordinances are tough and costly to work around. The lingering question is what can be done to make process easier?
- Many people have significant knowledge and experience in area in this area, including PV panels. There is a lot of education and awareness around energy consciousness in the area.
- There are several PV setups in this town. 4-5 people present have PVs.
- Marlboro's high elevation is favorable and provides us with a high potential for wind energy.
- Evaluation for commercial grade wind facility?
- We have solar power, it is accessible everywhere in town. There is plenty of sun despite Vermont being so cloudy.

- The Energy committee has participated in home visit program, and with the help of volunteers has installed CFL bulbs, and other energy improvements. This is part of the statewide program, (Button Up Vermont??) The energy committee has applied for several grants and been successful obtaining funds for heating/ventilation improvements in the school as well as for energy audits which have yet to be done.
- Funding for energy initiatives through taxes, the PACE Program (Property Assessed Clean Energy), was brought up at Town Meeting this year. No vote was held on this. The PACE program, is loan program for energy improvements, payable through/along with the Tax Bill. This has a lot of promise in terms of helping homeowners make decisions.
- The area has a history of using water powered sawmills and tinsmith mills.
- Cow power is another energy possibility.
- One challenge is NIMBY. Signs stating, "Wind Power, No Thank You". There is certainly is potential resistance.
- We are lucky to have a lot of firewood, a wonderful source of energy which is used fairly well in town.
- There are a few types of wind turbines, the vertical turbine and the three point turbines. There are benefits and drawbacks to both models, concerning return on investment, and space consumed.
- The site for wind turbines is an issue. Can we put them at the schools and incorporate them into the educational process.
- One idea is to integrate PVs on houses to provide communal source of power. We have a lot of potential as a neighborhood.
- One challenge is overcoming the perception of "only rich people do this" and address issues of privilege.
- One challenge is "being a suburb of Brattleboro". Transportation is a big component of our energy consumption.
- To make informed decisions requires research. So we need technical information related to solar. What resources does the State have?
- Many homes not designed to be energy efficient. Some individuals lack knowledge related to renovations and how to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes.
- The Town Energy Committee invites townspeople to participate in workshops. This is an opportunity to learn about energy improvement on their own homes. The Committee is having difficulty advertising this.
- Information sharing is critical and needed.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- We should have our own power plant that distributes energy house to house.
- We should compare our internal (community based) and external sources of energy.
- Education on how to make homes energy efficient, is the first step to going off the grid. This will make things easier and cheaper in the long run.
- We need to scale down our energy needs.
- We need to set a goal, in ways easily measurable, to reduce energy consumption, especially consumption of electricity. We need to measure our accomplishment and change over time.
- We need to buy down the cost of audits, so audits are more affordable to folks.
- The junior high class has helped install solar panels at the school and students are learning about offsetting their carbon footprint. Students wrote and obtained a grant. The systems they installed require 16 years for payoff.
- We should set a goal to be carbon free by, and set ourselves a timeline.
- There was an attempt to initiate a ride share program when fuel prices skyrocketed, and you no longer hear about that. Coordinated transportation is important.
- Wind energy projects are "Wanted in my front yard". It is still a question of size and scale of wind operation. Site is also an issue.
- A team should be created to write an educational document around energy related issues.
- House tours of existing energy systems in the community should be offered. This could provide an educational experience, increase communication, and allow opportunities for demonstrations.
- Tradespeople in the area should brainstorm and partner with other organizations, as part of a self-education process.
- Attend Solar Fest.
- We have many ideas, but when issues come up, a challenge is not knowing where to go for resources, help, and information to move things forward.
- One asset is that all ages are present and involved in the dialogue around energy issues.
- Could we establish a unique "Marlboro" identity around energy creation?
- Old road on Hogback (town purchase) might that be a location for wind operation? Can we explore this? Does this conflict with bear corridor?
- Can we conduct a study on what energy initiatives people would be willing to be a part of, what people are willing to do with their land, and what is preventing people from taking action on energy items?
- We are a tiny community.

- Finances are one obstacle. We need to find ways to make initiatives more feasible financially.
- We should try to be open to many options, so as not to exclude some people in the community.
- Co-op power could be an option, potentially an efficient way to pool our resources.
- There are a variety of needs in our community. We should create a resource map for the town that outlines

where wind possibilities exist and what slopes would work best for solar.

- Create non profit to do energy audits, where the money saved on electrical bills, goes to the organization. This money would help the organization work on future improvements.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- It is evident that several people in the community have knowledge and skills in this area. Information sharing needs to happen. The idea to create a resource map for the town is great. The concept of having an “Energy Fair” is fantastic. There are funds available through the USDA.
- NIMBY is prevalent, despite many people being interested in doing energy projects. But a major concern is how to involve people at home that are not interested. We need to give people room to be able to participate in the dialogue.
- Tonight, I have observed great energy in this room, but the question of how to focus this energy, remains. Identifying a path for the future must fit community interests. We need to identify our needs and get our goals and objectives written on paper.
- There is great energy and expertise in the area of renewable energy, and a great degree of experimentation is occurring on a statewide level. Collective energy is something that could be pursued. The “Energy Fair” is a great idea.
- Many communities are forming or have created energy committees. So the question remains, how do we

produce energy both for ourselves and for export. We face many challenges including global warming.

- Having energy committee in place is a wonderful source for bringing together ideas. Creating an energy source plan is a great idea, and the USDA is looking for funding opportunities.
- The greatest asset here is clearly the people power. (VECAN) is a great resource for networking, and providing opportunities for homeowners. Planning for your energy future is huge. The Vermont Sustainable Job Fund has some great resources, including GIS data layers with assessments regarding the potential of different areas/landforms to support various energy types. This can couple well with energy plan. Remember that both process and approach is important.

Infrastructure

Resource Team: Tricia Coates (facilitator), Steve Gold (facilitator), Suzanne Blanchard, Paul Bruhn, Harry Colombo, Jon Muise, Bob Paquin, Julian Portilla, Gwen Pokalo (scribe).

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

Telecommunications

Assets

- FBI communications tower in town on Hogback (multiple towers); also, there is a cell tower on Cowpath 40.

Challenges

- Poor communication with Fairpoint is a major issue. We feel powerless against large cell companies.
- Fairpoint came into town, so there are a few switching towers. Therefore, some community members have DSL, but some don't, and we don't know who has it and who does not – Ames Hill, Fire Station
- Dealing with large telecommunications companies has been really painful. The college has a line, but it's not in

use. The demographics of who can live in town is changing; new faculty is being hired at the college and they can't afford to be away from internet access, so don't live in Marlboro.

