

# East Charlotte Village Planning Project / Community Workshops Final Report

MAY 2010

Prepared for:  
Town of Charlotte  
P.O. Box 119  
Charlotte, VT 05445-0119

Prepared by:  
LandWorks  
228 Maple Street, Ste. 32  
Middlebury, VT 05753





## Table of Contents:

1. Project Overview	5	
1.1 Introduction & Project Goal	5	
1.2 Process & Work Product	5	
2. The Workshops		5
2.1 The Spring Workshop	5	
Workshop Outcomes	7	
Traffic Calming	8	
2.2 The Fall Workshop	9	
Density Discussion & Mapping	9	
Action Plan	10	
2.3 The Final Workshop	12	
3. The Survey	13	
4. Conclusions	16	
5. Conceptual Master Plan	18	
6. Appendix		
6.1 East Charlotte Land Use Regulations		
6.2 Existing Conditions Map		
6.3 Photo Inventory		
6.4 The Survey		
6.5 Newspaper Articles		
6.6 Future Development Map		



# 1. Project Overview

## 1.1 Introduction & Project Goal

In January of 2009 the Town of Charlotte issued a Request for Proposals for consultants to assist with obtaining public input and help plan the East Charlotte village. As stated in the RFP, the goal of the project “is to “take the pulse” of residents and other stake-holders to determine how (or whether) future planning should be undertaken with regard to changing the land use regulations and/or initiating public or community infrastructure projects.” The Town planned to commence the project in the spring of 2009 and suggested that a survey and envisioning exercises could be methods for obtaining public feedback. Three public meetings were held to provide a basis for the project. This project is intended to form the basis of a complete master plan for the village.

**“A master plan for the East Charlotte Village will be developed through a participatory public process.”**

## 1.2 Process & Work Product

LandWorks, of Middlebury, VT was selected as the consultant for this project. In explaining the importance of public input workshops to the project approach the consultant’s response to the RFP states, “key to success of these events is providing participants with a “fact base” and information about the issues and opportunities associated with developing the village. The response also states, “the summary report to be prepared must enable the Commission to chart a course

for the future and provide a framework for the realization of the range of proposed and appropriate initiatives, which evolve from this process.”

Over the course of the year, three workshops were held and a public input survey was conducted, the summaries and results of which are contained in this report.

# 2. The Workshops



Posters to announce the workshops were displayed in public areas.

## 2.1 The Spring Workshop

The first workshop held to gather public sentiment regarding the future of the East Charlotte village was on May 14, 2009 at the East Charlotte Grange. Many of the area residents came out to learn the basis for the project and its potential outcomes and to participate in brainstorming activities that will lay the foundation for the next steps in the effort to develop a plan for East Charlotte village.

The workshop started with a site walk attended by approximately 30 individuals to identify the area of study and focus with the

participants and to share observations of the characteristics, aesthetics and functions of the village. Land use history, the nature and speed of traffic, walking conditions and the visual qualities of the village area were discussed. The history of the area is reflected in the historic structures present - the Grange was originally built as a schoolhouse in 1870, and the home at the crossroads was at one point a tavern - serving the north-south traffic, which traveled, through the village area.

Following the hour-long site walk the participants returned to the East Charlotte Grange, and joined the other folks who had arrived for the start of the evening workshop. All were welcomed by Jeff MacDonald, Chair of the Planning Commission, and a project background was provided by Town Planner Dean Bloch. David Raphael, of LandWorks, then provided an introduction to the workshop and split the attendees (who numbered approximately 60) into 4 groups for the remainder of the evening. The groups were asked to discuss general issues and opportunities and were given specific questions to guide their discussion. The questions posed were:

A) What does the village have that you like? What does the village lack?

B) How does the East Charlotte village function today? Consider Spear Street and Hinesburg Road safety, aesthetics, and functional attributes, and walking and biking options.

C) What does the Village need in terms of future land uses and in what form and type? Discuss potential commercial uses, residential uses, agricultural uses, cultural/community uses.

D) What should the village look like in the future? Where to develop; where not to develop (in a general sense – landowner’s of

particular parcels have the right to develop or conserve in accordance with current zoning, their own interests and future plans); how much to develop?

E) Where should roads, trails, walks, etc. be sited? Share your personal experiences or concerns.



