

# Montgomery Planning Commission Minutes

## Special Meeting

### Public Safety Building

**August 23rd, 2023, 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Peter Locher, Barry Kade, Alissa Hardy, Kenny Miller & Gwen S. (Remote)

Guests: Emily Klofft (Regional Planning - Remote)

Meeting called to order at 6:06pm

Joe Sherman arrived 6:07pm

#### **1. Additions / Deletions to the Agenda**

None

#### **2. Approval of the August 8th 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Alissa Motioned to approve with one edit:

#5 Add note: Parma requested PC to address selectboard regarding conditional fee increase. PC decided to let DRB address the selectboard regarding DRB fees.

Peter 2nd. Motion approved 4-0. Kenny abstained

#### **3. Continue Discussion of Town plan update, Review with Regional Planning Chapters 6-7**

Chapter 6: Economy

a. Pg.29 Income data comes from tax returns for better data

- b. Grand list data is only available resource - number of farms not exact. PC Question - is sugaring defined as agriculture? Emily answered - it is as defined by the State
- c. Pg. 31. There was a map from 2017 showing farming operations then - Emily took it out as neighboring town operations dwarfed Montgomery's farming operations & made town related data unclear
- d. Pg. 31. Emily asked - Are the farm types/ quantities available for publishing - Is there still an operating dairy farm in Montgomery? PC recommend to remove "one operation dairy farm and"
- e. Emily suggested adding a comment regarding maple farming production in Montgomery.
- f. Barry suggested we add a comment regarding farming production/ land used for silage and hay
- g. Allissa suggested we include a comment regarding several small vegetable farms as well
- h. Emily - asked if we should include notes regarding maple production impact on roads. As mud season / maple trucking causes safety conditions - such as inaccessibility by ambulance to homes on certain roads. Allissa noted the majority of Montgomery maple traffic is sap collection, then boiled elsewhere. State regulations seem to accept sugar trucking, being a farming operation except from road weight rules. PC agreed to add a sentence regarding concern for road usage in mud season regardless of inability to regulate
- i. Allissa asked if we have yet determined if Long trail is in Montgomery? Emily has not yet determined. PC noted it certainly brings in tourism to Montgomery regardless of exact location
- j. Pg. 32 Emily Asked - If Montgomery Area Community Alliance (MACA) is still active - PC noted it should be removed

- k. Pg.33 Emily included a paragraph on workforce development - noting its significance regarding workforce housing and Montgomery's low unemployment rate. Low Unemployment rates make it hard for businesses to hire new employees
- l. PC discussed unknowns around progress of the Street Scapes & Waste Water Projects. Peter & Emily have reached out and not yet been updated. Chapter 8 shall be the section that addresses these issues.
- m. Pg. 33 PC suggest to change to "has" from "can" under Sewer section's first sentence.
- n. Pg.34 Barry asked for us to include a definition of broadband for upload & download speeds. More details to be within chapter 8.

#### Chapter 7: Land Use

- o. Pg.34 Emily suggested we change "adjacent to the villages" to "in Village 1 and Village 2 district" Joe asked if we could identify a long term description regarding ideal development density areas town wide. Perhaps increasing sizes of Village 1 & 2.
- p. Emily noted we could include in the town plan a note of these "study or advisory areas" places where the PC is considering changes to the zoning areas. These areas could be shaded on the town map. Emily noted other implementation actions we could include in the town plan would be using form based standards and official maps allowing for new development - such as proposed roads. Including brief descriptions of items such as these, lays the groundwork in our town plan for future by-law updates.
- q. Emily noted if there is larger interest in zoning upgrades beyond town plan updates and by-law updates - there are grants available now with November deadlines.

- r. Barry noted he recalls a map from 2015 that showed potential roads / soils for development areas in Montgomery. Emily shall look for the map.
- s. Pg. 37 Emily noted, village centers - are based on State regulated items such as communities with existing development, preserving historic development & municipal infrastructures
- t. Emily removed likely inaccurate population projections and replaced with permitted data

**4. Public comment**

- a. None

**5. Other Business**

- a. None

**6. Items for next meeting agenda**

Next meetings:

- a. September 5th - A special meeting
  - i. NRPC enhanced consultation on plan
  - ii. Review of chapters 8, 9 & 11
- b. September 22nd - continued review of chapters 8, 9, 11
- c. Meeting(s) in October shall allocate time for for 2nd draft review

Motion to adjourn,

7:36 Kenny motion to adjourn Peter 2nd - All in favor 5-0

Meeting adjourned.

Attachments:

- a. Chapters 3-7: Rough Draft

### Chapter 3. Archeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources

GOAL: TO RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF MONTGOMERY'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC, AND SCENIC RESOURCES IN SHAPING THE TOWN'S PRESENT QUALITY OF LIFE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

#### Policies

- Protect sites of potential archaeological and/or historical significance.
- Promote community growth that maintains the land use pattern developed throughout the Town's history – densely settled villages separated by open agricultural and forest land.
- Promote the use of historic buildings for public purposes whenever feasible.
- Preserve the scenic beauty and rural character of Montgomery's ridgelines, forests, open lands, and roads.

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#### Town History

[Working with state historic preservation on language around archeological sites] Due to the lack of written records from prior to European settlement, precontact archeological sites are an important source of information and should be protected.

The Town of Montgomery was named after Captain Richmond Montgomery, a hero of the American Revolution. It was chartered on March 13, 1780. Montgomery is situated within the northern Green Mountains and is dominated by steep, forested mountain slopes drained by the Trout River and its tributaries. The first European settlers who moved to the Town of Montgomery settled along this area. Five small villages also referred to as hamlets, eventually formed along the river. These hamlets are known today as West Hill, Montgomery, Montgomery Center, Hutchins, and Hectorville.

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Spurred by abundant waterpower and surrounding raw materials, the population grew steadily until 1900. At this time, the population started to decline until the 1970's, when it slowly started to rebound. Early economic activity in Montgomery centered on farming, sugaring, logging, and small wood related industries. As these industries changed, so did Montgomery's population. Since 2000, Montgomery's economy has begun to grow again due to the development of recreation and tourist industries.

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#### Cultural and Historic Resources

##### Covered Bridges

Vermont regards its covered bridges as one of its most treasured landmarks. The State has more covered bridges per square mile than any other state. The bridges were covered for two

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purposes: to protect them from the elements of nature and to preserve the wooden trusses used in their construction. Unfortunately, many of the states' covered bridges have succumbed to the forces of nature and also to neglect. It is vital that the Town, with the support of the State, take active measures to preserve these valuable landmarks.

The Town of Montgomery has six covered bridges that are considered historic sites: Fuller (1890), Comstock (1883), Hectorville (1883), Longley (1863), Creamery (1883), and Hutchins (1883). The Fuller Covered Bridge is also known as Black Falls and the Creamery Covered Bridge is also known as West Hill or Crystal Springs. The Jewett brothers, Sheldon and Savannah, built all of Montgomery's covered bridges between 1860 and 1890. They operated a sawmill on West Hill which allowed them to mill the wood to their specific requirements. The brothers used their trademark method to design the bridges, taking into account stress, wind and weight. First, the main bearing beams were positioned across the stream onto a pier foundation on either end. Then the lattice trusses were moved into position and the top beams tied. After this, the roof was secured. The Jewett brothers built bridges that have lasted for over a hundred years. All six of these bridges are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The following chart gives the location, type, the year built, and crossing for the covered bridges in Town:

| Historic Covered Bridges in Montgomery |                                                                    |                 |            |                                                       |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Name                                   | Location                                                           | Type            | Year Built | Crossing                                              |
| Fuller Bridge                          | South Richford Road<br>Montgomery Village                          | Town<br>Lattice | 1890       | Black Falls Brook and<br>South Richford Road          |
| Creamery Bridge                        | Creamery Bridge Road<br>Montgomery Village                         | Town<br>Lattice | 1883       | West Hill Brook and<br>Creamery Bridge Road           |
| Hectorville Bridge                     | Disassembled, and in<br>storage awaiting a plan<br>for restoration | Town<br>Lattice | 1883       | South Branch of the Trout<br>River and the Gibou Road |
| Comstock Bridge                        | Comstock Road<br>Montgomery Village                                | Town<br>Lattice | 1883       | Trout River and<br>Comstock Road                      |
| Hutchins Bridge                        | Hutchins Bridge Road<br>Montgomery Center                          | Town<br>Lattice | 1883       | South Branch of the Trout<br>and Hutchins Bridge Road |
| Longley Bridge                         | Longley Bridge Road<br>Montgomery Village                          | Town<br>Lattice | 1863       | Trout River and Longley<br>Bridge Road                |
| Source: Montgomery Historical Society  |                                                                    |                 |            |                                                       |

#### Historic Buildings

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and the Black Lantern Inn are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, also known as the Union

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Church, was built in 1835 at a cost of three thousand dollars. Membership thrived at the church until 1882 when, it started to decline. By 1920, the church was no longer being used on a regular basis and it began to deteriorate. On November 23, 1974, the Town of Montgomery formed the Montgomery Historical Society to save the historic building for future generations. The Society purchased the church from the Episcopal Diocese of Burlington for one dollar. The church was later renamed Pratt Hall in honor of one of the founders, Larry Pratt. All the necessary repair work that was done on the building was funded through community donations and fund-raising events. See Appendix A, Volunteer Community Organizations for more on the Montgomery Historical Society.

Smaller landscape features such as stone walls, old barns, outbuildings, corner stones, markers, trees, and old apple orchards and lilac bushes planted around former homesteads have historic value and importance, but these unfortunately often go unnoticed. These features say as much about the region's rural and agricultural heritage as many of its more readily recognized historic landmarks, but are often disturbed, removed, or demolished without any thought. Recognizing the need for more public education, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation published *Stonewalls and Cellarholes: A Guide for Landowners on Historic Features and Landscapes in Vermont's Forests* in 1994.

Cultural and historic resources are at risk of degradation through improper earth resource extraction. This includes the accidental destruction of buried archaeological sites and diminished scenic qualities that may limit the future use of disturbed sites. Noise, dust, and increased traffic on roads near extraction sites all compromise the rural character and sense of place the Town enjoys. Earth resource extraction should be carefully regulated to limit negative impacts.

### Scenic Resources

Scenic highways and corridors link natural, cultural, and scenic resources to the historic landscape of the area. The visual character of Montgomery makes it an excellent place to live. Montgomery should preserve scenic vistas. The scenic qualities of a forested ridgeline or hillside can be compromised by poorly planned development, such as inappropriate building placement, site design, and excessive clearing. The Town should encourage innovation in design and layout of development so that the visual impact can be minimized. The use of vegetative buffers and other screening methods should be encouraged to help reduce the visual impact of development in the town.

Montgomery shall take measures to ensure that its natural features are conserved. These natural areas include the Trout River and its tributaries, its mountains such as Burnt Mountain, Big Jay, and Little Jay, as well as farm and forest land. These natural features play a big role in drawing people to the area and they should not be compromised.