- There is no way to have dialogue with the large telecommunications companies because it is proprietary information.

Town Geography + Connectivity

- Because of the layout of the town, wireless won't work and fiber will be really expensive. Need an anchor town and a subsidy to get to a critical mass. There are simply not enough people in town to support a company like this.

- Cell coverage is very rocky.
- Emergency access to all town members is a concern. There was a suggestion that priority connectivity should be given to the parts of the community that is within close proximity to Vermont Yankee.

Town-Issue Background

- There had been a suggestion to go into a fiber system with other towns—EC Fibers + Burlington Telecom were the models. Money was going to come from the Layman Bros. Some interest from neighboring towns, but they needed Brattleboro for success. However, Brattleboro elected to try out Fairpoint.
- SoVerNet looking into optic system, and a subsidy may come from this grant.
- DSL is not 'it' – it's obsolete. It isn't enough; the community would like more opportunities to expand internet access.
- Marlboro had a grant from the state to implement wireless access but gave it back to the state because it didn't work.

Transportation

- "Transportation is a double-edged sword. Traffic is an indication of my business capacity – if it gets quieter, I'm broke. It's nice to have a dirt road, but if people want to survive in town, they need people going back and forth in town."

Assets

- There are a fair amount of people at the college who take the bus to Brattleboro and back (main commute times: morning and evening).
- Rural transportation service can take you one trip per month if handicapped, etc.
- Want to maintain small town life.
- The Fire Dept trained first responders and have an ER vehicle for quick response. (Ambulances come from Brattleboro and Wilmington.)
- We're articulate people and passionate. We can have a strong voice.

Challenges

ROUTE 9!

- Fast, very noisy (trucks), and overall, dangerous. Many neighbors can't send their kids to the pond because it's too dangerous.

- Geographic conditions increases danger. If it's raining in Brattleboro, it will be black ice here. Trucks drive very fast and don't pay attention to cars.
- Truck traffic increased in the 1990s. A suggestion was made to shut trucks down in the winter because when a truck gets shut down there, it shuts down the whole road until clean up can come. There is pressure from CNS so trucks drive when it's snowing and they don't have snow tire.
- What else could the trucks do? They could take Rte 2, 4, Mass Turnpike. State police patrol Rte 9.
- Not safe to drive in winter.
- Concern was expressed about Rte 9 being a critical corridor for animals.

South Road

- Walking is scary and dangerous. There are no police to enforce limits, nor are limits posted.
- Questions: Do the Feds mandate nothing below a speed limit of 40 on a connector road like Rte 9? There was a discussion about the design of the road to speed limit.
- Limited ability to walk and bike in the town and limited public transit.
- There are limited places to wait for a bus. The bus, called 'The Moover,' offers limited hours and service.
- In regards to walkability and bike paths: What rights do we have as private land owner? As a town? The town needs to make a commitment to alternative routes.

Dirt Roads (are they an asset or challenge?)

- The care of dirt roads needs to be the responsibility of the people who live on dirt roads. They have the intimate knowledge of the roads.
- If you improve roads, you'll increase traffic and speed.
- Dirt roads are tough on cars and you!
- The maintenance of dirt roads expensive.

Emergency Access + Roads

- If you need an ambulance in the middle of the night, it's going to take a long time to get to you because of the mud bogs.
- No one knew anything about emergency mitigation plan. However, Lisa is the director and should know.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

Communication

- We want to know our neighbors and know their phone numbers.
- 'Neighbor net' – Develop a calling tree to know roads. We can use Neighbor-net to find out who has internet and from where (one person has satellite) to answer: who is connected in our town? If there is an urgent need to get connected and that person lives close to me, they can come to my house.

- We need to be super-structured electronically and medically prepared for emergencies.
- Individuals and neighbors need to be more community/self prepared for emergencies.
- We should build collaborative cell towers with neighboring towns. We should encourage self learning around telecommunications.
- Southern Vermont is a 'black-hole' in cell coverage planning. We need to strengthen our regional voice!

- This is a geography issue. It may be necessary to have it legally mandated to have connectivity (which is what they did with electricity).
- Internet is the 'new utility' and impacts who we can draw here. European communities are more united around these issues; perhaps we should use them as a model.
- We should provide wireless at school, college, town offices.

Transportation

- There must be a way for not all of us to have to go everywhere! We suggest having available more farm-stands and green grocers; have truckers come once a week or so with produce. Then I don't have to drive; I can walk.
- Develop group transit.
- Develop a way to connect rides. Rideshare is tough because there are always more people who need rides than those giving because people don't want to put schedule down. We should start looking into developing a regional system (Ibrattleboro). Should we start by using bulletin boards?
- How do we influence the Moover + school buses to help us with transportation routes and development?
- Vernon has a mini bus. Maybe we could formulate a bus for the town. It can be energy efficient.

- Put a bus stop out front of town offices.
- Address speed issues.
- On South Road, we should further reduce speed limits and put stop sign in front of the Brelsford Property so people stop because it's a blind corner.
- Slow the speed limit on Route 9, especially around the school. May we can put up a sign about 'no jake-brake' for truckers, but we don't know how to do that.
- Address through zoning: If we build up the village district along commercial area on rte 9 (not really in the historic district), maybe we can talk to the state about reducing speed limit if it's a new community center.
- Identify alternative routes around town.
- Perhaps we can develop a pedestrian underpass under Rte 9.
- Increase the ability for walking and biking. How can we encourage people to not use cars to go between school and town offices?
- To increase safety, there should be basic driver education around sharing the road and etiquette.
- Seniors and students can use the same bus system.
- We should create off trail networks for bikes.

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- There is growing support for utility model for broadband access.
- Self reliance + independence are strengths. You can do better counting on each other especially around transportation and emergency.
- This is a very opportunistic community!
- There is a high level of technical knowledge, which speaks to how long you have been organizing around this. You are struggling to balance small town living and

city utilities. Neighboring towns have same problems; talk to other towns and get good ideas and share war stories.

- Keep up the fight and continue to ask for what you need

Town Identity

Resource Team: Tricia Coates (facilitator), Steve Gold (facilitator), Suzanne Blanchard, Paul Bruhn, Harry Colombo, Jon Muise, Bob Paquin, Julian Portilla, Gwen Pokalo (scribe).