Participants on the site walk



Brainstorming ideas for the village



Participants present their ideas

Following the questions session the groups were then guided through a mapping exercise and again asked to answer specific questions:

A) Where should new development go (in a general sense)? How densely developed should it be?

B) Where should transportation and circulation improvements occur? Identify improvements to Spear Street and Hinesburg Rd; and identify future roads and walking/biking network. Locate or highlight important views and/or scenic, cultural, historic, natural resources.

### Workshop Outcomes:

The residents of East Charlotte village appreciate the overall character of the village and environs. The agricultural feeling, old farmhouses, trees, existing views, small community, neighbors and the “de facto” village green all contribute to village’s sense of place (there was a sense that there was visual access to the open spaces of the village but not physical access). The importance of maintaining and adding to the historic architecture was voiced. One participant commented: “I like the fact that working farms and agricultural lands come right to the edge of the Village.” Many residents mentioned how they appreciate the existing village store, the farmer’s market that was set up in the summers and the existing hamlet feeling of the area. A sense of community has developed in the “East Village” and residents want to ensure that any changes will serve to promote and foster what is already there. There was no question that the workshop itself reinforced the sense of community and neighbors enjoyed seeing one another and sharing their views throughout the evening.

Many comments focused on what the village lacks and how to make improvements for the future. Residents agree that a high priority for the village is to establish a place to congregate

and to develop ways to encourage interaction among the community. This could be achieved by creating new businesses such as a cafe/restaurant, coffee shop, watering hole/pub, or by establishing new events in the area. Residents noted that commercial space already exists and should be considered for locations of new business. The farmer’s market, the village store, the village open space and the yearly Tractor Parade all create a foundation for community involvement and residents would like to see these opportunities further developed. The use of the Grange building as a community center was also discussed, with the limitations regarding the septic system being one constraint. Using the existing barn on the corner owned by Steve Denton for dances or outdoor festivals was also mentioned.

Transportation, vehicular traffic and pedestrian safety are a big concern in the village. It is likely that average daily traffic (ADT) on the two main roads serving the village (Spear Street and Charlotte-Hinesburg Road) will continue to grow. Participants identified a variety of issues including winter road conditions, speed limits that are too high, the lack of alternative modes of transportation or support for them (i.e. no public transit service), intersection safety, and road widths and shoulders that are unsafe for bikers or pedestrians. Residents suggested that: 1) a pickup/drop-off place be established for schoolchildren and commuters (there used to be such a spot in the village), 2) off-street parking be developed, 3) traffic calming measures implemented (see discussion below); 4) the creation of sidewalks, walking paths or bike lanes or bike paths be considered; 5) street tree plantings be implemented and 6) gateways be developed to help demarcate the Village boundaries and signal to motorists that they are entering a more densely developed area and need to slow down.

Each of the groups at the workshop touched

on the subject of housing and presented a variety of ideas for development. A theme arose in considering new housing and it is clear that the residents of East Charlotte village want new housing to be appropriately sited to encourage walkability in the village center, to promote community interaction, and to fit with the existing vernacular and settlement pattern. A need for affordable housing and senior housing was mentioned with clustered housing around the four corners as a potential site option. Supporting infrastructure for a growing village was a consideration to many and suggestions ranged from undertaking a review or revision of the Village District boundaries to support for a fire sub-station. An emphasis on maintaining village character and existing views was prevalent throughout these discussions.

Another topic of importance to residents revolves around recreational opportunities. Residents mentioned creating walking paths and biking trails, developing a playground, skating rink, sliding hill or pavilion for community members to enjoy. On the site walk, residents discussed how there used to be a ball field in the village and there was support for exploring the revival of some community green space - as much, if not all, of the conserved open space is not technically accessible to the public.

In considering the next steps for this project it is important to identify the primary areas of interest. From the spring workshop there emerged four distinct areas of focus:

- 1) Transportation and Traffic Calming;
- 2) Community Gathering Space- Indoors (commercial) and Outdoors (public);
- 3) Future Housing (i.e. senior housing and affordable housing) and Development Patterns;
- 4) Boundaries, including boundaries of the

Village District and commercial districts and revisiting the density and uses for the district (current 5 acre per unit density requirement may limit the overall Village District density in the future).

The options for action will address the roles of the 1) Selectboard; 2) Planning Commission; 3) Business owners and 4) Individual Property Owners in facilitating the vision for the future of East Charlotte village; 4) Assessing consensus for “action items” and identifying possible projects.

