

# The OUR FUTURE PUTNEY CELEBRATION

Participants came together  
Jan 29, 2026 to Celebrate,  
Vision, and Join the Energy!



Vermont Council on Rural Development

# Vision for Putney's Future

These vision statements, brainstormed by participants during the *Our Future Putney Celebration*, were supported by the majority of participants through an online survey after the meeting. The statements represent some of the broad hopes that Putney residents have for the long term good of the Putney community.

## Community members envision a future Putney:

- ❖ where young people want to stay and can afford to stay and raise their families, and where those who grew up here want to come back to live.
- ❖ that is vibrant with young people, activities, and things to do.
- ❖ with spaces for intergenerational connection and free gathering places that people can casually pop into.
- ❖ where the schools – Putney School, Greenwood School, and Landmark College – and the rest of the town are connected and share events, activities, and things to do.
- ❖ with riverfront trails and expanded access to Sacketts Brook.
- ❖ where the downtown is connected, and its streets are safe for walking and biking with bike lanes, wide sidewalks, and crosswalks.
- ❖ that preserves the Village's charming historic character and maintains what is wonderful about the community as it develops new buildings and infrastructure.
- ❖ with business, industry, and places to work, helping to keep our economy strong and growing our population.
- ❖ that supports and welcomes farmers, food producers, and food-related mutual aid including a food shelf, meal delivery, and community meals.
- ❖ with food security, affordable homes, and no poverty.
- ❖ with affordable single-family homes so people can come to the community, support local businesses, and sustain the community.
- ❖ with housing options that allow older residents to remain in the community while freeing up larger homes for young families.
- ❖ with quality continuing care for the folks who want to stay in Putney as they age.
- ❖ that is rich in people resources as both an aging community AND a community with a large youth population.
- ❖ where seniors and youth exchange interests, skills, and mentorship.
- ❖ full of people with skills and enthusiasm for being involved in the community and that work together for the future that they want to see.
- ❖ where we take care of each other and work hand in hand to solve our problems in a unifying way.

# Introduction

In late 2022 and early 2023, Putney community members turned out in record numbers for the *Our Future Putney* Community Visit process – a 3-month series of public meetings that brought over 300 community members together to actively participate in examining issues, set shared priorities, and build action plans for implementation. The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) provided the overall structure and neutral facilitation each step of the way.

Through the process, the communities identified three priorities for action and launched local task force groups focused on **downtown revitalization**, **developing a community center**, and **advancing housing solutions**.

In 2025, the Town invited VCRD back to Putney to facilitate a meeting among the groups in town working on housing (see the report: [vtrural.org/wp-content/uploads/ThePutneyHousing\\_Collaboration\\_Mtg\\_Report\\_.pdf](https://vtrural.org/wp-content/uploads/ThePutneyHousing_Collaboration_Mtg_Report_.pdf)). Throughout 2025, community members together with VCRD began planning for the *Our Future Putney* Celebration of bringing the community together to celebrate ALL of the work going on in town.

On January 29, 2026, more than 100 community members came together at the Putney Central School to celebrate the great work going on in town and to spark continued volunteer engagement and energy for the work ahead. Participants enjoyed a free community dinner (provided by the Putney Diner and Putney General Store); heard updates about what's been happening with downtown vitality, the community center, and housing; brainstormed points of vision for the future of Putney; and had an opportunity to visit information tables and network with neighbors. In addition, VCRD interviewed a few residents about their experiences with the *Our Future Putney* process as it celebrates 30 years of Community Visits in towns across the state.

We deeply appreciate the work and leadership of the many community members who helped plan the event and assisted with outreach and invitation: Karen Astley, Susan Coakley, Ruby McAdoo, Lyssa Papazian, Katy Emond, Marcella Eversole, Mike Cosco, Catherine Stephan, and many more. Thank you to the Putney Selectboard and Putney Town Manager, Karen Astley, for their ongoing dedication and support.

The VCRD Team was honored to be there to celebrate Putney's successes and are excited to follow their continued progress.



# Task Force Updates

Each of the task forces presented updates of their work over the past few years and shared information at stations around the room. To find out more about what's happening with each initiative or to get involved, see contact information listed below.