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- “Identity means different things to different people – are we a bedroom community or not? Is economic development something we all embrace or do we want it somewhere else? Are our assets for community development or to keep our little secret?”
- 30% of houses aren’t primary residences, which drives up property values.
- Development is changing nature of the town identity.
- There is no long term picture in light of what changes are going on.

Assets

- Skilled artists
- There are many small businesses and self-employed people who aren’t fully embraced by town. A good deal of commerce happens here, but quietly.
- Having the music festival here means that there are many talented musicians in town.
- Elementary school has opportunity to attract many people to town.
- The elementary school is a community center for those with kids in school, but if you don’t, it’s a bedroom community for people with jobs in Brattleboro, etc.
- Excellent environment + atmosphere – we want to live here.
- Our town meeting is a strength. We always balance the budget.
- Most of us moved here in the 70s and 80s and aren’t going anywhere. There is not a whole lot of turnover.
- We have routine gatherings: potluck lunch at town meeting; community dinner; holiday concert; rummage sale; fair; book swap; mixer, which help overcome topographical issues.
- 30% of the houses aren’t primary residences, which helps pay the school bills.
- We have been described as, ‘preserved’.
- Marlboro Cares is a volunteer program with good success.
- People in the community and our places (neighborhoods, natural assets)
- South Pond is a huge connecting place for people with children.
- Quidmore Peyton Trust (but this is lapsing and may only be accessible by members)
- On the college land, there are 15-20 miles of hiking and ski trails and historic sites.
- We have the ski challenge every year.
- An issue of town identity was exemplified in a story about how difficult it was to decide on a town sign. They couldn’t figure out where to put the sign after they decided against ‘welcome to Marlboro’.
- Though the town meeting always balances the budget, this makes us run on a shoestring. There is a cheapskate mentality. Pride and liability may play into this.
- Property values are driven up because there are many summer-only residents. Thus, there are few moderate income housing options and little to no rentals.
- We have been described as, ‘Preserved’; “As if that’s Vermont”; Elitist – hippie/Birkenstock crowd
- This is a liberal town. Non-liberals feel disempowered.
- The elementary school is becoming very exclusive, so it’s difficult for young people to come into town. Therefore, we may have to link with other schools in the area.
- They are closing the preschool because there aren’t enough kids. [One family] originally moved here because of the elementary, preschool, and daycare. Now, all but the elementary have closed. We used to have kids from other towns.
- Most of us moved here in the 70s and 80s and aren’t going anywhere, so there is not a whole lot of turnover of houses. This contributes to the difficulty for younger people to move into town. The town is fractured along these lines.
- There is a passing lane right in front of school
- Folks can’t work from home because of connectivity issues.
- Music Festival: Most people know the town because of the music festival and/or the college. This is difficult for the town. The music festival contributes little to the town society. Elitism may play into this.

Questions on Town Identity:

- Are we aware of the range of community members? For voices that aren’t present, how do we hear them?
- Does the community support giving someone a break on taxes if there’s a route that can connect areas on their property?
- Do we want people to know about Jake’s Trust?

Challenges

- Where is the center of town? It’s difficult to identify the town center because the topography of town breaks it into smaller areas.
- Route 9 cuts through the community.
- Meeting space for seniors is difficult because there is no town center.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Support artists + develop community
- Open a shop in town featuring all the artists in town. Attract people off Route 9; could be a restaurant with music and high speed internet
- We should develop a clearinghouse of talents around town; a map of who lives where and does what/socioeconomics. Maybe we can put it on the website.
- Redevelop the art walk. Currently – West Brattleboro Arts – don't id by watershed.
- Open a preschool at the elementary.
- Build inter-dependency through smaller neighborhood meetings.
- We think it would be a wonderful shift of identity to move toward inter-dependability.
- Deliberately turn the historic district into the true center of town.
- The town can buy the restaurant and run it. Create other centers (other than school and post office) to draw people out.
- Bring back Friday pizza night, which was friendly to the town people. They even sent pizza to the school once a week.
- Use Route 9 as a unifier.
- Reopen the old Route 9 and close the current Route 9. Use 100 mile view as a little outlook with a restaurant and gift shop.
- Slow traffic so that you know you're in a town, and want to see what it has to offer.
- Create stronger sense of Marlboro through programming for seniors; place for teens; gym; reading room/book loan – build a physical center; use different places for different things.
- We need help with highway department *
- We need high speed internet.
- We can use the Kingdom Paths model to create trails. Do we want to share paths?

Reflections of the Community Visit Team

- This was a rich discussion and focused on the connectivity of organizations and entrepreneurs. It seems the town is unsure of how to mix visitors with residents.
- South Pond is a really important part of the community. If the trust is running out, it needs to be re-secured. Look at Brandon for a model of a successful artist guild and retail space or the restaurant/village store in Hardwick. It had been suffering because it didn't have a restaurant/pub that served the full community, and now it's a community supported venture. This could easily happen here.
- There are tremendous assets here: tremendous intellectual assets in town (not because of the college, but especially because of the college). You're not trying to be something you're not already, and you're not grappling with crime problems or empty commercial space or people fleeing town.
- There are many things to use to identify yourself – try not to get your identity too whittled down. Despite geographical realities, the sense of community is alive and well. You are head and shoulders above other communities in your ability to identify community successes.
- The complexity and richness of your community should be valued; do not over simplify. You are aware of strengths and weaknesses of each neighborhood. Encourage use of natural areas and look at conserved lands and private/public use. Get a Marlboro Arts Council!
- [The expert was] impressed with the idea around inclusiveness of everyone in the town. Perhaps certain people can't participate in these sessions. Think about the opportunities that can be real for the people who didn't come to these sessions as well. Build on the concern for inclusion: infrastructure is a way to explore opportunities for everyone.
- Value your town newsletter.

Town Center / Community Center

Resource Team: Tricia Coates (facilitator), Steve Gold (facilitator), Suzanne Blanchard, Paul Bruhn, Harry Colombo, Jon Muise, Bob Paquin, Julian Portilla, Gwen Pokalo (scribe).

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- There is a difference between a civic center and social center. “Marlboro has a heart which needs a home”
- “There is no place to get a good ham sandwich” (Sweetie’s is more for people passing through town.)
- The town is very dependent on people starting commercial business, but transition is difficult. The community needs to make the investment.