**Traffic Calming** – In a general sense, traffic calming refers to those measures which are designed to slow down vehicular traffic on specific roads or thoroughfares. “The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) defines traffic calming as the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for nonmotorized street users.” (*ITE Journal, July 1997*). In busy village centers pedestrian related improvements and traffic calming are very important to everyday pedestrian and motor vehicle activity. Traffic calming improvements help to enhance the overall sense of place, aesthetics, and pedestrian and bicycle safety. They enable walkers to efficiently, safely and enjoyably access key destinations and encourage greater pedestrian usage, even if there is no apparent demand for pedestrian facilities. Moreover, it ensures a healthier and cleaner environment as vehicle usage is reduced.

There are many options available for traffic calming elements to be introduced into a streetscape – speed tables, raised or textured intersections and pedestrian crossings, landscaping treatments such as street trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses, street lighting, traffic control signs, and gateway signs can all

be considered as effective methods of slowing traffic.



Simple gateway signs notify drivers that they are entering a neighborhood and help to calm traffic in the village.



This is an example of a speed table on a residential street in Charlotte, NC. It uses the street print texture for the flat section, with asphalt for the ramps.

## 2.2 The Fall Workshop

The second workshop was held on September 10, 2009 at the East Charlotte Grange. About 50 area residents attended the workshop and participated in discussions intended to produce detailed information on specific planning concerns, including: 1) developing action items; 2) establishing density recommendations; and, 3) preparing a vision statement for the village.

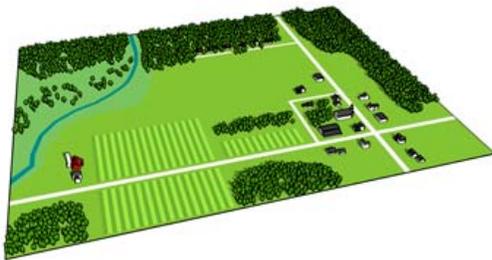
The workshop convened with a review of the results from the May 2009 workshop and the survey from the summer months. The workshop then moved to the new items on the agenda, which included a discussion of action items, the preparation of a vision statement for the village, and a discussion about density. For each of the new items, the attendees were provided an overview of the topic and its importance and relevance to the planning process. Attendees were given a list of ten action items developed from the results of the first workshop and the survey, a preliminary vision statement to consider, and a visual description of density, its benefits and how it relates to zoning, build-out and good design. The attendees were then divided into small groups for discussion. The following questions were posed to the groups:

1. Taking into account the potential build-out of the village, where should new development go (in a general sense)? How densely developed should it be? Using the pushpins provided, locate on the aerial map a minimum of 6 new units (represented by the push pins), up to a maximum of 90 new units. Two colors are provided to differentiate between commercial and residential uses.
2. Now that you've considered how dense the village should be, refine and prioritize the list of action items presented here tonight. Indicate who the responsible players should be as well as potential resources. Additional action items may be suggested.
3. Do you support the vision statement presented earlier? How would you refine the statement, or, develop a new one?

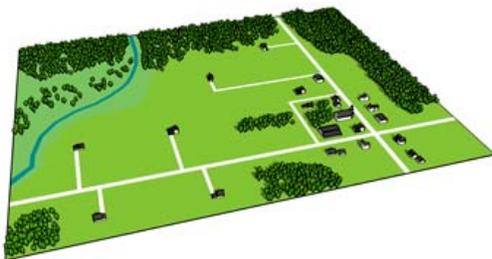
Density Discussions & Mapping - The topic of density and development is critical to the planning process for the East Charlotte village. Participants at the workshop were provided an overview of the role density plays in the project. Some benefits of density include walkable neighborhoods, housing

choice and affordability, transportation choices, community fiscal health fostered by efficient use of existing capacity and infrastructure, encouragement of community interaction and socialization, and protection of the environment and open spaces. Participants were reminded that, “people often associate negative characteristics with higher densities – these are a result of poor design, not the inevitable result of density.” Illustrations (seen below) were provided to help participants visualize the topic.