## Revitalize Putney's Downtown

Discover Putney ([www.discoverputney.com](http://www.discoverputney.com)) has led on a variety of work on this topic. Through special projects, community gatherings, and advocacy for Putney businesses, Discover Putney strives to enhance the beauty, functionality, inclusiveness, and prosperity of Putney by making downtown a place people want to live, work, visit, and spend time.

- Sign up for the Discover Putney email list at <https://discoverputney.us9.list-manage.com/subscribe> or contact Kate Hudson at [khudsonmem@gmail.com](mailto:khudsonmem@gmail.com).

## Develop a Community Center

Representatives from multiple organizations in Putney shared their work and ongoing coordination. For more information, contact:

- Putney Community Cares - Ruby McAdoo, [coordinator@putneycommunitycares.org](mailto:coordinator@putneycommunitycares.org).
- Putney Community Center - Nancy Olson, [olsonnan47@gmail.com](mailto:olsonnan47@gmail.com) or 802-387-8551.
- Pierce's Hall / East Putney Community Club - Irene Canaris, [irinican@gmail.com](mailto:irinican@gmail.com).
- Previous Community Center planning work - Katy Emond, [katy.emond.82@gmail.com](mailto:katy.emond.82@gmail.com).

## Develop Housing Solutions

The task force reviewed their work to increase housing in Putney, including grants they received to help homeowners complete accessory dwelling units, and more. For more information, contact:

- Putney Housing Solutions Task Force: Marcella Eversole and Burt Tepfer, [putneyhousing@gmail.com](mailto:putneyhousing@gmail.com).

Other relevant contacts for community members include:

- Our Future Putney Overall Community Visit Chair – Mike Cosco, [putneygs@gmail.com](mailto:putneygs@gmail.com).
- Planning Commission Chair – Sue Coakley, [pc\\_Chair@putneyvt.gov](mailto:pc_Chair@putneyvt.gov).
- Town Manager – Karen Astley, [manager@putneyvt.gov](mailto:manager@putneyvt.gov).



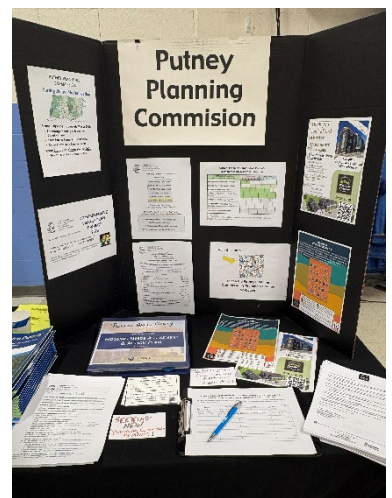
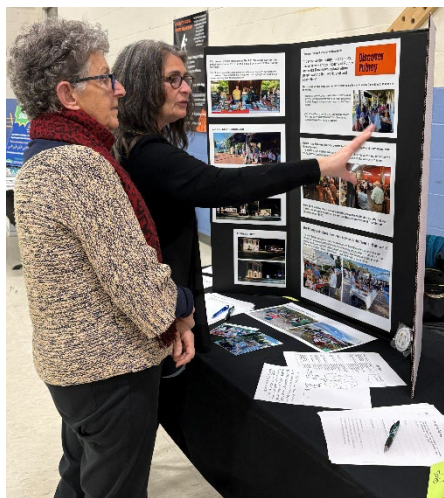
# Ideas and Vision Points

These ideas were contributed by participants during the visioning brainstorming session. Many interesting and diverse thoughts are represented here, and are presented as a reminder of issues explored, and a possible foundation for future projects.