Need for a Community Center

- Actual building
- We could name it the “Marlboro Arts + Activity Center.”
- Identify the Skyline Restaurant as a community center.
- There is a concern about having one space for everything.
- Physical center of town
- Could we use structures already here? It’s difficult to rearrange to accommodate events. Perhaps we could expand the current community center (physical center of town) and have it be multi-use and connect with paths.
- I want to have multiple centers of community connected by bike paths, etc. that spread out more into the community.
- People won’t drive there just because there’s a building there. There are many separate parts of town, and no Main Street in Marlboro. If we really want to create this, we’re going to have to look further than just putting up a building. We need to create something where people intentionally go.
- Does ‘if you build it they will come’ apply here?
- We should move the town center onto Rte 9 to slow traffic
- FYI: We have made lists in the past about community centers.

WHAT WE NEED IN A COMMUNITY CENTER

Meeting space

- We have a need to connect with others, face-to-face. Currently, there is no good place physically to meet. Psychologically, we are a strong community. However, there is no easy place to get together as a community.
- Things do happen here: for example, the senior exercise in junior high room. We make do. There’s the school, Sweetie’s, and the post office. If there’s a place we can have a kitchen, have meals, have meeting space, and have classes, that would be ideal. The school is gracious about meeting space, but there are constraints and it’s busy. There are various small places to meet.

Socialization Space

- We don’t have a casual place to run into people and socialize. The post office is not enough. If we had a

library or supermarket...place you go to regularly that you run into your neighbors rather than planned events.

- We want a room big enough for town meeting/contradances. Also, a café, kitchen to process goods from farms, community market, library. We want entertainment space for dancing, Square dance, music.
- We need to have programming for seniors to keep them there- intergenerational meeting place. Need the village to raise kids. Single mothers need support from role models.
- Could we connect senior housing to the community center?
- We need a place for parents with young kids to get together on rainy days.

Services

- Marlboro is the only town in Windham County without a library and community meeting space.
- We are particularly well suited for collaborations to start a library.
- We have no dump or recycling center. Could we put it in the community center?
- We need an information center; a Chamber of Commerce type thing. We need someplace where people know what they can get in town. Maybe we could make a Moover bus stop there?
- We’d like to see a warming centers model.
- We should have a nondenominational church.
- We could have movies at the center!

Connecting the centers

- Walkability is an issue.
- I want to see something accessible by paths (pedestrian/walking) to Sweetie’s.
- Public transportation is rough, and having to rely on Brattleboro is tough.
- We could have a town parking lot and then connecting paths to walk between centers.

Exhibit talent

- Let’s have a space to exhibit local art, educational, creative interest: an outlet for local artisans.
- Create an art guild. It can be housed in a coffee shop with lending library and music + gallery. It has to be close enough in proximity to other services.
- We’d like to have dance/art, etc classes in town instead of sending kids to Brattleboro.

QUESTIONS THE COMMUNITY ASKS:

- How does a center like this encourage others to move here?

- How well do we use the space we already have? Should we invest in someone to look at how we can capitalize on what we already have?

- How do we include the college as a part of the center?

WISH LIST: In a Community Center

- Really good bathrooms with showers
- Adequate plumbing
- Fire station – we want to have the community more involved. Then we can get more volunteers.
- Kitchen
- We should provide services for others, like senior meals on wheels
- Informal gathering places
- Accessible by foot or bike in a safe way along paved roads
- Multi-use space with at least one large meeting space with smaller break out rooms
- ***Pub/café – help students get off campus (extremely popular)
- Lobby with bulletin boards
- Flexible space
- Good parking
- Multi-generational – senior and very young and college students
- Weekly senior lunch + transportation
- Town library

- Senior and/or affordable housing
- Shared office space/income generation
- Function as an emergency shelter
- Internet access
- Outdoor space – community garden, place structure
- Green building/eco outfitted – match aesthetic of the current town
- Endowment – make it so whole burden isn't on tax payers

DON'T WANT

- People going there whenever they want. Concerned about: early teen hang out; BYOB; rent for party space
- Pay special attention to not relying on volunteers – someone needs to be in charge
- What will it cost + what will it do to taxes
- Increased traffic/sound
- Crime because of the fact that people from other towns may use the space
- Don't want to lose community connections that already exist (elementary performances at the college; lessons at HogBack)

CURRENT PLACES

- Firehouse

Reflections of the Visiting Team

- This is a good place, and it's not fractionalized. You all agree that something important is missing. You need to decide if the center will be function-driven in a few different places, or one centralized place.
- You're very positive. Creativity will be a great asset.
- Priorities: pub, internet, and better corridors between multiple centers you already have. Innovative ideas! Whatever we make, make it so we can make it office space, and share resources.
- Go out and do it! Visit and talk with other communities to see how they tackled these issues.
- Consensus in Marlboro is fantastic. You're looking for vehicles to bring that together.
- Get others involved who haven't been involved today.

The Town / Gown Relationship

Visiting Team Members: Chuck Ross, Greg Brown, Larry Mandell, Nancy Owens, Will Sawyer, Ryan Torres, Susan Titterton (scribe)

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- Wonder how much Marlboro College (MC) is thought of as part of the town. Some people may forget about MC, and when we mention to students that they live in a town they seem surprised.
- How can we balance the traffic and speed on South Road, the access to college from the community?
- For some people in town MC doesn't even exist; town and the college are two entities that don't interconnect.

We used to think the elementary school couldn't have events at the college because none of town would come.

- Feels like a cultural divide for some that the college is an intellectual place they couldn't have anything to do with; also true for the music school.
- MC students come and help at the elementary school. Bruce Cole, an MC alum, later became a teacher and principal at the elementary school. He held a candle of