Illustrations of Density:



Existing Development



Traditional Low Density Development



Clustered Higher-Density Development

Build-out is defined as a hypothetical point in the future when all land that can be developed, has been developed under current conditions and allowable densities for any parcel, given its size and zoning designation. For the mapping portion of the workshop, the groups were given pushpins (two colors each) and asked to keep in mind potential build-out of the village while identifying potential locations for new commercial and residential units in the village.

The result of this exercise indicated that participants would prefer development be clustered together, located near to existing roads and near the current Village Commercial District (See Appendix 6.6). One group extended the East Charlotte Village District boundaries and another suggested a mixed-use area located north of the 4 Corners. Through previous phases of the project East Charlotte residents expressed a desire to increase density in an amenable fashion in the Village District core. Alternatives such as performance zoning, which regulates land development according to its impacts rather than use, and TDR approaches are possible tools to accommodate density and maintain open space. Performance zoning allows for flexibility in the planning, design, and development of specific parcels of land and the projects proposed for those parcels. It allows designers, developers and regulators to assess how the project will “perform” when measured against specific criteria and standards.

“Performance zoning can encourage mixed uses and appropriate scale of development; and benefit rural communities...to sustain farming by allowing it to co-exist with low impact businesses...and can help rural areas stop large-scale developments that would otherwise follow traditional zoning densities and uses” (*Community Rules: A New England Guide to Smart Growth Strategies*, Conservation Law Foundation & Vermont Forum on Sprawl)

Action Plan:

Participants were given a list of action items and were asked to refine and prioritize them,

as well as provide additional comments and action items. The Action Items developed by the group are shown in the following matrix in order of highest priority:

ACTION ITEM:	NOTES / RECOMMENDATIONS:
1. Maintain COMMUNITY CHARACTER	
2. Protect HISTORIC PROPERTIES including the Church Grange	
3. Create OUTDOOR COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACE	Consider reorganizing / designating open space areas as part of developments. Participants noted this is already happening in some instances, but that it should be formalized with a designated area.
4. Develop additional COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS like a coffee shop or pub.	Participants noted that this is happening also – suggestions include a "watering hole", residential neighborhood mixed use, dropbox/Post Office as part of commercial center, library, laundromat, and support for re-use of existing buildings/footprints
5. Provide RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES like bike paths, walking trails	Recommended connect to existing trails (i.e.: VAST, X-C ski, snowmobile) and planning with Town Trails Committee
6. Plan for FUTURE HOUSING that is affordable, attractive and walkable	Recommended Performance Zoning in Village District that would allow flexibility in density and design
7. Provide ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS	Possibilities include a bike path on road /bike lanes, a bus, possible park & ride, walks (recommends restarting Middlebury -Charlotte to Burlington rail connection)
8. CALM TRAFFIC	Consider speed limit and enforcement, avoid signals; other traffic calming elements
9. RECONSIDER / REDRAW BOUNDARIES for village and commercial districts	Tie into mixed use/commercial and residential. Integrate as a mixed use commercial/residential district.
<b>Additional suggestions for Action Items:</b>	
10. Include GREEN BUILDING designs/infrastructure	Consider and promote wind/energy/water conservation, sustainable design into new development or redevelopment
11. Flexible use of EXISTING BUILDINGS	Consider adaptive re-use/live-work options
12. Solving the HYDROLOGY PROBLEMS in the vicinity of the church	
13. Providing JOBS in the village and locally using lands for vineyards or farming	
14. Continue East Charlotte PLANNING GROUPS and COMMITTEES	
15. Pulling together all town groups to WORK COHESIVELY on planning efforts.	



Action items are developed in the workshop.

*The Vision Statement:*

A vision statement provides an overarching sense of what the community envisions for the future of their town, or places in their town. It is intended to articulate the values and hopes for the physical, cultural, social and economic attributes of an area. It is a general statement and provides the basis for guiding planning and development initiatives.

Residents reviewed the initial vision statement and provided comments and suggestions that have been incorporated into this second iteration of that statement. They wanted to be sure to identify the small scale of the village, and articulate the importance of how the neighborhoods reflect the community’s heritage. Sustainability and the spiritual aspects of the village setting were also suggested as considerations for the vision statement. One respondent stated that the vision statement should end with a “punchline” that reaffirms the village’s heritage and it’s setting amidst a scenic and historic landscape.

Revised Vision Statement...