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# BASE MAP TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

## LEGEND

### Transportation Features

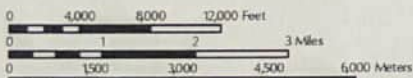
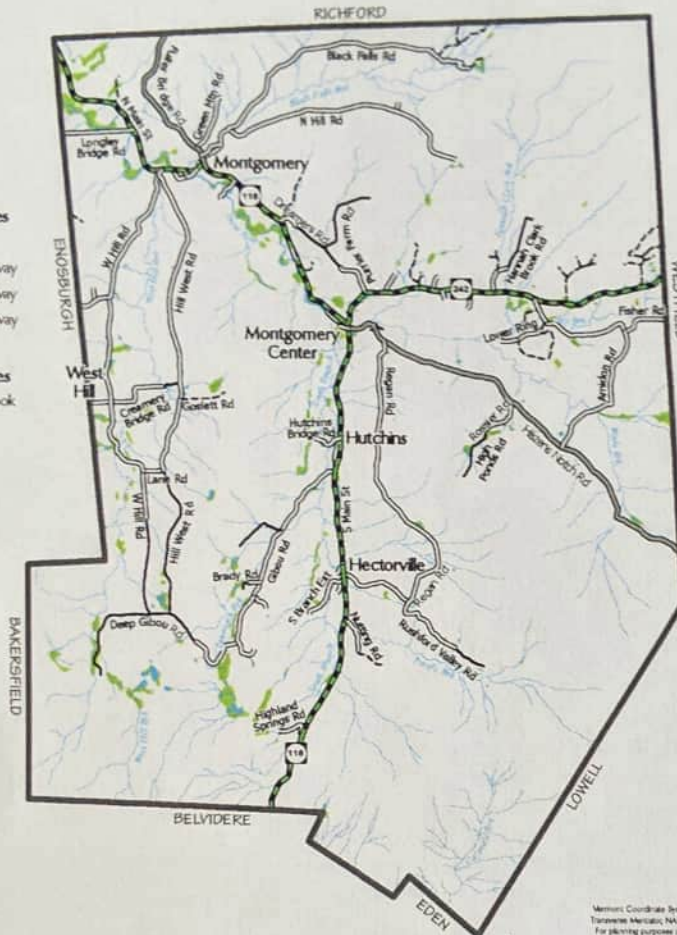
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

### Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond
- Wetland

### Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Data Source: All map features derived from VCE digital coverage. North arrow on map refers to Old North.



Montgomery Coordinate System  
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83  
For planning purposes only.

Prepared by:  
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February 2016

Location: mapdata\project\county\thinkdmontgomery\Newplan2016

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## Chapter 4: Natural Resources

GOAL: TO PROVIDE FOR GROWTH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WHILE MAINTAINING A HEALTHY AND INTACT FORESTED LANDSCAPE WHICH SUPPORTS A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY, PROTECTS CORE WILDLIFE HABITAT AND CONNECTIVITY, AND MAINTAINS WATER QUALITY AND KEY NATURAL FEATURES SENSITIVE TO ADVERSE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: TO ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER A FLOOD RESILIENCY COMMUNITY

GOAL: TO MITIGATE THE RISK FOR LOSS OF LIFE AND INJURIES THAT RESULT FROM FLOOD EVENTS

GOAL: TO REDUCE DAMAGES TO PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESULTING FROM FLOOD EVENTS THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

### Policies

- Limit development in areas where soils have limited capacity to support structures or filter wastes and in areas where the slope is greater than 15%.
- Maintain natural vegetative cover to the greatest extent possible where development occurs in Conservation Districts (Conservation I and II).
- Guide development away from productive agricultural or forest soils.
- Protect the water quality of the Trout River and its tributary streams by preventing erosion along their banks and encouraging reduction of stormwater and agricultural runoff and non-point source pollution.
- Protect groundwater quality by regulating uses that could introduce contaminants into the ground in the source water protection areas.
- Limit the loss or degradation of wildlife habitat by maintaining significant features, including wildlife corridors and unique sensitive areas or natural communities, and protecting such areas from development that would demonstrably reduce the ecological function of habitat on the landscape scale.
- Development shall be designed and sited in a manner to limit the fragmentation of large blocks of contiguous forest to the greatest degree possible.
- Prohibit land development resulting in the loss of wetland and floodplain storage capacity.
- Recognize the collective value in preserving natural resources throughout the town and encourage good land stewardship practices among private landowners in matters of soil health, biodiversity, and water quality.
- Ensure the conservation and proper stewardship of significant natural communities and forestland.
- Avoid development and other encroachments – including fill, dredging, new structures, parking areas, infrastructure and utilities – within mapped river corridors.

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- Protect headwaters and the ecosystems they sustain from risk of degradation; to ensure high water quality, these areas shall be principally maintained for forestry and recreational uses.
- Incorporate vegetated buffers from streams, rivers and ponds into Montgomery's zoning bylaws in order to better protect water quality.
- Encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning.
- Where development already exists in vulnerable areas, measures shall be taken to protect people, buildings and facilities to reduce future flooding risk.
- New development shall be planned for and encouraged in areas that are less vulnerable to future flooding events.
- Discourage new development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and river corridors; in areas where new development is allowed, it should not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.
- Encourage the protection and restoration of floodplains and upland forested areas that attenuate and moderate flooding and fluvial erosion; where feasible floodplain restoration and conserved land in vulnerable areas should be encouraged.

### Environment of Montgomery

Though once standing higher than the Rocky Mountains, Vermont's Green Mountains now stand around 4,000 feet. The Town of Montgomery is it is surrounded by steep, forested mountain slopes that are drained by the Trout River and its tributaries.

### Biosphere

Montgomery lies at the intersection of two biophysical regions, the **Champlain Valley** and the **Northern Green Mountains**. Thousands of years ago, as the glaciers retreated to the north, the Champlain Valley was lying under the fresh water glacial Lake Vermont and then later, the salt water of the Champlain Sea. The water had a profound impact on the soils found here today, with the retreat of the glacier leaving gravel and rocks in streambeds and clays and fine sediments in lake bottoms. As the glaciers retreated, salt water flowed in from the north, converting the lake to a smaller sea and depositing the sand we can find mixed in the soils today. The underlying bedrock is composed of carbonate-rich rock with some quartzite, which makes the soil very fertile. Over time, the ancient sea was replaced by the fresh water of Lake Champlain. Today, the Champlain Valley is low, warm, and comparatively dry.

In comparison, areas of higher elevation within the Champlain Valley were not flooded by either Lake Vermont or the Champlain Sea, but were scoured by the glaciers as they retreated north. This left the glacial till that the soils in these areas are made up of. Summer temperatures in the Northern Green Mountain biophysical are often 20 degrees cooler than the Champlain Valley. The Northern Green Mountains have the shortest growing season, and the coldest winter temperatures in Vermont are found on northern slopes. Annual precipitation can also be much greater, receiving up to twice as much as in the Champlain Valley.

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Montgomery, like many towns in the State of Vermont, is fortunate to have a landscape that is filled with so many different types of natural features.¶

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## Topography

The majority of Montgomery's land area consists of upland areas (areas of 1,000 feet or more in elevation), including mountains, hilltops, and ridge lines. Many of these are highly visible from public vantage points and contribute significantly to the Montgomery's scenic beauty. These areas also include drainage divides, steep slopes, shallow soils, and exposed, fractured bedrock. These areas are important for upland drainage and groundwater recharge. They also support significant wildlife habitat, forestry, and outdoor recreation but they generally prevent all but low-density development.

Slope is one of the most important factors that determine if the area is suitable for development. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides general guidelines for assessing slope imitations and these are listed in Table 18. The slope of an area should be considered when deciding if the land is capable of supporting potential development. Map X.X shows areas of Montgomery with slopes above 15% and 20%.

| Slope Classifications |                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0-3%                  | generally suitable for most types of development but may require drainage                                            |
| 3-8%                  | most desirable for development because these areas generally have the least restrictions                             |
| 8-15%                 | suitable for low-density development with particular attention given to erosion control, runoff, and septic design   |
| 15-25%                | unsuitable for most types of development and septic systems, construction costly, erosion and runoff problems likely |
| >25%                  | all types of construction should be avoided, careful land management for other uses is needed                        |

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# TOPOGRAPHIC LIMITATIONS TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

## LEGEND

### Topographic Features

- 1000 Foot Contour Line
- Slopes 20%
- Slopes 15%

### Transportation Features

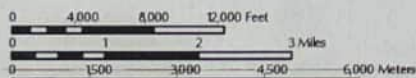
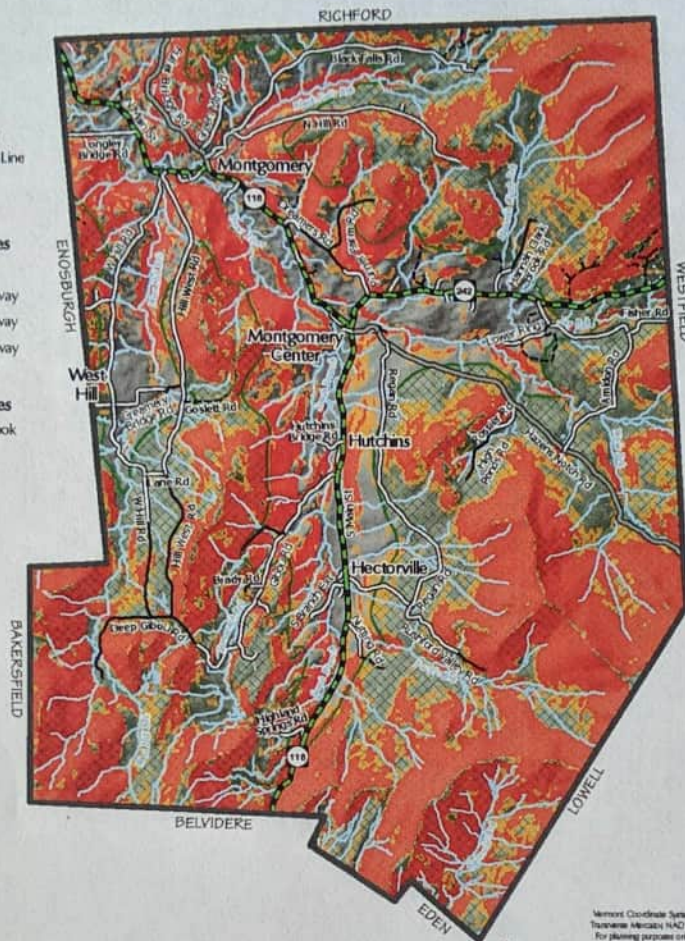
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

### Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

### Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Data Source: All map features derived from VGS digital coverages. North arrow on map refers to Grid North.



Vermont Coordinate System  
Transverse Mercator NAD 83  
For planning purposes only

Prepared by:  
Northwest Regional  
Planning Commission  
25 Fairfield Street  
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(802) 536-3069  
www.nrcplan.com  
February 2016

Location: nrcplan.org/departments/1544/montgomery/temple2016



## Soils

Soils are the primary environmental factor that governs the use of land in rural areas. Four characteristics are of concern when doing land use planning: bearing capacity, erodibility, drainage, and resource value. The Town's farms depends upon the availability of high-quality soils in large, adjoining parcels to allow for economical hay and field production.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides soil survey information; maps and a description of each type of soil can be found in the Soil Survey of Franklin County, Vermont and online on the NRCS's Web Soil Survey. The soil survey is a tool that can be used to inform decision making on agriculture, development and infrastructure.

The Town of Montgomery is home to soils that formed in glacial till in the Green Mountains and on uplands. The most common soil associations that are found in Montgomery are the Lyman-Marlow-Peru association and the Peru-Marlow association. These upland soils may create restrictions for development.

Primary agricultural soils, as defined by Vermont's Land Use and Development Law (Act 250), include soils which, based upon their chemical and physical properties, are considered especially suited for agricultural use. Because of their physical qualities, however, these soils are often also considered the best suited for development. These uses must be carefully balanced. Primary agricultural soils in Montgomery are primarily located along the lower-lying areas adjacent to Vermont 118.

