

TOGETHER FOR BURKE'S FUTURE

NOVEMBER 2008

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

Town Survey Shows Strong Support for Protecting Burke's Rural Character

In late summer 2008, the Planning Commission distributed a survey to all Burke residents asking for input on a range of issues related to Burke's future.

The survey data show that Burke residents have a shared understanding of what constitutes the community's rural character, as well as a strong desire to see that character protected. What follows are a few major themes that

emerged from the data. A full report on survey results is available on the website listed on page 4 or in the town office.

SCENIC VIEWS AND OPEN AGRICULTURAL LAND

Survey data showed strong support for protection of scenic views and open land. "Scenic vistas" was the most important element of rural

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The survey results and other data were presented at a community meeting on October 16. Participants were asked to rank a variety of goals for the town's future. Support was strongest for the following:

- Protecting large open meadows
- Discouraging strip development and limiting the scale of new commercial developments
- Preserving the character of the villages
- Protecting the integrity of the Kingdom Trails network
- Protecting wildlife habitat

GINN PROJECT UPDATE:

Current Plans for New Development on the Mountain

The following text is condensed from information provided by the Ginn Corporation.

Burke 2000 is seeking approval for construction of Phase I of its proposed development and "master plan" approval for the remainder (Phase II). All elements in Phase II will need to come back to the Planning Commission for

approval after Phase I is built out and additional information on these future phases becomes available.

PHASE I Cutter Inn Area

- Development of 387 housing units, including 150 single-family lots and 237 condominiums in four four-story buildings and 15 duplex buildings

- Creation of 60 acres of new skiing terrain and addition of a chair lift

Sherburne Base Lodge Area

- Expansion of the Sherburne Base Lodge by about 8,000 square feet
- Expansion of the Sherburne Base Lodge parking area from 400 to 700 parking spaces

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This newsletter is published every other month to help Burke residents stay up to date on the Town's efforts to plan for Burke's future.

The goal of the project is to develop strategies for protecting Burke's rural character and enhancing its historic villages as the town continues to grow.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact the Planning Commission at 467-3717 or at burkePC@burkevermont.org.

...Town Survey Shows Strong Support for Protecting Rural Character



Burke Hollow Meeting House

(Continued from page 1) character for respondents, with over 90% rating it as either "most important" or "somewhat important." "Agricultural lands" (that is, pasture lands) also received high marks, with

over 90% rating it as either "most important" or "somewhat important." In addition, the top two "sacred spaces" mentioned were Darling Ridge and Burke Mountain, both of which are central to the town's scenic qualities.

Finally, more than two-thirds of respondents indicated that they were open to placing additional conditions on new development so as to reduce its visual impact and preserve scenic landscapes or important natural resources.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

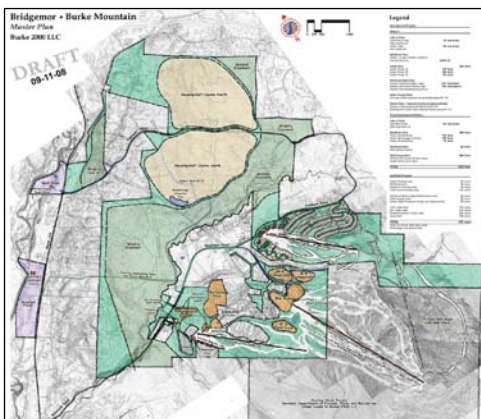
Survey respondents indicated that they saw historic preservation and adaptive reuse as either the number one or number two priority for special planning attention across all three villages. In addition, after Darling Ridge and Burke

Mountain, the three most often-cited "sacred spaces" were East Burke Village, Burke Mountain Club House, and Burke Hollow Meeting House, all of which are important in large part because of their historic character.

THE ABSENCE OF SUBURBIA

Survey respondents demonstrated their concern about suburban encroachment in many ways. Most important, there was very strong support – from about 70% of respondents – for encouraging commercial clustering. In addition, more than two-thirds of respondents indicated

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The Burke Mountain master plan and other maps are available online at www.skiburke.com

...Update on Ginn's Plans for Burke Mountain

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Mid-Burke

- Removal of the Mid-Burke Lodge and erection of a 4000 square foot temporary guest facility

- Installation of a high-speed lift from the Mid-Burke Area to the summit
- Creation of 35 acres of new skiing terrain on the north face of Burke Mountain

Utilities

- Expansion of the existing water and wastewater systems
- Upgrades to the area power supply

PHASE II

Mid-Burke Area

- Construction of 363 housing units in the Mid-Burke area
- Creation of an additional 60 acres of new skiing trails in the East Bowl

- Addition of a new East Bowl chair lift

Sherburne Area

- Construction of 64 multi-family housing units in the area of High Meadow Road

Golf Course Area

- Construction of 210 single-family home sites
- Construction of an 18-hole golf course
- Construction of a snowmaking and irrigation pond

SAVING THE BEST OF BURKE:

Strategies for Protecting Rural Character

There are a variety of strategies that can be effective tools for protecting rural character in a rapidly growing community. The Burke Planning Commission is currently developing a series of options for residents that respond directly to community feedback on what approaches are most appropriate for Burke.