- Forrest, with the Marlboro Historical Society, did a photography project—black and white photos of people around town. The exhibit was at the college and so many people from around town went.
- Speaking as a small business-person, I've had faculty come to visit our shop with their students. As an idea, we could develop a town resources directory to help students doing research or wanting to get more familiar with the town. This could include people and special places.
- We could get a community engagement grant to work together with MC and the elementary school around the Hogback land the town recently purchased. This could include a listing of things that exist out there. Question is: how do we link up those two groups and that town resource?
- This year at Town Meeting, only two MC students came in the afternoon to observe as non-voting members, despite our efforts to get them engaged. They were singled out at "non-voting" MC students may get registered as Marlboro residents and therefore voters. Does the town want that kind of participation?
- As teacher at MC, a challenge is to incorporate the town into my teaching. It is amazing how shy the students can be about making contact with community members. Maybe we could have functions like the Historical Society function, with a mixer ahead of time.
- How can we make the college more accessible to townspeople? Forrest's exhibit may be coming back; that's an opportunity.
- A few Marlboro residents come to the MC library. They can take books and DVDs out. Many don't realize that.
- Marlboro prides itself on older residents being able to stay at home. They may need help, shoveling, etc. which is a good way for town residents to get to know MC students, if they help out, maybe visit and have tea. We haven't made enough of that opportunity. There was Marlboro Cares at the college to set things like this up. It has had lots of turnover, every semester, and takes vigilance to keep it going. Maybe we can revive it. Now we have Dasha Peacock (career counselor) who could keep track of that.
- Don't know how much the town sees this, but an issue that comes up on campus is students drinking. There's quality of isolation, students don't think they are being observed. A greater sense of inclusion in the town might help students to grow up faster on that issue.
- Quite a few MC students are members of the fire department, also some work at Sweeney's.
- Student traffic that goes sixty miles an hour is a problem; not other things. Isolation on campus may mean other issues stay on campus, at the end of the road.
- One person who rents a house to students sees that once a year there's a loud party and sometimes students don't leave the house in good shape.
- Everyone who is in this session is college connected in some way. We don't know what might others say or what their perspectives might be. We don't hear about it much. Not at town meeting. There's some sense of a split, a schizophrenia. Think there is some resentment toward college and music school from others in town.
- Think there is a real divide. Wonder what the proportion of people "from away" who have moved here may be. There seems to be a divide between people from away and native people here. Disappointed that we're all college people here today.
- Marlboro is the center of 5 watersheds. Energy runs off to Brattleboro and Wilmington. It's like 5 villages in the town. Hard to connect those.
- At same time people may like not being involved in everything, part of why they live in small rural environment.
- Tax-wise the college is a significant taxpayer and asset.
- The elementary school is an asset to the college, allows MC students experience and a place to do projects. The School Board is very welcoming. The preschool used to be an asset this way, as well.
- Work-study funds allow MC students to work at the elementary school. Having different school calendars makes it hard though.
- The college offers many cultural activities free to townspeople that are well-attended.
- MC has an active outdoor program—a cross-country trail system, skating rink, and soccer field—all open to town use. The auditorium is available, as well. Many don't know the skating rink available, not sure about the other resources.
- MC lets elementary school do performances at the college and is very accommodating.
- There will be Hogback ecology and environmental course at the college.
- Some use library, many don't know. Same with the skating rink and events at the college. How to let people know more? There is a bimonthly town newspaper and website to get that information.
- There's some confusion about college library; some feeling it was discouraged at some point. Then guidelines were worked out and new librarian. The message is the library does not have the resources to extend it as a research library, but it's okay for borrowing books. These final parameters were never announced clearly.
- Information-wise, there is a college website and college monthly mailing of events at college and resources available. The town also has a website for putting out information.

- One of the best connections is when students get summer jobs working at Sweeties or at the Inn. It brings them into a sense of this as a town.
- Large number of alumni who have settled into town is an asset.
- Music school in summer, housed by the college, is great asset. Music festival gives back to town; many musicians have built houses in town.
- The college brings intellectual capital to the town. Faculty and staff participate in town and serve on committees.
- The volunteer fire department has more MC students than any other town activity.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- MC helps town to advocate for broadband access for every resident. A college person gave her example of having T3 at work and then dial-up at home. Town-wide broadband would help home businesses.
- Photography show was such a great success; what other things like that could we do? College gallery could be used for other shows, maybe a show of artwork by townspeople. Maybe we could do more things to bring townspeople to the college. Maybe the town could use the gallery during times when it's empty.
- Concert at Town House done by student drew lots of townspeople; could have more events at Town House.
- Contra dances in Outback at school drew students and community members.
- What about service learning? What could that mean at the college? What opportunities are there right here in town?
- There is the Wendell Judd ski race every year, townspeople and students participate. It uses town land, private land and college land. There's been a significant increase in participation over the years. It's a lovely fun event. How can we celebrate that or think of another similar event?
- The fair in the fall is similar.
- Planning Commission might think about how to integrate MC and the community, perhaps something near the college that is community-based—apartments for elders, childcare, and a swimming pool—something that would bring town and college together in a “built environment.” Perhaps joint fundraising to create that.
- Great opportunities in the use of Hogback; the college get involved with town to create those.
- Little affordable housing in town that could attract college teachers, young families. Would be good to have high-speed Internet access in such housing.
- College gave up daycare center operation, now this one is going out of business. It was a great asset; parents had to be involved and do projects.
- Could the MC Health Center do blood pressure screenings for elders in town? Very willing to look at service opportunities for Health Center, assuming capacity.
- Joint building could solve a slot of problems “Marlboro North.” Town has no public venue, no grange. Town House has no bathroom and no insulation, most uncomfortable seats ever. There's a real need for a physical space.
- Could create a directory of assets, services and people and places in town. College could use that information to enrich their teaching.
- How is community positioned in marketing that the college does? “There's a town 12 miles away.” (Brattleboro)
- There's a blindness to resources in this town “own back yard.” We go to Brattleboro or Wilmington.
- A lot of students appreciate being out here away from everything. They find interesting places to live: a group that live in Brattleboro and bikes around, a group that lives here in a tree house or built a teepee.
- We could create some way for students to meet alumni or others who have been here for a long time due to their connection with the college and the town.
- Some people have creative and amazing ways to make living for themselves. Town is full of them. Students could benefit from learning / knowing about this.
- Is there mentoring for students? Not formally. A number of townspeople have been outside evaluators for senior projects.
- When power has gone out for long stretches, somehow people in town took in students. And college fed and watered any townspeople who could get to college. Everybody coped well and it was a real emergency. We could have cooperated even more. That's improving; still a ways to go.
- There's an educational resource in our elementary school. Then students go off to high schools for four years. Families can use tuition for private school or the public high school of their choice. Maybe we could create a transition for students between high school and college, like Simon's Rock, beginning to do college work and then transition into Marlboro. It would be high school for 3 years, transition 1 year, then college.
- Some concerns about some kids not being engaged in their senior year. They can take classes at Keene state, not Marlboro. Not sure why not—expensive? Not for credit? Actually, there is a program for kids to take courses at MC, but the school board doesn't know that.
- Reputation of MC as just a music school; didn't know they taught science.