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helping developers locate areas of least limitation for basements, septic tank disposal fields, and associated uses; ¶

helping engineers in planning the best location for highways, buildings, and the like; and ¶

helping communities with the planning of economical, attractive, and trouble-free developments. ¶

Because soils vary widely in their potential for major land uses, the soil survey maps should be carefully looked at when deciding what the land should be used for. ¶

The general soil map shows the soil associations that represent a distinct type of soil landscape for each town in Franklin County.

**Deleted:** These are subdivided into "prime" soils having a very high potential and few limitations for producing food, feed, forage or fiber crops; and "good" soils of statewide importance that have good potential, but one or more limitations that may restrict the choice of crops and require more careful management. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture also recognized "local" soils with agricultural potential, but which are not regulated under Act 250. This classification does not consider location, current land use, and parcel size. Prime, statewide, and local agricultural soils are shown on the Agricultural Soils Map.





#### Earth Resources

Earth resources, including sand and gravel deposits, are critical regional resources, especially because of their use in road maintenance and construction. As Montgomery develops, more of its earth resources will be needed to meet its infrastructure needs. The extraction of these resources can cause a problem if they are located in rural areas where residential development is increasing. Improper or excessive extraction can damage cultural resources, natural resources, and scenic resources of the area. Extraction of earth resources should be carefully managed to avoid these outcomes.

#### Air Quality

Air quality is generally good in Vermont, especially in rural communities such as Montgomery. Motor vehicles are the largest source of air pollution in Vermont, which can create localized areas of poor air quality where traffic is congested. Air quality can also be impacted by weather patterns which carry pollutants, such as smoke, from other areas. All efforts should be made to maintain good air quality in Montgomery.

#### Water Resources

##### Surface Waters

Montgomery's waters offer scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and livelihood to the residents and visitors.

The Trout River, a tributary of the Missisquoi River, runs through Montgomery. It is one of the most valuable natural and cultural resources in the Town and is an important location for recreational activities. The Trout River, alongside the upper portion of the Missisquoi River, are the only rivers in the state who have received a "Wild and Scenic Rivers" designation from the National Parks Service. The designation recognizes the outstanding scenic, recreational and natural resource value of the river. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the Federal government control over private property; recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area.

Maintaining the quality of the Trout River is of extreme importance. Not only does it affect the Town, but also it has the potential to directly affect the Missisquoi River Delta and consequently, Lake Champlain. The many streams which feed into the Trout River should also be protected.

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**Deleted:** The Northwest Region of Vermont is home to many types of surface waters. They offer sustenance, scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and livelihood to the residents and visitors of Franklin County. Water is one of the basic necessities of life, and because of that, it must be appropriately respected, managed, enhanced, and preserved to ensure the future vitality of the Region and its inhabitants.

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**Deleted:** which runs through the Town of Montgomery, is one of its many tributaries.

**Deleted:** a valuable natural and cultural resource. The Trout River provides many beneficial uses such as providing a place for recreation activities.

**Moved (insertion) [6]: Recognizing Special Resources.** Fifty miles of the upper Missisquoi River and 20 miles of the Trout Rivers were designated in 2014 as a Wild and Scenic waterbody. This designation excludes the section of the Missisquoi River with the Enosburg Falls dam. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. This designation encourages river management that crosses political boundaries and promotes public participation in developing goals for river protection. In addition, it enables access to federal funding for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and geologic resources of these rivers. It should be noted that designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property; recreation, agricultural practices, development and other uses are permissible in this designated area. §

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[2]



In addition to its rivers and streams, Montgomery is home to swimming holes which offer great recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Most swimming holes are located on private lands and are enjoyed only with permission of the property owner. Where possible, the Town should take steps to ensure continued access to swimming holes, such as negotiating land easements.

#### Ground Waters

Groundwater is the source of over 90% of the drinking water for rural areas in Vermont. It is replenished through rain and surface water that percolates down through the soil. Risks to groundwater are associated with human activity in the vicinity of the aquifer.

Groundwater is a critical resource that must be managed effectively. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources identified the following as potential threats to groundwater resources: animal feedlots, fertilizer applications, irrigation practices, land application, landfills, material stockpiles, pesticide applications, pipelines and sewer lines, septic tanks, surface impoundments, and waste piles. As described in the Community Utilities section of the plan, Montgomery does have public water supply that should be protected.

#### Natural Springs

A number of Montgomery residents rely on natural springs as a water source. Springs are especially susceptible to contamination from surrounding land uses. The Town encourages cooperation with private landowners to protect these water sources.

#### Wetlands

Wetlands are areas of land where soils are saturated with surface or groundwater frequently enough to support specific types of vegetation that require these conditions for growth and reproduction. Vermont's wetlands have been well documented as serving critical ecological and socio-economic functions. In the Town of Montgomery, there are 607 acres of wetlands, which is roughly 1.7% of the total land cover in Town. Wetlands serve many different functions which are listed below:

- Flood Control: wetlands associated with streams slow flood waters, provide flood storage, and reduce peak flood levels.
- Shoreline Anchoring: wetlands provide erosion control.
- Water Quality: wetlands process heavy metals, pesticides, and other toxic substances and they remove nutrients from run-off water (i.e. agricultural run-off).
- Habitat: wetlands provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals including a high number of threatened or endangered species.
- Socio-Economic Value: wetlands are utilized by humans for their recreational, scenic, historic, educational, and cultural values.

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**Deleted:** a natural feature that attracts people from all around. This natural feature is the

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**Deleted:** The swimming holes should be recognized because they contribute to the overall quality of life that is enjoyed by the residents of Montgomery.

**Deleted:** Vermont's groundwater policy declares that the State "shall protect its groundwater resources and maintain high quality drinking water" and "shall manage its groundwater resources to minimize the risks of groundwater deterioration" (10 VSA 48 1310).

**Deleted:** , as stated in the statute,

**Deleted:** There are State programs which are designed to protect groundwater. These include those aimed at hazardous materials management, agricultural plant industries, public water supply, well drilling, wastewater management, road de-icing management, and land use regulation.

**Deleted:** Groundwater quality in the Northwestern Region of Vermont is considered generally good but there is always the potential threat of it being contaminated.

**Commented [EK3]:** Does PC know the specific areas used by residents and an approx. # of how many use these sources?

**Commented [EK4R3]:** In regards to SPA discussion- would be considered public water source only if it had 15 year-round connections. SPAs also only grant limited legal authority.

**Deleted:** Wetlands cover 6.2 percent of Franklin County's total land area.

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Given the importance of wetland systems, they should be protected by restricting development, including roads and driveways and by maintaining and/or establishing undisturbed, naturally vegetated buffers around their edges.

#### Flood Resiliency

Floods are inevitable and uncontrollable natural events which occur sporadically and affect lands adjacent to watercourses. As climate change affects the State, floods are expected to become more frequent and severe. It is therefore in the public interest to plan for floods, and to implement land use strategies which will protect these areas and minimize the risks to public health, safety, and property.

#### Floodplain

Floodplains, lands adjacent to watercourses, are periodically inundated by heavy rains or during spring thaws. Their soils are porous and can absorb considerable water before reaching flood stage. Floodplains make excellent agricultural land but are poorly suited for development. FEMA has developed maps of floodplains in Montgomery, these maps are expected to be updated in 2023. Montgomery has 550 acres of mapped floodplain, which is roughly 1.5% of the community's total land area. Like many towns in Vermont, Montgomery's villages are partially in the floodplain and are therefore very vulnerable to increased flooding.

#### River Corridors

About two-thirds of Vermont's flood-related losses occur outside the mapped floodplains. A mapped floodplain assumes that a river channel does not change position or scour down and build up with material. However, river channels move and change their meander path frequently due to erosion of the bank and sediment deposition. The river corridor represents the likely area where a river could move over time. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has developed maps of river & stream corridors across the state.

#### History of Flooding

Floods of large magnitude have occurred in Montgomery on a more frequent basis since the 1970s. The flood of 1997 was the worst flood recorded in Montgomery's history and resulted in the collapse of the Route 118 Bridge over the Trout River. Minor flooding occurs nearly every spring particularly along the Trout River, when melting snow combined with spring rainfall flows from the surrounding mountains. While the minor events do not have the same town-wide impact as the larger declared disasters, reoccurring events impact the town's capital budgeting. Spring flooding in 2013 damaged a section of Regan Road necessitating improvements of less than \$50,000 and in 2014 damages along roadways in town were approximately \$120,000. The Town of Montgomery Hazard Mitigation Plan contains further information on flood resiliency and all hazard mitigation.

#### Impacts of Development

Human development can have a major negative impact on flooding risks. Undeveloped wetlands serve as natural storage for floodwaters, slowing the release of water downstream. When

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Deleted: Flood Resiliency

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**Moved (insertion) [1]:** Floods of large magnitude have occurred in Montgomery on a more frequent basis since the 1970s. The flood of 1997 was the worst flood recorded in Montgomery's history and resulted in the collapse of the Route 118 Bridge over the Trout River. Minor flooding occurs nearly every spring particularly along the Trout River, when melting snow combined with spring rainfall flows from the surrounding mountains. While the minor events do not have the same town-wide impact as the larger declared disasters, reoccurring events impact the town's capital budgeting. Spring flooding in 2013 damaged a section of Regan Road necessitating improvements of less than \$50,000 and in 2014 damages along roadways in town were approximately \$120,000. The Town of Montgomery Hazard Mitigation Plan contains further information on flood resiliency and all hazard mitigation.¶



developed, this critical function is lost. Historic development activities such as deepening river channels and removing vegetation from rivers has increased the speed of rivers during flood events and increased risks of erosion. Development in the floodplain or river corridor decreases the area available for floodwater and puts that development at high risk. Attempts to protect development by raising buildings with fill can also result in worse floods downstream.

Currently there are 103 structures within the FEMA-mapped floodplain in Montgomery, which represent 14% of all structures in the community. Sixty-nine percent of these structures are residential dwellings. Owners of buildings within the designated SFHA are required to carry flood insurance to get a federally backed mortgage. According to FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program as of March 31, 2014, the Town of Montgomery had only 31 flood insurance policies in force. The cost of flood insurance can be prohibitively expensive for many residents and business owners.

Montgomery's adopted Flood Hazard Bylaw adheres to the minimum development standards allowed by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Montgomery also follows all four minimum measures communities should take to reduce flood-related risks and prepare for emergencies which are:

1. Adopt the most current Town Road and Bridge Standards (see VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials).
2. Adopt flood regulations that meet the minimum standards for enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program.
3. Annually adopt and maintain a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP).
4. Adopt a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

As a result of these actions, Montgomery is eligible for the smallest local match requirements (12.5%) for repairs to municipal infrastructure after a declared disaster.

To further protect the community against flooding risks, Montgomery should review the standards for land development in the floodplain to ensure public safety and reducing future risk to infrastructure and investment.

Potential strategies to be considered include:

- Prohibition on New Development – this would prohibit new structures in the Flood Hazard Overlay District.
- Increasing Standards – Communities can choose to increase the requirements for new developments in the floodplain while still allowing all or most forms of development. For example:
  - o Limit the amount of fill or impervious surface.
  - o Require structures be elevated such that the lowest floor (including basement) is at least two (2) feet above the base flood elevation. This requirement also can result in major reductions to flood insurance premiums.
- Consider regulations to preserve upstream wetlands.