East Charlotte village is a small, friendly community with a unique identity, abundant natural resources, and distinct historic buildings that define and contribute to the Town of Charlotte. The retention of the

historic and visual character of the village is of high importance to community members and provides a basis for guiding compatible future growth and development. Our neighborhoods are attractive, affordable, and carefully designed to be walkable and complement the distinct physical and cultural context of the village. Sustainable design and development are critical for maintaining our village for future generations. Our open spaces and landscape features are attractive and provide a variety of recreational activities. The surrounding agricultural lands also contribute to the beautiful scenery in East Charlotte Village and connect residents and visitors to our heritage.

---

**“The purposes of the East Charlotte Village District are:**

**(1) to allow for residential, limited civic and neighborhood uses that reinforce East Charlotte Village as a principally residential hamlet, and**

**(2) to ensure that new development is consistent with the district’s village character and pattern of development as expressed in the Charlotte Town Plan.”**

---

2.3 The Final Workshop

The final workshop was held on Thursday, October 15, 2009 at the East Charlotte

Grange. The workshop began with a presentation and summary of the project to date. Overarching conclusions for the project included:

- Traffic, roadway and streetscape design work is needed on Hinesburg Road and Spear Street to facilitate multiple modes of travel and to implement traffic calming measures;
- Delineation and designation of a “Village Common” – a greenspace for public use and recreation is desired;
- Establishing an eating/drinking destination – viability and implementation dependent on private sector and market;
- Continue and enhance the Grange as a community gathering place;
- Develop walking trails and connectivity with other areas in Charlotte;
- Explore performance zoning for development of Village District and environs

The second half of the meeting involved group discussions and the presentation of the group summaries. The groups were asked to 1) Review work to date and discuss comments, concerns and conclusions; 2) Consider the revised vision statement and input from the previous workshop and to provide further refinements; 3) Create a “to do” list from the highest priority Action Items and discuss who will be responsible for each item; and, 4) Discuss density and development and envision future development patterns. Consider ways to work with landowners to chart future development.

From the results of the group discussions it is evident that the residents of East Charlotte would like to encourage a “hamlet” environment and to have the village still look the same in 20 years. There is concern that the village will be overdeveloped and the question was posed, “is density the same as development.” A review of the initial

development of East Charlotte revealed that the historic village, built prior to the implementation of zoning in 1969, would not have been built the same way under the current agricultural zoning regulations. As the evening progressed and it became apparent that development in the village would occur, the focus shifted to how the current land owners, taking into account the goals and needs of the townspeople, could creatively plan the future of the community.

It is very important to the people of East Charlotte to maintain the existing character and to plan carefully to avoid destroying neighborhoods. The existing agricultural lands are an integral component of the character of the area and as such should be preserved and promoted for their ability to create local jobs. The construction of orchards, vineyards and wineries were mentioned as a way to enhance the local economy while maintaining the land.

New Action Items garnered from this workshop include:

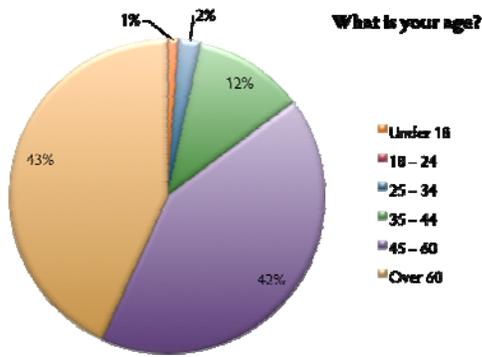
1. Solving the HYDROLOGY PROBLEMS in the vicinity of the church;
2. Providing JOBS in the village and locally using lands for vineyards or farming;
3. Continue East Charlotte PLANNING GROUPS and COMMITTEES;
4. Pulling together all town groups to WORK COHESIVELY on planning efforts.

### 3. The Survey

One key step in the project was to develop a public opinion survey to obtain citizen’s views on a variety of community initiatives and priorities. The survey, Appendix 6.4, was distributed over the summer of 2009 and proved to be a valuable tool in understanding public sentiment.

The survey asked six questions related to growth and development in the village.

Ninety-five surveys were completed online or submitted by hand or by mail. Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents live in East Charlotte village and nearly half (48.7%) of those are over the age of 60. In fact, the majority (85.2%) of all survey respondents represent people 45 years of age and older, with 43.2% over the age of 60. A lesser amount of young people answered with 11.4% representing those 35-44 years old, while the remaining 3.4% represent those 34 years and younger.