- How can we engage parents from the non-college part of town? Perhaps mainly through focusing on their children in elementary school, through saying as a community “these are our children too,” “ we need loggers, etc. too.”
- Can we get MC faculty and elementary school teachers together? What kinds of conversations could we have?

One class doing a community oral history project connects the elementary school and historical society, connects parents as kids talk about what they’re learning, also older people in town.

- Even in our small town, don’t know what people on other side of town are doing. How to bring us together? Why might we want to do that?

Reflections of the Community Visit Team:

- I’ve not heard a lot a lot of stereotypical issues saying that kids are a problem. You want to integrate the town through ideas like a directory or a center. Is there a liaison now between MC and the town? Community wants to work together. Town meeting example of college student participation is interesting.
- Heard more about assets than about opportunities and problems. What you’ll hear from us may be what you already know. I haven’t heard a deal breaker, huge barriers or polarizing issues. Traffic mentioned but not heard much about. School and community are not connecting in some ways that they could. May be on the edge of making those happen.
- Communication very opportunistic and ad hoc. This is a significant issue in how you move forward. You mentioned people who are not here and having somewhat of a one-way conversation with those who in some way are all connected with college. Someone mentioned resentment out in hills and dales. And, students aren’t here either (spring break).
- Desire for community connections town-college, generational, away vs. native. Lack of awareness about resources available at the college and perhaps some blindness regarding the college realizing that.
- Communication. College wants to be a partner but is not proactive about that. Library access, available space, and

the skating rink are examples. Is this really a partnership? Are there equal partners here? Both sides have to want to and make it happen. Seem to need ongoing communication that’s formal, not ad hoc.

- Desire to integrate, know one another, use each other’s assets but haven’t figured out how to do that yet. Many ideas about how to do that were expressed today.
- There’s an undercurrent. You’re a small rural town where you may not know about neighbors in other parts of town. That’s related a lot to topography. Whereas college is concentrated entity (the largest nucleus), it’s not really a part of the town but wants to be. Issues around communication are about more than just people talking to each other. Face to face contact hard. How many of folks who participate actively in town affairs have some connection to the college? Answer to that question can say a lot about where center of gravity is in town. (90%? More than ½? 75%?)

The Regional Voice

Visiting Team Members: Chuck Ross, Greg Brown, Larry Mandell, Nancy Owens, Will Sawyer, Ryan Torres, Susan Titterton (scribe)

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- Question: What is “regional voice?”
- Answer: It came up regarding Route 9, getting things done through the Agency of Transportation (AOT) and VTRANS. We can’t say to Unicef “will you cover our town?” Need to connect with other towns in a regional way to get things done.
- Answer: How do we maintain the perspective of our particular school and also work with other towns? We have a particular culture we came here for (laid back); don’t know how that gets spread out and stays the same.
- Answer: How do we co-exist in the larger community of Southeastern VT? We benefit from a regional agricultural voice. Example, concerns about nuclear leakage and impact on local agriculture. What does southeastern VT mean re: housing, taxes, agriculture, etc.?
- Answer: School as center of community; not willing to give that up to pressure from the state to consolidate small rural schools. We have a very good school. Our children do well. Avoid a lot of the problems Brattleboro has. Newfane and Marlboro have very different ideas about how schools should be.

- Concerns about how to work together within region and still protect what we have locally (school, especially) School budgets pass. School choice, including private schools. Most go to Brattleboro Union HS. Transportation is provided to Brattleboro.
- School population has dropped K-8, now only 88 students. Kids fuss, but two extra years in small progressive school is good for them. Not many younger families coming in; not much affordable housing or job opportunities to attract young families with children. Think school population may rebound in ten years.
- If we lost our school, we might lose our identity as a town.
- Transportation, solid waste, broadband are all examples of regional issues.
- Regarding Route 9, thousands of vehicles go by everyday, but can get places. Talk annually about more use of back roads, but hate mud season. Would like Route 9 area near school to be acknowledged with some way to slow traffic down. Discussed with AOT having a breakdown lane or turning lane, but difficult to get help as a small town. People drive too fast on windy mountain road; lots of accidents which fire dept has to respond to.
- Some want to speed Route 9 up to 50 mph (means 80 mph). State wanted a bypass. Town voted it down. Would have meant more vehicles driving faster on this curvy mountain road. Ongoing adversarial relationships with people (who work in town, trucking companies. work at some distance, who commute, go over the mountain to the ski areas) who want to make the roads faster. A solution: Pass a law to limit the noise that motorcycles and trucks can make and let town enforce it and keep the money.
- Route 9 is a problem (speed, noise) and an asset (transportation access).
- Route 9 is promoted as the quickest way for trucks and others to get places. Would like to have a village designation at intersection by school to slow down traffic.
- State police enforce speed limits on Route 9. Sheriff gives some coverage in town. Most accidents on Route 9 are from ski area traffic, comes that way and through Marlboro.
- Regarding other police/ emergency response needs, some things that go on at college, college deals with and town not aware of. Some concern about sheriff coverage, but nothing specific shared.
- In mid-80s lots of burglary issues. Set up neighborhood watch. Recently have had another rash of burglaries. State police working on this. Think it's related to drug use and people traveling up and down Connecticut Valley. Reviving the neighborhood watch. Regional crime-related issues.
- College is an asset—Marlboro and SIT in Brattleboro. Availability of liberal college people.
- Brattleboro as more of a regional center for performances, events, stores, etc.
- Small farmers market in Wilmington. We try to keep the conversation going about small-scale regional farming, with other small farmers so we become collaborators more than competitors. Would like to see this southeastern VT regional voice expand. "Let us embrace our local agricultural possibilities."
- Many people would like to be able to have internet-based businesses, but we're lagging in that access to the great world. Local access was put in as a public project, which is not allowed to compete with private service providers. So, can't extend the service from elementary school beyond. Fairpoint is trying (DSL), but topography of town makes it hard. Great Auk Wireless thought they could do it, but couldn't.
- Development-wise, just a few houses being built. Large tracts of land in conservation and also topography make it hard to build. Development isn't a problem. Those who live in town may simply divide property up so their children can build houses.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Could we enhance tourism? There are lots of crafts people spread out. Not enough passing through traffic. Hogback has pro-commercial strip on either side. Might be able to do something there and with Skyline Restaurant. Currently, people are going through, not stopping. Other than college or music festival in summer.
- (Appreciation was expressed for local, state and federal civil servants and elected officials whom you can reach on the phone and they are happy to help you.)
- Zoning/ planning-wise, could create a village district in the Route 9 area near the school to lower speed. But, we have no density in that spot. Can we create that designation in our town plan? We could also be more positive about commercial development along Route 9, but we need to avoid what happened in West Brattleboro with several gas stations and an abandoned IGA—junky stuff, not appealing. Do you really want to make the village where the state highway intersects it?
- Basically, we like the way we are here. We like to be isolated and convenient. Our Planning Commission does a good job. And, we wait to see what Dummerston does and then use those ideas.
- Would like to see a regional bus system. Continue to support the little local buses. Could the bus from

Wilmington stop at the P.O. and encourage people to ride. Now they only go up to the college. They don't come in

summer because the music festival people use their own cars. Could they come twice a day?