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**Moved (insertion) [2]:** Montgomery's adopted Flood Hazard Bylaw adheres to the minimum development standards allowed by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Montgomery also follows all four minimum measures communities should take to reduce flood-related risks and prepare for emergencies which are:

- Adopt the most current Town Road and Bridge Standards (see VTrans Orange Book: Handbook for Local Officials).
- Adopt flood regulations that meet the minimum standards for enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Annually adopt and maintain a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP).
- Adopt a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

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- Deleted:** • ...prohibition on New Development – this new structures in the Flood Hazard Overlay District.
- ...increasing Standards – Communities can choose to increase the requirements for new developments in the floodplain while still allowing all or most forms of development. For example: [3]

- Deleted:** • ...increasing Standards – Communities can increase the requirements for new developments in the floodplain while still allowing all or most forms of development. For example:
  - o ...limit the amount of fill or impervious surface [4]

- Deleted:** o ...limit the amount of fill or impervious
- o ...require structures be elevated such that the lowest floor (including basement) is at least two (2) feet above the base flood elevation. This requirement also can result in major reductions to flood insurance premiums. ...

- Deleted:** o ...require structures be elevated such that floor (including basement) is at least two (2) feet above the base flood elevation. This requirement also can result in major reductions to flood insurance premiums. ... Consider regulations to preserve upstream wetland [5]

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More information on disaster planning and priority infrastructure improvements can be found in the Montgomery Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Deleted:** Floodplains, lands adjacent to watercourses, are periodically inundated by heavy rains or during spring thaws. Their soils are porous and can absorb considerable water before reaching flood stage. Floodplains make excellent agricultural land but are poorly suited for development, because of their propensity for flooding. Montgomery has 550 acres of mapped floodplain, which is roughly 1.5% of the community's total land area. ¶

# WATER RESOURCES TOWN OF MONTGOMERY



## LEGEND

### Water Resource Features

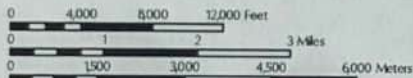
- Water Source
- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond
- Wetland
- 100 Year Flood Zone
- River Corridor
- Groundwater Source Protection Area

### Transportation Features

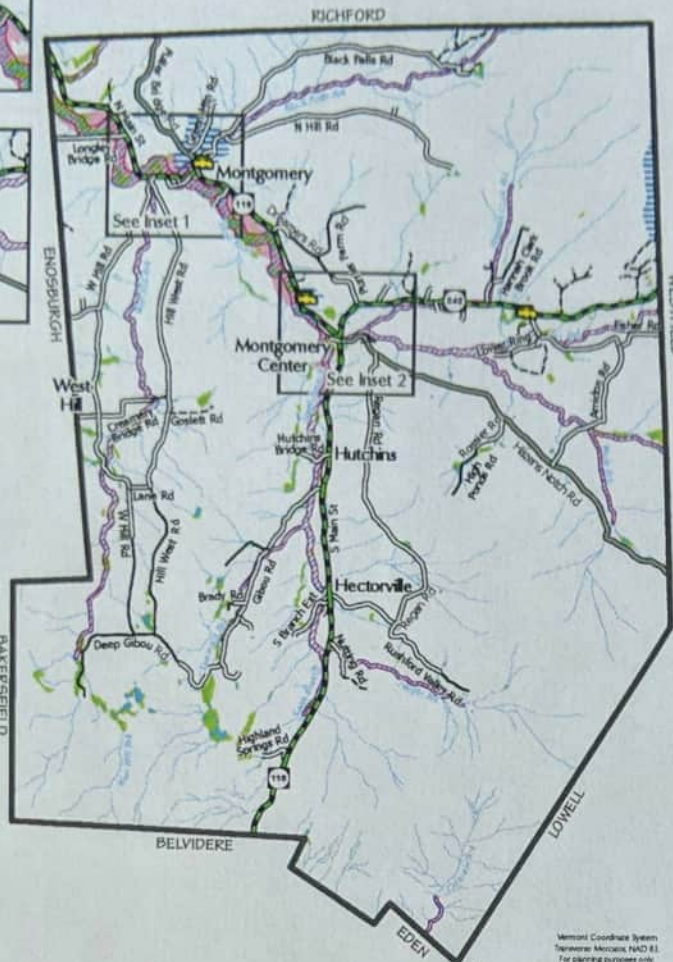
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

### Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Data Source: All map features derived from VCD digital coverage. North arrow on map refers to Old North.



Location: H:\projects\county\shards\montgomery\townmap\2016



## Forest Resources & Animal Species

Approximately 84 percent of the Town is covered in forest land. These forest lands and associated habitat are part of the important "Cold Hollow to Canada" habitat connection between northern New York and forests in Maine & Canada. Preserving these connections that allow the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants is crucial in maintaining biological diversity, and the long-term viability of breeding populations in the face of climate and habitat change.

## Significant Wildlife Habitat & Rare Species

Montgomery's residents are fortunate to share the community with a variety of animal species that depend on a variety of habitat types – and connectivity between habitats – for their survival. Maintaining viable populations of native wildlife is an important goal of town residents. To achieve this, residents and local officials should understand the habitat needs of different species, where those habitats are found in the community, and how land use and human activity can best be guided so that the function of important habitat is not diminished.

## Deer Yards.

Deer wintering areas provide critical habitat for white tail deer and other species. These areas of hemlock, spruce, fir, cedar, and pine species provide shelter from deep snows, and they also permit easier winter travel. The combination of elevation, vegetation, and solar aspect significantly increases the survival rates of deer populations and also impact the landscape, ecology, and recreation. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have targeted these areas for protection.

There is an extensive amount of deer wintering areas identified in the heavily forested areas of the Town. Large, contiguous wintering areas exist along the Trout and Tyler Branch of the Missisquoi River. Careful management of these areas is of extreme importance in order for the species to thrive.

## Black Bear Habitat.

Black bear prefer mountainous and forested landscapes just like those found on the slopes of the Green Mountains. The location of most bear habitat is in eastern portion of Franklin County; the entire Town of Montgomery has been identified as potential habitat. Black bear have a significantly large home range and because of this, their survival rate decreases when larger areas of forest are divided into smaller areas due to development. In addition to needing large blocks

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**Deleted:** The 1997 flood made all Montgomery residents aware of the power inherent in a flood and is an urgent reminder of the need for proper management and appropriate use of critical floodplain areas. Development within floodplains poses significant risks and should generally be avoided. River channels and floodplains function as a single hydrologic unit, periodically transferring floodwaters and sediment from one to the other. Appropriate uses of floodplains are those that can accommodate this cycle. Examples of uses that are appropriate to floodplains include agriculture, open space, and recreation.

It is also recommended that the following actions be implemented to maintain the function of the floodplain: support stream bank stabilization efforts that reduce the risk of erosion; vegetative buffer strips should be used; development of new structures in the floodplain should be limited.

of July 1, 2014, municipal plans must address flood resiliency. This chapter identifies flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas and designates those areas to be protect

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**Moved (insertion) [3]:** Approximately 84 percent of the Town is covered in forest land.

**Moved (insertion) [4]:** allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants, which is

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**Deleted:** Riparian habitat along streams and rivers, strips of forest cover between developed areas, and even

**Deleted:** Conducting an inventory of important habitats would greatly assist the town to better maintain habitat

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**Deleted:** of eastern Franklin County - this includes the Town of Montgomery.

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of un-fragmented forests, bears are especially dependent on concentrated stands of mast producing trees that provide concentrated fruit or nut production.

Both deer wintering areas and productive/seasonal bear habitat cover Montgomery's landscape, town should encourage the management of these habitats—where they occur—in a manner that does not threaten the ability of the habitat to support these desired species.

Threatened and endangered species are protected by Vermont's Endangered Species Law (10 V.S.A. section 5401 et. seq.). The Vermont Non-Game and Natural Areas Program maintains an inventory of the locations of rare, threatened or endangered plants, animals and natural communities. The precise locations are made available to town planners, although they are not published or made available to the general public. Endangered and threatened species are presently mapped in town in areas associated with the high elevation natural communities of the upper elevations of Jay Peak and along the town borders with Lowell and Bakersfield. Subsequent additions to the Non-Game and Natural Areas inventory should inform planning and development decisions in town to conserve or otherwise protect those species and the habitats necessary for their continued survival.

#### Habitat Blocks & Corridors

As noted throughout this section, ability to travel across blocks of core habitat within a landscape is critical for the health of wildlife populations. Conservation of and continued management of these forest lands is an important community goal. Forest land and its traditional uses (timber extraction, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenic resources, etc.) help define the rural character of the Town. The majority of Montgomery's land are high priority habitat blocks at a statewide level, with the most important blocks being the southeast corner of Town. While portions of this land are conserved through the Atlas Timberland Partnership, other portions remain in private ownership. Similarly, a portion of the southwest corner of Montgomery is conserved, but other areas in the habitat block are not.

**Deleted:** , unlike the landscape that is found in the western portion of Franklin County. The

**Deleted:** "Travel corridors" is a term used to describe land that links larger

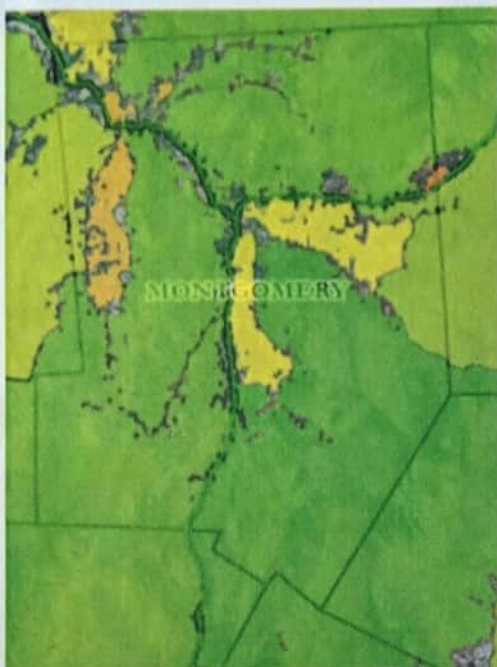
**Moved up [4]**

**Deleted:** , allowing the movement, migration, and dispersal of animals and plants, which is crucial in maintaining biological diversity, and the long term viability of breeding populations in the face of climate and habitat change. Riparian habitat along streams and rivers, strips of forest cover between developed areas, and even hedgerows/fencerows all represent potential connecting habitat. Included are areas where land use and landscape features

**Deleted:** allow wildlife to move across roads to and from habitat areas (e.g., undeveloped areas with forest cover close to each side of the road). Travel corridors can serve local populations of wildlife, or species with wide ranging habitat requirements.

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Even low densities of development lead to the fragmentation of these habitat blocks. Forest fragmentation affects water quality, fish and wildlife populations, and the biological health and diversity of the forest itself. When many small habitat losses occur over time, the combined effect may be as dramatic as one large loss. Fragmentation results primarily from the construction of roads and associated development and can result in a disruption in animal travel, promote the invasion of exotic vegetation, expose interior forest habitat, and create more conflict points between people and wildlife.

**Moved (insertion) [5]:** Forest fragmentation affects water quality, fish and wildlife populations, and the biological health and diversity of the forest itself. When many small habitat losses occur over time, the combined effect may be as dramatic as one large loss. Fragmentation results primarily from the construction of roads and associated development and can result in a disruption in animal travel, promote the invasion of exotic vegetation, expose interior forest habitat, and create more conflict points between people and wildlife.¶

| System   Country   Region | 0-2 | 2-4 | 4-10 | 10-20 | 20-40 | 40-60 | 60-80 | 80-100 |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Blue                      | 94  | 80  | 38   | 100   | 84    | 44    | 38    | 47     |
| Red                       | 94  | 78  | 40   | 100   | 82    | 44    | 38    | 47     |
| Orange                    | 94  | 78  | 40   | 100   | 82    | 44    | 38    | 47     |
| Green                     | 92  | 76  | 40   | 98    | 80    | 42    | 36    | 45     |

Maintaining and developing Montgomery's natural beauty and resources for recreational purposes is an important part of the Town Plan. Montgomery has some of the most beautiful hiking, hunting, and fishing areas in the State and the Town should make a concerted effort to preserve these.