- A bigger mutual aid organization and communication so that we can help people out who need a ride or something like that.
- Paper mill transformed into a space for artists and craftspeople for gathering and creativity.
- A pharmacy.
- Create on hand training for the youth in Putney teaching skills in the construction and building industry and having a space for anyone wanting to learn these types of skills.
- Lots of color and art and a way for people to see all of the businesses and projects that are happening through downtown art installations (since online businesses don't need storefronts).
- More schools and destination learning opportunities that attract cultural creatives.
- Biking and walking trails along Sacket's Brook below the old paper mill, and all the way down to the river- it's beautiful and completely inaccessible.
- No more invasive plants.
- Vibrant waterfront.
- Large community bread oven.
- Offer public Jewish events, and Jewish and holocaust education in school, etc. so Putney is a safe place for my Jewish daughter and the community.
- Protect Putney's forest blocks, preserve connectivity with adjoining towns and forests for the sake of the entire Northern Forest, forestalling fragmentation!
- Increase housing by encouraging density and assuring that the village and denser neighborhoods are well designed, charming, pocketed with green spaces, sidewalks, walkable. Save the forests.
- Create diversity of centers in supporting seniors (rides, breaking isolation, puzzles), young families, teenagers offering aid including major projects of interest.
- Sport arena, fields, picnic benches, soccer, softball, hockey. Swimming pool YMCA (huge building), gymnastics, basketball.
- Bike trails - huge traveling routes connect to town.
- Provide a spiritual center building and classes on a variety of topics e.g. music.
- More apartments and places for people to live.
- Students able to stick around.
- Spaces for inter-generational activities, like Landmark students tutoring/helping kids and teaching technology.
- Crosswalk by the post office across Route 5.
- Transportation improved for those who don't drive more than the current times of the Moover.
- Draw people from outside the community to town by partnering with creative and arts organizations to offer destination learning opportunities.
- An outdoor playground for our children that people can get to easily.
- Bike paths and other ways to bike safely.
- A center where young people and children learn about agriculture, healthy food, and gardening and all the benefits that they bring.
- Have a Harvest Lantern Supper multiple times a year for local arts and community building.

# The Celebration

In addition to hearing updates and brainstorming vision points, participants enjoyed a free community dinner and had an opportunity to visit information tables, network with neighbors, and share their experiences with the Our Future Putney process.



# Participants

George Apgar  
Karen Astley  
Janice Baldwin  
Phil Bannister  
Eric Bass  
Ines Zeller Bass  
Michael Bicki  
Ezra Black  
Jenny Bordo  
Candace Brown  
Amanda Burton  
Dan Buryj  
Lisa Chase  
Alan Chechive  
Elizabeth Christie  
Lionel Chute  
Sue Coakley  
Kimberly Cosco  
Mike Cosco  
Josh Coursen  
Carl Crook  
Danielle Delaini  
Naomi Detenbeck  
Ron Dewdney

Harold Dimmock  
Charles Dodge  
Kate Dodge  
Natalie Dreyer  
David Eggleton  
Katy Emond  
Marcella Eversole  
Richard Fletcher  
Doug Grandt  
Rich Grumbine  
Matthew Hoffman  
William Homestead  
Shray Howey  
Kate Hudson  
Sarah Hunter  
Christopher Irion  
Terry Keegan  
Molly Landon  
Il Lang  
Curtis Lavoie  
Chloe Lee  
Chrissy Lee  
Paul LeVasseur  
Vanessa Long

Oona Madden  
Martha Meigs  
Bonnie Mennell  
Bob Meyer  
Lynn Meyer  
Imogen Mills  
Matt Mills  
Gail Murray  
Wendy O'Connell  
Anna Olivier  
Carolyn Olivier  
Jim Olivier  
Putney Outreach  
Lyssa Papazian  
Emily Peyton  
Sam Quintal  
Miles Rae  
Coni Richards  
Edward Riddell  
Ben Ridgway  
Jesse Ridgway  
Root Rosenberg  
Marni Rosner  
Susan Ruggles

Nina Salvatore  
Joanna Sauriol  
Ellie Schlefer  
Kora Skeeel  
Ellie Solomon  
Meg Staloff  
Renee Stearns  
Barry Stockwell  
Jorika Stockwell  
Ellen Strong  
Burt Tepfer  
Harriet Tepfer  
Mary Thomforde  
Aileen Tulloch  
Jay Uth  
Willow Uth  
Craig Weber  
Michelle Wells  
Jessie Werner  
Barbara Westfall  
Nick Williams  
Eileen Willingham  
Claire Wilson  
And many more...





*Mural in the Putney Central School*

Laura Cavin Bailey, *Climate Economy Program Director*  
Lauren Brady, *Community Engagement & Policy Coordinator*  
Margaret Gibson, *Operations Director*  
Kaziah Haviland, *Village Trust Initiative Director*  
Alyssa Johnson, *Community Visit Program Director*  
Nick Parker, *Community Programs Associate*  
Jessica Savage, *Director of Programs & Strategic Initiatives*  
Denise Smith, *Executive Director*

**Vermont Council on Rural Development**

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