Reflections of the Community Visit Team:

- Small size inhibits your voice regarding changes you'd like in Route 9. Worries about changes from outside the region, particularly school consolidation. Opportunity for Marlboro to highlight what it has—crafts, agriculture. What could happen if Marlboro had broadband access?
- School as center of gravity for town. You feel the loss of school could affect the town's identity; at the same time the change from smallness and rural nature could negatively affect town's identity.
- There is a particular voice and way of life in Marlboro (rural), along with the headaches and inconveniences of living that way. Challenges of living along Route 9. Worries about school. Challenges/ opportunity broadband access (or lack thereof) present.
- Regional agriculture is an opportunity. There may be more opportunity regarding the college. The town and college don't currently sell each other. I don't think you should wait until you're about to die before you get some younger families in town. It's about housing, so this is an attractive place for people to live. Your biggest risk is Marlboro College not being successful. Many small colleges are at-risk. Many are going to on-line learning.
- Struck by how important community and culture are to you. The first thing you talked about was education and protecting the school. Route 9 causes you the most anxiety. Interesting that the college didn't come up once here. What might college say about regional voice?
- You do have a culture / identity. You do see regional issues that are opportunities (agriculture) or threats (the school). You may have more power to influence Route 9 and the school than you think. Route 9 seems to be your biggest issue. Your biggest risk is to do nothing. Route 9 is going to change and you want to get out ahead of those changes. You have the choice, the space, and the people power to figure that out. You also have a need to have a dialogue with the college about how interrelated you are going to be, to think about what's in your best interest.

Affordability and Taxes (*Diversity and Housing*)

Visiting Team Members: Chuck Ross, Greg Brown, Larry Mandell, Nancy Owens, Will Sawyer, Ryan Torres, Susan Titterton (scribe)

What are the Assets and Challenges in this Area?

- Have some very large property owners, push for conservation, lots of open land, but they're taxed to death, leads to dissolving of that land. Should they get an abatement for us enjoying their property? It's a challenge for the town.
- Real drivers for local property taxes are not decisions made in town, but at state and federal level. Examples are health costs, tax burden, cost shifting, not from decisions we make.
- So few property transfers; a high property sale increases the assessment for a lot of other property owners.
- Feeling burden of other policies; town being asked to carry the weight of things that seem best from the state level or federal level; not decided at town level.
- Regarding the school budget, we have a large number of kids with special education needs. That brings our costs up. We want to support those kids, but the cost should be spread out over state or paid for by state. It's a federal mandate, but they don't pay for it.
- Services we provide (and want to provide) are paid for only by property owners, not by renters.
- The listers see decisions made each year at the state legislative level. The answer is people have tried to change Act 60/68, but there's no good model to put in its place. It needs to be attacked at the state legislative level to figure it out.
- I would like to see taxes separated from "evil-ness." Taxes pay for services we all use. Marlboro does a good job of budgeting well for services we want. Taxation is not evil; it's necessary.
- My children can't afford to buy property; costs have gone up an unreasonable amount. My grandkids live in Brattleboro and can't afford to live here. (True about VT. True about the NE.) Clustered housing might help to solve some of these issues.
- 30% of housing in Marlboro is 2nd homes. Some states tax that group higher and they'll pay it. But, fairness is a question; they have to pay more and they're not using services.

- Some second homes are rented out to other people who live in town with their families and their kids go to the school.
- 2nd homes are an asset as far as taxes and a challenge as far as property values.
- Cost per acre for small acreage is higher than cost per acre for large pieces of land.
- Incomes have not kept pace with property values. So, people are income poor and property rich.
- Our values are high because we live in a nice place. People want to move into Marlboro. A lot of people move here for the school, too.
- In the summer, it's cooler here than in Brattleboro. (And, there are a lot of cool people here, due to the school, the college, and the great people.)
- Many people come to college and stay here.
- In comparison to a lot of other places in the NE, it's affordable. I have a nicer house and more land than I had where I used to live.
- People move to VT thinking it's going to be inexpensive, and it's not.
- South Pond is a great asset. As well, the environment in general—outside, walking, biking, skiing, the pond.
- Some people show some resentment for people who have their property in land use, yet that's the land we all ski on.
- Some things lower our costs: no sewage, other things that are the cost of running a community (cost, sewage, trash removal).
- The school makes my life affordable, to be able to have my kids in a good public school and not have to put them in a private school. My taxes pay for their education, instead of having to pay taxes and pay private school tuition.
- The town has school choice for high school. Some people move here to have that asset.
- We talk about building or operating a community center, but that's another cost we'd have.
- We have some diversity of land use and occupations in terms of our local agriculture. That's an asset we need to protect. A lot of economic diversity.
- We don't have cultural diversity.

Opportunities: What Should Be Done?