- Currently, the Recreation Board manages the Town's formal recreational activities. They work with other volunteer groups in town to provide and maintain recreational facilities for use by the entire town.

**Deleted:** For the purpose of this Plan, recreation is divided into three equally important categories: sport recreation, wildlife recreation, and other outdoor recreation.



Wildlife recreation includes activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and wildlife viewing. The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife administers Avery's Gore, located in the southern part of the Town. It contains a total of 259 acres and has many different types of game available for hunting, including black bear, deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, rabbit/hare, partridge, and woodcock. Potential users of the area are responsible for making themselves familiar with all rules, regulations, and restrictions before they can hunt or fish.

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Deleted: Avery's Gore, located in the southern part of the Town, is one of these areas. It contains a total of 259 acres and has many different types of game available for hunting. Such game includes black bear, deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, rabbit/hare, partridge, and woodcock.

Outdoor recreation activities include skating, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, hiking, swimming, mountain biking, and road biking. Within the borders of Montgomery, there exists Little Jay (elevation 3180 feet) and Big Jay (elevation 3780 feet). There are several natural swimming holes in Montgomery. The Trout River, with its Wild & Scenic designation, is a major resource for fishing & paddling.

There are several public and private recreational resources available to the community:

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The Hazen's Notch Association maintains about 40 miles of trails on over 2,000 acres. These trails are used in summer and fall for hiking and in winter for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The Association acts both as a local land trust for the Town of Montgomery, as well as a stewardship partner with other regional and statewide land trusts. The 300-mile Catamount Trail is a winter-use cross-country ski trail that passes through Montgomery as it traverses the length of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada.

The Covered Bridges Snowmobile Club maintains an extensive snowmobile trail network throughout the town and works with landowners to maintain these trails and the permission for use by snowmobilers.

The Long Trail extends the length of the State of Vermont from Massachusetts to Canada. The local chapter of the Green Mountain Club maintains hiking trails associated with this trail. Hiking is possible throughout the Town and there are many trails for people to enjoy.

Catamount Trail is a 300-mile, winter-use trail open to the public for skiing and snowshoeing.

The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the Jay Peak Ski Area (elevation 3861 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Jay Peak owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan.

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Moved (insertion) [7]: The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the Jay Peak Ski Area (elevation 3861 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Jay Peak is an important asset to the area because of the amount of tourism activity that goes on at it. Although located in Jay, the Jay Peak Ski Area brings in more potential tourists to their town and its bordering neighbors like Montgomery. Jay Peak owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan. ¶

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# CRITICAL AREAS TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

## LEGEND

### Critical Area Features

- Bear Mast-Wetland Feeding Area
- Bear Crossing
- Moose Collision
- Summit
- Deer Yards
- Endangered or Threatened Species
- 100 Year Flood Zone
- Wetland

### Habitat Blocks by Acreage

- 5,000 - 10,000
- 10,000 - 30,000
- 30,000 - 50,000

### Transportation Features

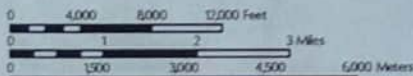
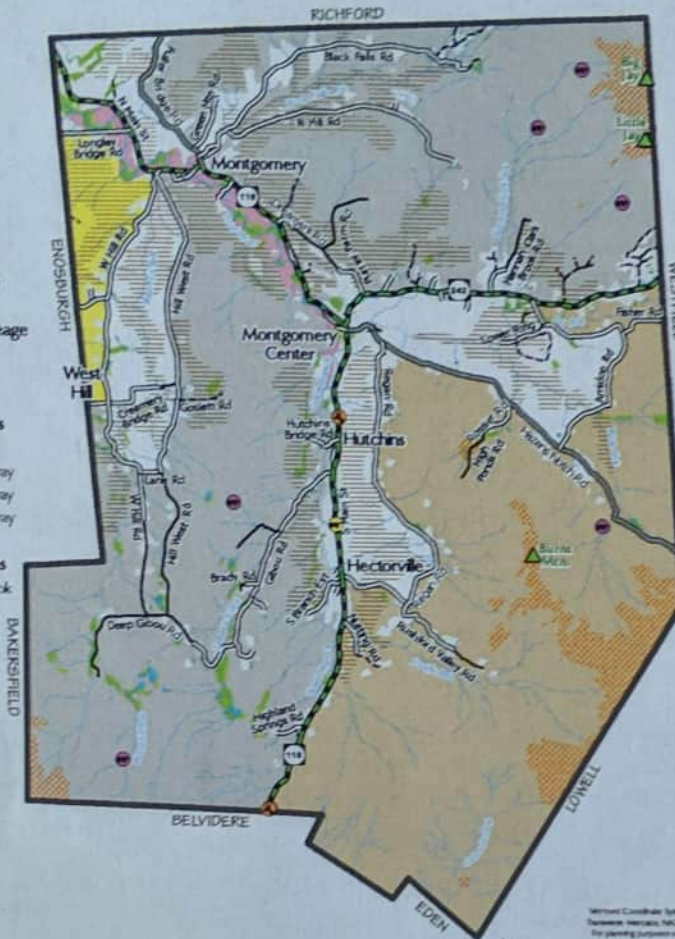
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

### Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

### Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Data Source: All map features derived from VRS digital coverages. North arrow on map refers to Grid North.

Vermont Coordinate System  
Township: 40 North, Range: 10 East  
For planning purposes only

Prepared by:  
Northwest Regional  
Planning Commission  
25 Portland Street  
St. Albans, VT 05478  
(802) 524-4888  
www.nwrc.com  
February 2016

Location: <http://montgomeryvt.org/geo/119-10-40-montgomery-township-016>



## Chapter 5: Housing

GOAL: TO PROVIDE SUITABLE LAND AREAS FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT WILL SERVE THE NEEDS OF MONTGOMERY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS

### Policies

- Ensure adequate housing options for people of all income levels, ages, household types, and preferences.
- Ensure that households and individuals with special housing needs, including the elderly, disabled, and low-income households are able to attain suitable and affordable housing.
- Allow only low-density residential housing in areas without municipal services while promoting higher densities in parts of town with existing services or close to existing service boundaries
- Conserve and protect the vitality and quality of existing neighborhoods.
- Allow for innovative housing to promote low-cost, low-impact, consolidated, and resource efficient options.
- Accessory apartments are encouraged, as they provide needed income for the homeowner and needed small apartments for residents living alone.
- Affordable housing should minimize long-term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment.
- Encourage land use patterns which are inherently more affordable by nature of cost of efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, smaller lots, proximity to utilities).
- Existing housing in the floodplain should be flood-proofed for the safety of the residents and the Village as a whole.

### Change in Population, Households, and Housing Units

**Deleted:** Presently, Jay Peak has built an 18-hole golf course, an indoor ice rink, and an indoor waterpark since 2005. A four-season operation is vital to Jay Peak's future and will have a very positive impact on all of its neighboring communities as they provide more year round employment for its staff, many of whom reside in or around Montgomery. Hiking is possible throughout the Town and there are many trails for people to enjoy. ¶

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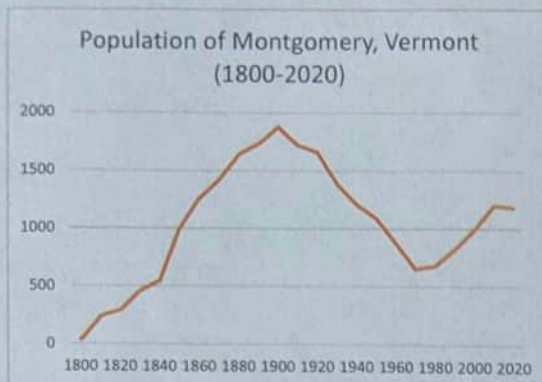
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**Commented [EK6]:** Did not include changes from existing plan as this section is mainly data

**Commented [EK7R6]:** This section could be a sidebar.

**Deleted:** Adequate and affordable housing is an important concern to residents in every town. Differences can be seen across Franklin County in the supply and demand for affordable housing. Towns that are located in the southern tier of the County, closer to Chittenden County have a relatively small percentage of families below the County median income. Therefore, there is little housing that would be affordable to households earning the County median income. Towns that are more rural in nature, often provide a large portion of the Region's affordable housing¶

Over the last 10 years population in Montgomery has been relatively stable. However, the



number of households has increased 21% in the last 10 years, with 522 households in 2021. The number of households is increasing despite a flat population because household sizes are getting smaller. Just 19% of households have children under 18. The number of senior residents has increased from roughly 10% in 2010 to roughly 30% in 2020.

According to the 2022 Grand List, there are 636 residential properties in Montgomery suitable for year-round occupation, while there are 85 units that are only suitable for seasonal use. According to the American Community Survey, 30% of all units are used seasonally. This suggests that there is substantial overlap in the market for seasonal and year-round homes, and that increased demand for seasonal homes could reduce the availability of year-round housing.

In recent years, the number of properties rented out for short-term rentals has increased. Currently, no list or registry of short-term rentals exists, making it difficult to quantify the number or potential impacts. The Town plans to continue to monitor the impact of short-term rentals on the housing market & economy of Montgomery.

The number of residential properties serving as the primary residence for Montgomery residents (homestead rate) is 61% of all residential properties, which is slightly higher than it was in 2013. Therefore, there is no evidence that demand for seasonal or short-term rentals is affecting the number of homeowners. It is more difficult to understand whether short-term rentals are affecting the long-term rental market as there is not data on the exact number of rental properties in Montgomery.

#### Housing Options & Availability

##### Housing Availability

On a State and regional scale, availability of both housing for sale and rental housing has decreased. For houses for sale in Franklin County, the average number of days on the market has decreased by 50% from 2016 to 2022, pointing to a competitive market. Statewide, rental vacancies are 3.2%, which is below the healthy rate of 5% to 10%.



The price of the average home for sale in Montgomery has increased over 100% in the last four years. Currently, similar increases have not been seen in data on the price of rental housing. The median reported rent according to the American Community Survey was \$783.



The increased demand for housing appears to be having an impact on housing development. From the economic recession in 2008 to 2018, very few residential units were permitted in Montgomery. In the last four years, that number has increased, although it is still far lower than the number permitted in the early 2000s.



#### Affordable Housing Needs

The demand for affordable housing is something that needs to be addressed in all communities. According to Vermont Statute, rental housing is considered affordable when a household earning not more than 80 percent of the county median income or the metropolitan statistical area's median (MSA) income, if it applies, pays no more than 30% of their income on housing, while owner-occupied housing is considered affordable when a household making not more than the

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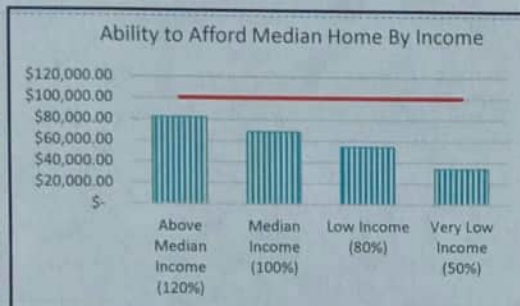
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county or MSA median income, pays no more than 30% of their income on housing. All municipalities in Franklin County are part of the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area; however, the figures for median income do not paint an accurate picture for many of the municipalities within Franklin County, including Montgomery. The 2021 median household income for the Burlington-South Burlington MSA was \$79,246, while it was \$68,476 in Franklin County. For this reason, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission has used the county median household income to compute affordability statistics.

