

2008-2009 Planning Commission Project with
Smart Growth Vermont and NVDA
Project Goals

This project will build on the work already completed by the Planning Commission, the Select Board, and the community at large over the last couple of years. With the revised Town Plan (2006) and Bylaws (2007) as a starting point, the Planning Commission is currently focused on four main issues:

- How to manage rural residential development in a way that balances protection of rural character with respect for private property rights
- How to work with large developers to ensure that their development plans benefit the community as a whole
- How to concentrate new development in and around the villages in a way that is compatible with the unique character of each
- How to plan ahead and budget for major town projects such as road improvements, sewer extensions, and equipment purchases so that taxes remain stable as the town grows

The goals of this project are built around these four issues, and the end products are intended to help Burke residents work together to address the challenges of each. In rough chronological order, the goals are as follows:

1. To make the town eligible for state programs that provide financial incentives for upgrading old buildings and building new homes in and around village centers
2. To help the Planning Commission refine its zoning bylaws so that they ensure that scattered rural development fits with Burke's character while respecting a landowner's right to develop their land
3. To help the Select Board and the Planning Commission develop a "toolbox" of strategies for making growth as efficient as possible from a municipal budget perspective, as well as a long-range plan for funding local government services within the means of the community

To meet these goals, the Planning Commission, in partnership with Smart Growth Vermont and NVDA, will develop a survey, hold smaller focus groups and larger community meetings, develop GIS maps based on key features of importance to the community and develop an implementation matrix outlining the tools the town can implement to protect key areas of rural character. We will also apply to the Downtown Program for Village Center Designation for East and West Burke. See the project documents for the results of this work.