- Cluster housing for seniors, but how do we fund that? Who funds those kinds of things? Example: How do we attract something like Vernon Green or Putney Cares? We do have Marlboro Cares, but they're not about to fund housing.
- If there were senior housing in town, it might open up other housing for people to move into. My mother is a perfect example of that. There was no place in Marlboro, so she had to move to Brattleboro. Right, a lot of us would second that.
- Senior housing must have accessibility in mind.
- Get Marlboro North dorm back from the college to make senior housing? Building not suitable, site could be.
- Question to Nancy: Are other towns doing that kind of thing? A: There are a lot of towns that have managed to do that—a hundred different ways. A large amount of resources, the question is whether the town wants it, what kind you want, what resources you can bring to the table, and how you prepare the ground for it.
- Nancy's idea: A property is transferred. As part of the transfer, you say the value of that house is fixed. When you suppress the value of that house, how does it affect the values of other homes? If it's a foot in the door, it's interesting to consider. (More information was offered on how this might go.)
- "A lot of people" in town would like to see affordable housing. People would put effort and energy into it. But they need to know how to go about it. (Chuck: This is what a later meeting would be about.)
- Is everybody's picture of affordable housing the same? What will it look like? Where will it go? (Chuck: These are the kinds of questions that team can respond to later with options from around the state.)
- Also zoning issue to consider in terms of affordable housing (density).
- Route 9 could have a tollbooth. State wants a faster, straighter road and they're working toward that (challenge). Route 9 also provides access to other areas (asset). Route 9 area may be an area for more affordable housing. Proximity to Route 9 provides proximity to the builder.
- Greater Internet access could help people to increase their income.
- Many people are self-employed and don't all know who others are. Many are artists/ craftsmen. If we knew, we could buy from each other instead of going to Brattleboro and buying from them. Another idea: Entrepreneurs could share office space.
- Some communities set up their own money system. Or we could barter.
- You're asking questions that are beyond our ability as individuals or as a town. We can only answer those questions by our continued discussion and the ideas you bring to us. I don't know how we can help our neighbors to get more income.
- Hogback and incredible environmental diversity in this town. But we don't know how to use those to bring

income into the town. We don't know how to stop people from just driving through town.

- Reviving the restaurant could bring more income into town.
- Consolidation of schools is often brought up, but won't save money.
- The NE Kingdom has a system of trails that attract people to ride and stay and do other things. They drive by us to go there. How could we use Hogback? As a 576-acre park

to hike and ride in, restaurant stocked with local produce, crafts and arts to buy, etc.

- Maybe a guild or a brain trust to support each other in our businesses. We could be consultants for new businesses (peer-to-peer connecting).

Reflections of the Community Visit Team:

- Everyone agrees Marlboro a desirable place to live. People who can afford it will pay a lot to live here. Want to face this challenge by creating housing that is less expensive to live in. Need to talk about whom the housing is for. Selling points: a "school choice" town, a good school.
- Taxes and property "richness" are challenges. Lack of affordable housing is a challenge. New housing doesn't address the cost for those who are living here now. Wonderful place to live. Self-employed people.
- Recognition of the foundational value that is causing the affordability problem. Issue is who is making the decisions that affect how much it costs to live here. Ideas were not cost cutting, but asset-building ideas for enhancing local businesses, for turning town's assets into revenue sources.
- You recognize the assets, shared values, things you want to preserve. May lack financial capital, but have lots of social capital. Some blaming of the state, and so on. Lots of ideas, and when all is said and done, will fall on you to

make it happen. Who's going to take the lead to make it happen? Everyone needs to step up.

- You're not alone; throughout the state lots of communities express the same concern and same optimism. Some places have taken these things on and seem some results. I've also heard some pent-up energy that you use to can run with your ideas.
- You all see the challenge on an affordability/ taxes basis. Also see what's special about this community—natural assets and the people. You seem to have willingness and an openness to consider what might work. Have ideas about housing and other economic activity, but don't know how to do that yet.

Summary by Visiting Team at End of Visit:

Sustainability

- Strength in the people who coalesced around the community today. Education resources at elementary and college. Love for natural habitat, open space and land
- The arts, have resources and leadership and collectively need to move to next stage

Infrastructure

- Internet tops the list. Frustration. Amazing amount of organizing, lots of committees. Speak like the installation committee. Question of route 9. Pooole go to fast, dangerous in winter, noisy.
- Opportunities for pedestrians and bikes
- Transportation, mover company between here and Brattleboro. Some good things, some lacking, can combine w school bus
- Dirt roads or paved?

Town / Gown Relationship

- Deep seated issues lurked. Good conversation. Room full of interested people but they all had some connection with the college. Raises some questions about the nature of the relationship. Looking for a closer connection with the town.
- College connected people make the town run. Town offices and boards have some connection to the college.
- Lurked – sense some resentment on the part of life-long Vermonters here. It's a traditional split. New folks, folks from away vs. native Vermonters

Growth and Development

- Purchased Hogback 600 acres. Concerned about 2 acre zoning. Hesitancy re town plan zoning. No elderly housing. Yet population getting older. Talked about cluster development or village centers. Difference in pricing of land route 9 vs not route 9. School an asset. Growth and Development – a lot of resources in town but hesitancy in growth.

- Bear corridor, interest or minority vocal group planning to protect bear corridor. Keeping lots small vs. zoning involved in bigger lots. People who own land not sure what their options are. Development rights, current use.
- Town website takes too long to access.

Identity

- All people in the room have a sense of this as a community but 2/3 or the people have that sense and 1/3 don't. the 1/3 didn't show up. That 1/3 feels disenfranchised and outnumbered by most liberal community members in the state. As self described.
- In terms of community identity, multiple centers. Geographical problems in terms of sense of place but people treasure the multiple centers and want to figure out how to connect them.
- \Make route 9 safe to cross – people corridor

Regional Voice

- Issues around route 9, regional ag, schools and housing.
- Elements of the community that relate beyond the borders of their town.
- Maintain schools as local community school.
- Leverage ag brand
- They are almost paralyzed on the one hand but they realize they have to act before it overtakes them. Esp. Route 9 with state and feds telling them what's going to happen.
- Marlboro College reaches beyond the town of Marlboro, but its success is connected to the towns success and vice versa. Interest in finding a mutual communication that hasn't happened yet.

Energy

- Lot of expertise in Marlboro. Interest in moving to larger scale projects. Some concern about nimbyism. Interest in

convening larger conversation around planning. Interest in figuring out the potential.

- Interest in setting goals and then going out and achieving them.
- Identifying biggest bang for buck. Not always clear in-house technical capacity to figure out where we should invest.

Town Center

- Need for expanded community center capacity. An opportunity to have it all together in one building or multiple locations around. Identified needs not currently being met in existing centers. Unanimous consensus that town needs a pub.

Affordability and taxes

- Desirable place to live but expensive. People can't afford the taxes. Different question than that about making it affordable for people moving into town. There is a commitment to make affordable housing.
- Having a great school saves people money, choice for h.s. saves people money and people move to town because of that.
- Artistic craft community – talk about putting together a guild to increase income to that portion of the community.
- Steve: infrastructure focused a lot on what they could do to help each other. Already things set up. Neighborhood phone trees. Those that have high speed wondering how they can make it available to others.
- Larry – Hogback has potential
- Forrest: bowled over by the process. Called those 3rd that weren't here; would have liked to have seen them here.
- Paul: this town came out in force.

VIII. Marlboro Community Visit Participants

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