The regional affordability compares the median cost of housing locally to the regional or county median income. This allows the community to see how affordable the housing is to the average household in the region.

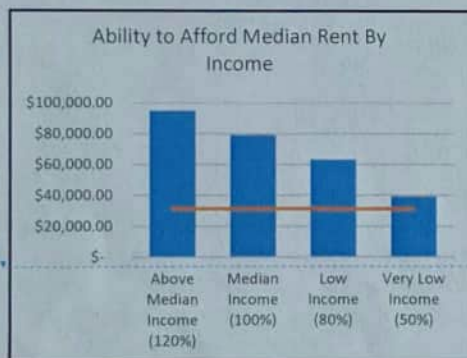
#### Homeownership

A household would need an annual income of \$100,425 to afford the median house in Montgomery. Homeownership is therefore unaffordable to households making the county median income, and even many households making above the median income. Of current Montgomery homeowners, 43% are paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs.



#### Rentals

A household would need to earn \$31,320 to afford the average rent in Montgomery, therefore renting is generally an affordable option for county residents. However, it is important to note that this data may be flawed and that limited rental housing is available in Town. Of current Montgomery residents, 88% of renters are paying more than 30% of their income on rent & utilities.



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**Moved (insertion) [8]:** Lower income households have to get by on tighter budgets and because housing is a basic need that people cannot do without, high housing costs place a greater strain on lower income households than on households that are economically better off. Therefore, affordable housing initiatives generally emphasize the importance of providing affordable housing to households that are at or below the median income of the area.¶

**Deleted:** Lower income households have to get by on tighter budgets and because housing is a basic need that people cannot do without, high housing costs place a greater strain on lower income households than on households that are economically better off. Therefore, affordable housing initiatives generally emphasize the importance of providing affordable housing to households that are at or below the median income of the area....

**Deleted:** The affordability gap for Montgomery is the difference between the maximum affordable mortgage and the median sale price for single-family homes. In Montgomery, low-income households can afford a mortgage, with monthly payments not more than 30 percent of their monthly income, or not more than \$153,719. This figure is higher than the 2014 median sale price for single-family dwellings of \$135,000. This means these households can afford the median home price and have \$18,719 remaining, ruling that affordable housing is available in Montgomery according to the definition of affordable housing in Title 24 VSA, Chapter 117, Section 4303. Households earning less than 80 percent of the county median income may face hardship in locating housing. The median household income in Montgomery is \$38,000 as of 2013; these households would face a shortfall of \$18,194 to meet the median sale price for a home.

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## Specialized Housing Options

Communities also need to account for providing housing to individuals and families with special housing needs such as senior residents, families with children in poverty, and disabled individuals. Different measures will be needed to accommodate these groups ranging from modifications to existing housing stock (for accessibility), while others need assisted living arrangements or financial assistance. If these housing options are not available, it may force some residents to relocate outside of Montgomery as they age or need additional levels of care.

The following is a list of population groups with special needs and an evaluation of how well their needs are being met in Montgomery.

**Seniors** - Currently, the Town of Montgomery does not have specific independent or assisted living housing for senior citizens. As of the 2020 US Census, 30.5% of the Town residents are age 65 and older. Supporting the development of senior housing is a high priority for the Town. Senior housing allows more residents to age in their community, rather than needing to leave for larger communities.

**Persons with Disabilities** - Roughly 1/3 of Montgomery residents have some form of disability, including roughly 6% with an ambulatory disability. The existing housing stock in Montgomery is older and often not accessible. The needs of these residents need to be considered as a part of future housing development.

**Families in Poverty** - Currently, 13% of Montgomery families are considered to be below the poverty level. With high levels of cost burden for existing residents, the Town will should take actions to ensure that there are opportunities for all incomes to find safe and adequate housing,

### Options to Increase Housing Variety and Affordability

Increasing the availability and affordability of housing in Montgomery is critical to supporting the many existing residents who are cost-burdened, younger residents and renters looking to become homeowners, and new residents looking to move to Montgomery for employment opportunities.

Municipal regulations can have an impact on the types of housing available and the potential for more affordable housing. For instance, regulations that allow for a smaller lot size reduce the land cost of new development, which can support more affordable homes.

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Deleted: Of the population that is older than 65 years old, 51% of the age group is classified as having some type of disability (as identified in the Community Profile). Twenty-three percent of the population age 16-64 has some form of disability. The

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The Town is in the process of reviewing its zoning regulations to identify opportunities to allow for a variety of housing types, especially in the core Village areas, while providing standards to maintain the character of the area and ensure adequacy of services. The goal is to accommodate a diversity of housing types and development near existing services with flexible standards that allow for development within village settings. Other forms of housing development that can be economically and structurally viable for affordable units are planned unit developments and other forms of cluster housing, accessory apartments, and multi-unit housing. Mobile homes also are an important source of affordable housing. Vermont land use law does not allow municipalities to discriminate against or segregate mobile homes. Mobile homes in a town can provide an opportunity for those who cannot afford conventional housing.

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Public infrastructure contributes to the availability of low-cost housing. In particular, shared sewer and water connections allow for higher densities and lower land costs by minimizing the amount of land that is necessary to accommodate new development. Affordable housing developers often depend on these public facilities to reduce building costs. The expense of drilling wells and designing individual septic systems significantly increases the price the developers require for their efforts. The Town is working on efforts to expand sewer access in the village areas, more information is available in Chapter 9.

Deleted: low cost

Montgomery can also promote housing variety and affordability by promoting programs such as HomeShare Vermont. HomeShare Vermont assists elders and persons with disabilities to live independently in their own home by bringing them together with persons who are seeking affordable housing and/or care giving opportunities. Montgomery also supports efforts from non-profit housing developers to develop appropriately sized senior and affordable housing in the village areas.

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## Chapter 6: Economy

GOAL: TO FOSTER A DIVERSE AND STABLE ECONOMY BY SUPPORTING EXISTING ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ONES

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### Policies

- Support and encourage sustainable and diversified businesses that supply local and regional food needs.
- Encourage businesses that complement recreation opportunities within the town.
- Protect the vitality and importance of the villages as a community and regional asset.
- Encourage commercial development that supplies local needs for retail, business, and personal services.
- Encourage and develop resources for home occupations.
- Encourage Montgomery's growing arts community.
- Encourage businesses and industries that use the skills of the local labor force.
- Create an attractive, safe and friendly village environment that invites and supports safe pedestrian use, community events and an active lifestyle.

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Economic planning can assist in providing jobs that match with the skills and aims of local residents, a more balanced tax base to meet community needs, the protection of important economic resources, and the provision of services and products to support the local community. Poorly planned economic development can negatively affect the local environment, strain municipal services, cause dislocations of businesses and labor, and adversely impact community character.

Deleted: The term "economy" for purposes of municipal planning refers to resources, production, jobs, income and activities in the town and region that contribute to the economic well-being of local residents, businesses and industries.

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Montgomery has many assets that can strengthen its role in the regional economy. Each of the two Village Centers serve as hubs of culture, community, and commerce and offer unique opportunities for residents and local businesses. These Village Centers contain most of the Town's important civic structures, iconic businesses, and historic landmarks such as the Black Lantern, Pratt Hall, and the Baptist Church. Montgomery contains several publicly accessible open spaces and recreation opportunities such as the Recreation Center with pavilion and fields, River Walk Park, community gardens and the village green. Montgomery also offers striking views of Green Mountains and a quality K-6 education system. These factors enhance the quality of life in Montgomery and provide a solid foundation for future economic development.

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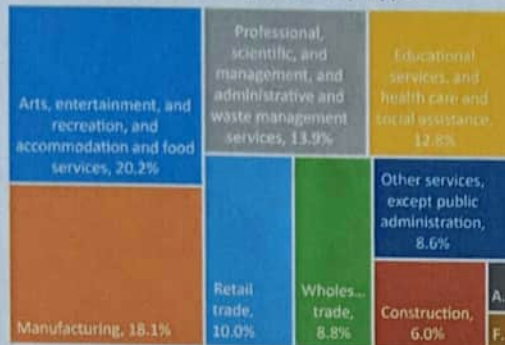
Data on Commute, Income, Employment, Business and Poverty

The majority of workers in Montgomery commute outside the Town for work, with just 5% working for Montgomery businesses and 11.3% working from home. Map X.X shows the most popular commuting destinations. Montgomery residents are about as educated as the state

average, with 93.5% of residents having at least high school degree or GED and 37.3% having at least a bachelor's degree. The top three industries that Montgomery residents work in are tourism/hospitality/ restaurant industry, manufacturing and professional services jobs.

Roughly 5% of Montgomery's residents are unemployed, compared to 2.1% in Vermont overall. The average income reported on a Montgomery tax return is \$58,843; for households with children the average income is \$66,006. Compared to the state average of \$81,960, incomes in Montgomery are generally lower. Poverty has decreased in Montgomery over the last 9 years, from 19.9% in 2012 to 14.9% in 2021.

Worker Occupation By Type



#### Agriculture & Forestry

In the past 20 years, the State's agricultural economy has experienced both consolidation and diversification. To remain profitable, the average Vermont dairy farm has become larger which leads to a decrease in the number of farms while the amount of land being farmed may increase. This increase in large farm activity has led to environmental and health concerns at the local and State level. The available statistics also point to an increasing number of small farms that are diversifying the region's agricultural economy, which for more than a century has been largely focused on milk production. In recent years, the amount of land used for farming in Montgomery appears to be relatively stable with 5% of land being used for farming in 2013 and 6% being used for farming in 2022.

**Deleted:** <#><object>The majority of Montgomery's residents work outside of the community, and most of the existing businesses in Montgomery are small in comparison to other communities in the region. Excluding self-employment, approximately 3% of Montgomery residents work in Town and another 40% are employed in other parts of Franklin County. Montgomery and its neighboring towns house much of the region's workforce as well as provide affordable housing opportunities. Providing a diverse housing stock, as prescribed in the Chapter 13 on Housing, will help to strengthen the local and regional economy.¶

**Deleted:** The economy of the Northwest Region, particularly with regard to land use, remains predominantly rural and resource-based; however, it is in transition. In Franklin County, the number of farms between 1997 to 2012 decreased by twelve percent while the size of farms increased by ten percent in this same timeframe (Census of Agriculture). ¶

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There are presently one operating dairy farm and two farms that raise and sell beef and/or pork in Montgomery. Montgomery also has several large sugaring operations and numerous hobby and small commercial producers. Several hobby beekeepers help keep local crops pollinated.

The Town should encourage efforts that support its agricultural base, including the protection of primary agricultural soils, support diversified agriculture, and support of tax abatement programs such as the Use Value Appraisal Program or Current Use.

Roughly 84% of Montgomery's land area is forest land. Well-managed forestry activities can support forest health while providing an economic benefit to the Town.

## Local Businesses

### Role of Tourism

Montgomery's location close to Jay Peak Resort, as well as its many outdoor recreation and historic sites, make it a popular destination for tourism. Tourism supports many local businesses such as inns, restaurants and retail stores.

Jay Peak Resort: The Towns of Jay and Westfield, located to the east of Montgomery, are home to the Jay Peak Ski Area (elevation 3861 feet) which offers downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and snowboarding. Although located in Jay, the Jay Peak Ski Area brings in more potential tourists to their town and its bordering neighbors like Montgomery. since 2005, Jay Peak has built an 18-hole golf course, an indoor ice rink, and an indoor waterpark. A four-season operation is vital to Jay Peak's future and will have a very positive impact on all of its neighboring communities as they provide more year-round employment for its staff, many of whom reside in or around Montgomery.