BALANCING NEW HOUSING AND CONSERVATION IN RURAL AREAS

Effective management of rural residential development is a key issue facing the community. A few of the strategies that are in use or under consideration in Burke include:

Clustering, in which a developer concentrates more lots on a portion of the property in return for protecting open space.

Building envelopes, in which all structures on a lot are located within a specific area on the lot so as to reduce impacts on views.

Screening, which refers to a range of strategies for reducing the visibility of new construction.

GUIDING DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND THE VILLAGES

There is a clear desire to see new development concentrated in and around the villages. A few strategies that might help facilitate new village development include:

Public infrastructure planning, which involves developing integrated plans for new streets, sidewalks, wastewater, and other elements of growth that are best coordinated by the municipality.

Village street grids, which is an approach to village development that provides incentives for following the historic pattern of interconnected streets that defines Vermont's villages.

Design review guidelines, where the Town sets standards for various aspects of design and then reviews development proposals against those standards.

"Vermont Neighborhoods" designation, which is a state program that provides incentives for designating areas in and around village centers for compact residential development.

DISCOURAGING STRIP COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The potential for poorly managed commercial development along Burke's main highways is of great concern to the community. A few of the strategies for meeting this goal include:

Commercial clustering, which refers to the designation of specific, limited areas for commercial development.

Access management, which involves a variety of strategies for limiting the number of places where cars can enter and exit the public highway.

Design review guidelines, where the Town sets standards for various aspects of design and then reviews

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"Prediction is difficult, especially about the future."

Yogi Berra



Highway 114 in Lyndon south of East Burke Village may be vulnerable to strip commercial development

Town of Burke, VT

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West Burke, VT 05871

Planning Commission:
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burkePC@burkevermont.org

Additional information
about this project is
available online at:

<http://tinyurl.com/burkeplanning>

UPCOMING EVENTS

VILLAGE HISTORIC TAX CREDIT WORKSHOP

*December 11, 6:00 PM
Town Clerk's Office*

GINN PRESENTS PHASE I PLANS TO BURKE DRB

*December 15, 7:00 PM
Town Clerk's Office*

...Strategies for Protecting Burke's Rural Character

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development proposals against those standards.

Collaboration with adjoining towns, as development decisions made in neighboring towns can have a major impact on Burke's character.

PROTECTING FARMLAND, FORESTS, AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES

The conservation of farmland, forests, and

other natural resources goes hand in hand with the management of rural residential development. If the community wants to retain significant acreage of forest and agricultural land, it must start with strong standards for new rural homes so as to ensure that they are compatible with the rural landscape. Once those standards are in place, the town may want to consider complementary approaches that are

...Town Survey Results

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that they were in favor of placing additional conditions on new developments so as to reduce their impact.

COMPACT VILLAGES SURROUNDED BY RURAL COUNTRYSIDE

Survey data highlighted the importance of the villages, with traffic calming and pedestrian safety the top two priorities for special planning emphasis. Compatible commercial uses, traditional development patterns, and lighting management also received high marks, indicating a strong desire that the villages retain their essential character. Finally, five of the top ten sacred places cited by respondents were either locations within the villages or a village itself.

LARGE BLOCKS OF FOREST AND AN ETHIC OF PUBLIC ACCESS

Survey responses were consistent with an ethic of forest conservation and public access. "Forested land and open space" was ranked as the second-most significant element of rural character. Similarly, three-quarters of respondents were in favor of using land use planning to encourage land conservation.

SUPPORT FOR THE GINN COMPANY

Significantly more respondents agreed with positive statements about Ginn and its impacts than with negative statements. In general, there was a willingness to work with Ginn for the benefit of the community as a whole.

focused specifically on conservation of natural resources, including:

Trails planning, in which communities map trail networks, formally designate trails, identify segments that are at risk, and work to secure easements so that trails are protected even if land changes ownership.

Scenic/agricultural overlay districts, which are special districts applied to areas of high scenic value that place additional

conditions on development in those areas so as to protect the scenic character of the town.

Land conservation funding, which can include fee simple purchase, purchase of easements, and transfer of development rights, among other strategies.

Partnering with nonprofit organizations that are in a position to assist the town with natural resource planning and conservation.