Historic & Cultural Tourism. Historic and cultural tourism promotes responsible travel to these sites and activities that educate the community and visitors by connecting us to our history and culture. Activities in Montgomery include historic sites, agricultural tours, cultural events, performing arts center, and festivals. Covered bridges are an attraction that draws tourists to the Region and to the Town. The covered bridge is viewed as a treasured landmark in the State of Vermont for they represent each town's history and an appreciation of their cultural heritage. Currently, there are six covered bridges in the Town of Montgomery, all of which can be found on the National Register of Historic Places (one is disassembled pending restoration). A description of these can be found in Chapter 3: Archaeological, Historic, and Scenic Resources.

Ecotourism. Montgomery is located near the Long Trail and the skiing and snowshoeing Catamount Trail, along with many other local hiking and outdoor recreation opportunities. The Trout River's designation as a wild & scenic river is another asset to recreation tourism in the Town. There is potential in Montgomery to promote ecotourism or nature-based tourism

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Commented [EK8]: Has this changed?

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Deleted: Agriculture is extremely important to the regional and local economy. The agricultural industry exports goods from the Region and imports new dollars into the local and regional economy. Local farm operators tend to rely on other local businesses for their needs. By keeping things local, the multiplier effect of every new dollar brought into the area increases.¶

Deleted: Many towns in the Northwest Region of Vermont depend on their natural features, their rural settings, and their history to attract tourists. The Town of Montgomery is no exception to this fact. See Chapter 6 – Community Facilities for discussions of tourism resources.¶

Deleted: Jay Peak is an important asset to the area because of the amount of tourism activity that goes on at it.

Deleted: Jay Peak owns approximately 2,600 acres; of which 1,500 acres will remain forever wild by Jay Peak's choice and 1,100 of which is to be used for some type of development based on the Jay Peak Master Plan.

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destination that acts as a tool for both education and community development and promotes the available outdoor recreation and rural serene environment. Ecotourism activities could include nature-based tours and attractions, wildlife viewing, and outdoor recreational activities such as swimming holes, hiking, boating, fishing and winter sports.

**Deleted:** . This type of tourism should ensure that travel to and use of the natural areas is done responsibly and sustains the well-being of the community while providing a quality experience that connects the visitor to nature.

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According to the 2011 US Fish and Wildlife Service survey, \$704.4 million was spent in 2011 on fish and wildlife-based recreational activities in Vermont which includes activities such as wildlife observation, bird watching, fishing, and hunting, and fall foliage touring. Given the impact of these activities on the Vermont economy, conservation and protection of important wildlife habitat should be considered an economic development strategy as well as a natural resource conservation strategy. These types of tourism support the Town's goals to maintain the natural environment, history, and cultural heritage of the area.

**Deleted:** As noted in the Chapter 14 Natural Features, Montgomery contains several large blocks of unfragmented forestland which provide critical habitat for a diverse range of wildlife.

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Home Businesses ¶

#### Types of Local Businesses

To complement the rural character of the Town and agrarian economy, small commercial enterprises, home occupations and light industry, in appropriate locations, should be encouraged. The largest types of businesses in Montgomery are professional and business services, goods producing industries, and construction businesses. Small home-based businesses are common in Montgomery, and roughly 13.2% of residents report self-employment income. These businesses provide jobs, tax revenues, lodging, dining, and other services for Montgomery's residents.

**Deleted:** Montgomery does have a variety of businesses that serve both local needs and the needs of its surrounding areas.

**Deleted:** a mixture of employment opportunities for its residents and for residents from other towns. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, most of the employees in Montgomery worked in the educational, health and social services trade sector, followed by those working in the retail, construction and manufacturing trade sectors.

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The Town of Montgomery has many different types of businesses and services for its residents and visitors. These include tourist orientated services, outdoor recreational services, retail stores, lodges, construction services, automotive services, financial advising services, and restaurants. These businesses all contribute to the local economy by providing jobs, tax revenues, lodging, dining, and other services for Montgomery's residents. ¶

**Commented [EK9]:** Do we want to leave this in? Any activity in this area?

#### Businesses in Montgomery

**Business Associations.** In 2009 a local business alliance, Montgomery Area Community Alliance (MACA), was formed to encourage business, economic development, and employment in the Montgomery/Jay Peak area. While this organization is not currently active, some of the economic development strategies discussed in this plan may be better implemented by such an association rather than by Town Government. A local businesses association would help to market Montgomery and Montgomery businesses, provide networking opportunities for local businesses, and advocate on behalf of local businesses.





### Challenges to Economic Development

Certain infrastructure limitations have created challenges to economic development in Montgomery. Many of these challenges are discussed in other chapters of the plan but are referred to here as they relate to economic development.

**Deleted:** The Town is faced with some challenges to local economic development created by infrastructure limitations. By working on these challenges, including sewer capacity, improving facilities for pedestrians and parking, and encouraging improvements to telecommunication, the Town will encourage the continued development of a healthy economy in the village areas.

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### Workforce Development

A strong economy relies on a skilled workforce. Montgomery should support educational opportunities for residents of all ages to provide residents opportunities. A strong workforce also requires available and affordable housing opportunities. Strategies for supporting workforce housing are discussed in Chapter 5.

### Village Streetscape

Improvements to the village streetscapes could help in attracting future development and businesses to the village centers, encourage tourism, and enhance the livability of its residents. While each village has a sidewalk system, the current infrastructure is narrow and is often blocked by parked cars. The Town has completed an initial streetscape study and is examining options for moving forward with streetscape improvements. More information can be found in Chapter 8.

**Deleted:** should identify options to improve the streetscape of the villages that consider safety and accessibility of all users.

### Sewer

The lack of a public sewage disposal facility can inhibit development of the village centers. However certain commercial uses, such as office and retail stores, require significantly less wastewater capacity than residential uses, making commercial use of existing structures on small village lots a viable option for village redevelopment. The Town is currently planning a community wastewater system, more information can be found in Chapter 8.

**Deleted:** At present, there is no plan to add public sewage disposal infrastructure in Montgomery.

### Telecommunications

Most modern businesses, including home-based businesses, rely on high-speed (broadband) internet access and cellular service which are unavailable in parts of Town. Expanding internet access and cellular service throughout the community should be an economic development priority for the town. The Town is a member of the Northwest Vermont Communications Union District (Northwest Fiberworx), a municipal organization working on expanding fiber internet to the Northwest region. More information on telecommunications can be found in Chapter 8.

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**Deleted:** The Town recognizes that a particularly effective means to encourage economic development would be to bring more reliable telecommunication service to residents and businesses throughout the Town.

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**Deleted:** Broadband internet connections would encourage and enable small and home-based businesses, and enhance existing businesses in ways that current connections cannot. As technology evolves,

## Chapter 7: Land Use

### GOAL: TO MAINTAIN MONTGOMERY'S RURAL CHARACTER AND SCENIC RESOURCES BY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW WISE LAND USE PRACTICES

#### Policies

- Maintain the character of existing neighborhoods and avoid potential conflicts between incompatible land uses.
- Allow for a greater density of development in and directly adjacent to the Villages.
- Limit development on slopes greater than 15% and maintain natural vegetation on slopes.
- Protect scenic ridges by limiting development above 1,600 ft. in elevation.
- Steer development away from areas where soils will not support it due to shallow depth to bedrock, instability, or high water table.
- Protect public health, welfare, and safety by limiting development in the floodplain.
- Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands, and along stream banks.
- Conserve productive lands by accommodating development in areas apart from most farming activity.
- Recognizing the community's susceptibility to flooding, new development shall conform strictly to floodplain regulations.
- Promote new development in areas of existing infrastructure, such as roads, power, and water.
- Encourage sustainable agricultural and silvicultural practices to both protect the use of land and water resources, air quality, and keep a working rural landscape based on a practice of stewardship.
- Avoid fragmentation of large forest blocks of contiguous forests that provide both economic opportunities for landowners as well as ecological and cultural benefits to the community, including wildlife habitat, water quality maintenance and recreation.
- Promote anti-sprawl initiatives as a measure to maintain the appropriate use of our land resources.
- Promote the enrollment of productive farm and forestland in the current use value appraisal program.

Montgomery is wooded, hilly, and well suited for forestry. Forested areas are beneficial for both the economic livelihood of the rural communities and for the natural habitat they provide. Uses of land, such as wildlife habitat and watershed protection, provide substantial benefits to society, ranging from the economic returns arising from tourism to the benefits of water purification and flood control. The natural environment and community of Montgomery also make it a desirable place to live and visit. This can lead to new development, which if not planned for, can create

**Deleted:** Montgomery should continue to work the public and private sectors to improve the local telecommunication infrastructure to ensure that residents have fast, reliable network connections.

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**Deleted:** Over the years, Vermont's economy has changed from natural resource based businesses to technology based businesses. As the types of businesses have changed, the value of land has also changed. Previously, the productivity of a piece of land for farming or timber largely determined its economic value. Today, features such as access to major transportation networks; infrastructure such as water and sewage systems; and proximity to qualified labor markets all help in determining the value of land for economic development. ¶ Much of Franklin County's eastern section is wooded, hilly, and well suited for forestry. This includes the Town of



negative impacts on Montgomery's natural areas. Land use planning will ensure the Town can continue to be an excellent place to live and visit while preserving its most important natural resources.

#### Current Land Use

Montgomery's total land area is 57 square miles or 36,436 acres. The majority of land cover in the Town is comprised of forest land (approximately 84 percent) with agriculture the second dominant land cover (less than 10 percent).

The Town of Montgomery has two unique village areas: Montgomery Center and Montgomery Village. Both of these are considered assets to the Town. The Center and the Village need to be promoted and preserved. Historic preservation, economic development, and the adaptive reuse of existing structures should be encouraged. The majority of residential homes are located in these two villages.

The two major routes in the Town are Route 118 and Route 242. Most of the development in Town occurs along the two routes, including residential development, agriculture, and communication & utility lines.

According to data from the property tax records, the amount of undeveloped woodlands and farmland has stayed roughly the same over the past nine years. However, the number of properties developed for seasonal use has increased significantly.

| Category    | Appraised Value of Category |                | % of Total |       | Total Acreage |          | % of Total |       |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|-------|---------------|----------|------------|-------|
|             | 2013                        | 2022           | 2014       | 2022  | 2013          | 2022     | 2013       | 2022  |
| Residential | \$ 101,936,600              | \$ 134,252,800 | 73.5%      | 67.9% | 13788.27      | 11,833.4 | 38.0%      | 31.6% |
| Mobile Home | \$ 1,725,300                | \$ 1,930,800   | 1.2%       | 1.0%  | 252.45        | 227.2    | 0.7%       | 0.6%  |
| Seasonal    | \$ 3,184,300                | \$ 14,966,000  | 2.3%       | 7.6%  | 1135.29       | 3,890.7  | 3.1%       | 10.4% |
| Commercial* | \$ 2,714,900                | \$ 18,059,200  | 2.0%       | 9.1%  | 233.86        | 354.3    | 0.6%       | 0.9%  |
| Industrial  | \$ -                        | \$ -           | 0.0%       | 0.0%  | 0             | 0        | 0.0%       | 0.0%  |
| Utilities   | \$ 2,764,100                | \$ 4,492,300   | 2.0%       | 2.3%  | 2.81          | 0.6      | 0.0%       | 0.0%  |
| Farm        | \$ 3,051,400                | \$ 5,431,800   | 2.2%       | 2.7%  | 1874.59       | 2,292.2  | 5.2%       | 6.1%  |
| Woodland    | \$ 10,447,200               | \$ 12,370,900  | 7.5%       | 6.3%  | 16630.9       | 16,856.5 | 45.8%      | 45.0% |
| Misc.       | \$ 2,358,100                | \$ 5,583,400   | 1.7%       | 2.8%  | 1515.98       | 2,041.2  | 4.2%       | 5.4%  |
| Other*      | \$ 10,448,600               | \$ 531,100     | 7.5%       | 0.3%  | 879.2         | 0.3      | 2.4%       | 0.0%  |
| Total       | \$ 138,630,500              | \$ 197,618,300 | 100%       | 100%  | 36313.35      | 37,496.3 | 100%       | 100%  |

\* In 2013 Grand List, municipal properties were listed as other, while in 2022 they were listed as commercial.

**Deleted:** Technological change has an impact on land use and conservation. Modern machinery and financing allow projects to be accomplished on a grander scale and more rapidly than in previous times. The construction of roads and the use of transportation technology allow people and materials to move more rapidly and reliably over the landscape. Care should be taken to prevent inappropriate development at the expense of our natural environment. Advances in telecommunication and computer technologies erase geographical limitations.

**Deleted:** ¶  
Land use planning involves the consideration of the many possible types of land uses and the goals of the land users. The impacts of growth, development, and environmental change on the land should be taken into consideration before any changes are made to the land. These changes will have a lasting effect on the community for years to come. ¶

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**Deleted:** By looking at the Land Cover/Land Use Map for Montgomery, it can be seen that most

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**Deleted:** (such as row crops and hay or pastures)

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# LAND USE/LAND COVER TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

## LEGEND

### Land Use/Land Cover Features

- Built Up (residential, commercial, industrial or other urban)
- Open Land (barren, transitional, or barren)
- Agricultural (row crop, hay/pasture, or other agricultural practice)
- Forested (broad leaf, coniferous, deciduous or mixed)
- Wetland (includes forested wetland)

### Transportation Features

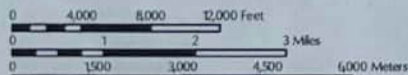
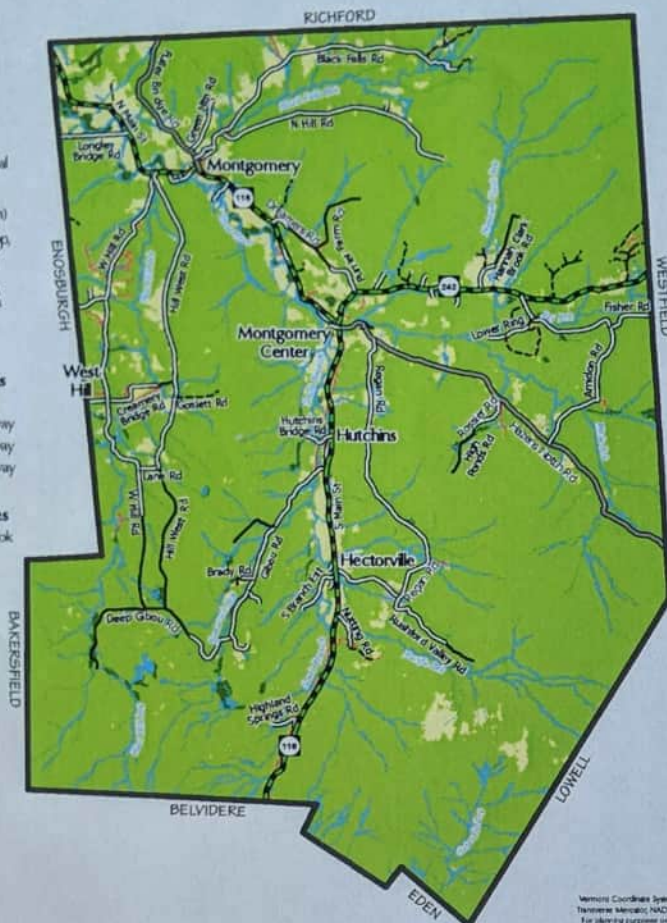
- State Highway
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway
- Private Road

### Surface Water Features

- River, Stream or Brook
- Pond

### Other Feature

- Town Boundary



Data Sources: All map features derived from VDOT digital coverage. North arrow on map refers to GRS North.



Vermont Coordinate System  
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83  
For planning purposes only.

Prepared by  
Northwest Regional  
Planning Commission  
25 North Street  
St. Albans, VT 05478  
(802) 524-0068  
www.vtrpc.com  
February 2008

Location: <http://projdata.courtesy/bkblnk/montgomeryyoung/0208>



#### Constraints to Development

Areas with steep slopes (15% or greater), shallow soils, high water table, or within the floodplain are poorly suited for development. These site conditions may entail high maintenance costs, and pose a burden to municipal taxpayers as well as hazards to public health and safety. Development in these areas may also compromise the quality and quantity of ground and surface waters and other natural resources, and therefore should be restricted.

#### Village Center Designations

Montgomery received Village Center Designations for both villages in Montgomery in 2003. The purpose of the designation is to support revitalization of the existing traditional village centers. This designation is one tool to encourage investment in the villages that will lead to enhancing the livability by expanding access to employment, housing, education and schools, services, public facilities, and other basic needs. Supporting our villages also aligns with the statewide planning goals of encouraging compact development and maintaining the historic settlement pattern as stated in 24 V.S.A. § 4302.

**Deleted:** Both of the Villages in Montgomery received state designation in August of 2003 as a way to support the

**Deleted:** supports the goals of the community by gaining access to several benefits as listed below as

**Deleted:** these settlement areas

#### State Village Center Designated Areas in Montgomery

Montgomery Village



Montgomery Center



Benefits available for designated village centers are:

- Up to 20% Vermont income tax credit for substantial rehabilitation of certified historic buildings;
- Up to 50% Vermont Income Tax credit for code improvements to commercial buildings;
- Priority consideration for all grants through the state's Municipal Planning Grant Program, and the Consolidated Plan for HUD funding including the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG);
- The State Buildings Department will give consideration and priority to designated village center locations when leasing or constructing buildings, in consultation with the

community;

- A special assessment district in a designated village center may use funds for operating costs in addition to capital expenses.

#### Future Land Use

While Montgomery is not currently experiencing a large growth in population, data shows there is continuous demand for new housing units, with an average of seven units per year permitted over the last five years. This development pressure could lead to sprawl, which is defined as "a regional land use pattern of scattered, low-density, single use development...it is land consuming, auto dependent, energy and resource intensive, economically exclusive, and is initially some distance from existing infrastructure" (source: The History of Sprawl in Chittenden County). Growth can occur without sprawl by redeveloping existing village centers and developing new compact growth centers. Recognizing that the two current village areas contain significant wastewater limitations, the Town is working on developing a community wastewater system. Additionally, the Town may want to consider designating additional areas adjacent to the Villages that are appropriate for more intense development.

The community recognizes the value of working lands to the regional farm and forest products economy and to the local and regional community's ability to conserve and provide stewardship for its cultural heritage and natural resource of fish, wildlife, plants, ecological systems. Therefore, the town will explore all reasonable and feasible opportunities to support and protect working lands that are greater than 25 acres and meet any of the following criteria – (i) enrolled in the Vermont Current Use program; (ii) owned by persons willing to consider the sale and application of a conservation easement; (iii) are being managed in accordance with a forest management plan that has been reviewed and approved by a professional forester, wildlife biologist, or other appropriate and related professional; or (iv) owned by persons willing to consider other non-regulatory mechanisms that promote sustainable forest management or seek to otherwise conserve the lands.

**Deleted:** The Town of Montgomery, like all other towns, needs to look at the consequences of growth and development for its local community and also with the Region and State. Growth and development can greatly affect the town's land use, and towns need to plan for this potential change. Montgomery is expected to see a steady population growth through the year 2020 of twelve to seventeen percent (see Community Profile) which is a higher rate of growth than is expected at for Franklin County. This could affect the future land use patterns as the Town grows to accommodate this new population. ¶

**Deleted:** One thing that needs to be addressed is sprawl. Sprawl

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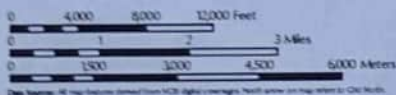
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## PROPOSED LAND USE TOWN OF MONTGOMERY

- LEGEND**
- Proposed Land Use Districts**
- Village 1
  - Village 2
  - Conservation 1
  - Conservation 2
  - Rural/Residential
  - 100 Year Flood Zone Overlay
- Transportation Features**
- State Highway
  - Class 2 Town Highway
  - Class 3 Town Highway
  - Class 4 Town Highway
  - Private Road
- Surface Water Features**
- River, Stream or Brook
  - Pond
- Other Feature**
- Town Boundary



Data Source: All map features derived from NGS digital coverages. North arrow on map refers to CNE North.



North Coordinate System  
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83  
For planning purposes only.



Prepared by:  
Montgomery Regional  
Planning Commission  
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www.mrcvt.com  
February 2018

Location: <https://projects.vermont.gov/landuse/montgomery/landusemap/2018>

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While village center revitalization is an ongoing process to improve a community's vitality and livability, village center designation is only one tool and its focus is on supporting commercial activity in the center of Vermont's villages.¶

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*Conservation I District.* The purpose of the Conservation I District is to preserve the ecological, cultural and economic value and function of forest blocks and the natural resources they encompass as detailed in this Plan. These include:

- To maintain healthy, viable populations of native wildlife;
- To support active forest management as a means of supporting the local wood products industry;
- To enhance outdoor recreation valued by residents and visitors alike;
- To provide for the protection of source waters which feed rivers and streams, including important aquatic habitats; and
- To maintain the aesthetics associated with the agricultural and forested landscape.

*Conservation II District.* The Conservation II District consists of forest blocks at 1,600 feet in elevation and above. Placing restrictions on development is essential due to the sensitive resources located there, including wildlife habitat, steep slopes, shallow soils, headwaters, and the potential for development to affect erosion or flood hazards downstream. Protection of these areas also serves the ecological, cultural and economic benefits associated with the rural character as described above.

*Hazard Area Overlay.* The purpose of this overlay district is to prevent increases in flooding caused by development in flood hazard areas, to minimize future public and private losses due to flood, and to promote public health, safety, and general welfare. This includes all areas in Montgomery identified as areas of special flood hazard on the National Flood Insurance maps located at the Town Office building.

*River Corridor Area Overlay.* The River Corridor consists of a floodplain corridor, including the stream and land adjacent to the stream, the dimensions of which are determined using physical relations between the channel width and the meander belt width. It identifies an area where stream processes may occur that enable the stream to re-establish and maintain a stable slope and dimensions over time. A stable stream slope occurs when a channel reaches a certain length. This length is accommodated by a corridor of floodplain area described as the meander belt. The River Corridor is a calculated belt width-based corridor where erosion is minimized when stream equilibrium conditions are achieved. River Corridor area boundaries attempt to capture lands most vulnerable to fluvial erosion in the near term and indicate the type, magnitude, and frequency of fluvial adjustments anticipated during flood events. The area can be mapped, and is based on quality-assured fluvial geomorphic data (i.e., data that describe the physical form and process of a riverine system).

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**Deleted:** Given Montgomery's topography and hydrological characteristics, the town is at great risk of erosional hazards – as evidenced by the 1997 floods that caused a lot of damage in the Town. To protect against property loss and public infrastructure damage (especially the many gravel roads and culverts located on or near steep gradient streams) from stream channel movement, Montgomery should limit development in areas of high erosion risk (as indicated on Agency of Natural Resources River Corridor maps). ¶

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