People were asked to indicate what they believe to be the top 5 most challenging issues or needs facing the East Charlotte village today. The chart on the following page illustrates the top results and indicates that preserving agricultural/rural lands is the highest priority among all respondents, receiving a response rate of 58.9%, with maintaining community character following close behind at 56.8%. It is interesting to see that among those who *do not* live in East Charlotte village, maintaining community character received the highest priority at 61.2%, with preserving agricultural/rural lands coming in second at 51%. Also of note is that more residents of East Charlotte village believed that too much growth was an issue (27.5%), whereas only 6.1% of non-residents felt it was a concern.

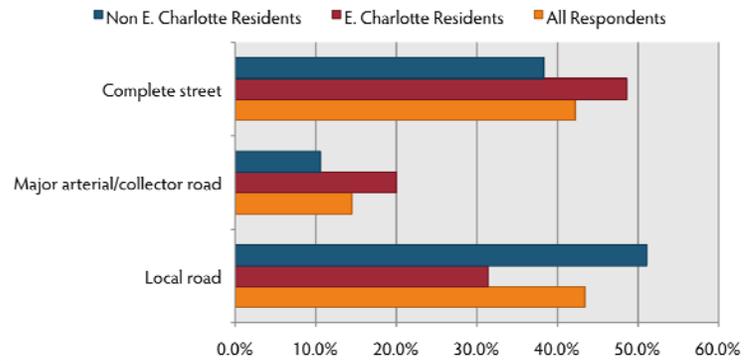


The view along Hinesburg Road.

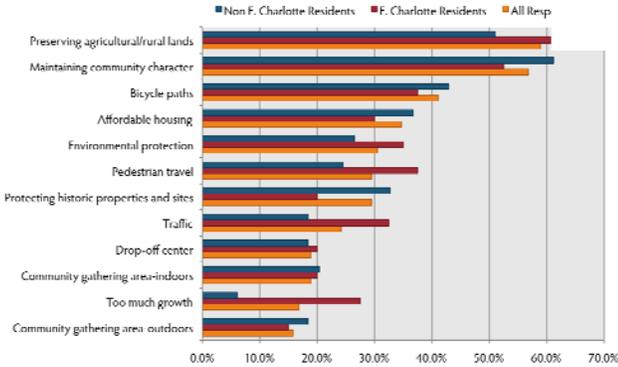
Respondents were then asked how Spear Street and Hinesburg Road should function and were given three options: 1) as a local road that connects neighborhoods to each other as well as to major collectors and arterials, and travel speeds are low; 2) as a major arterial/collector road that connects to other towns/cities where travel speeds are moderate to high and traffic flow takes precedence over pedestrian/bicycle access; or, 3) as a “complete street” that provides for pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and transit. There seems to be consensus among all respondents for Hinesburg Road to function as a “complete street”, receiving 50.6% of the vote from all respondents, 58.8% from East Charlotte residents, and 45.7% from non-village residents. The other half of respondents split their votes between local road and major arterial.

Contrarily, answers for Spear Street were noticeably divided. Among all respondents, there was a near even split between local road (43.4%) and complete street (42.2%). East Charlotte village residents seemed to favor

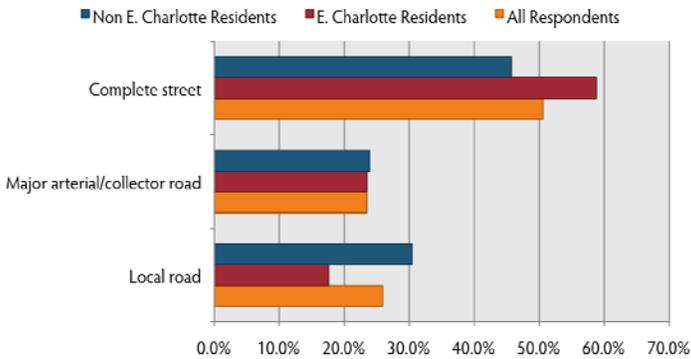
complete street (48.6%) over local road (31.4%), whereas non-village residents preferred local road (51.1%) to complete (38.3%).



**Illustrations of Survey Results:**



Top 10 Priorities among all respondents.



How should Hinesburg Road function?

**How should Spear Street function?**

The final portion of the survey provided an open-ended question, which asked people how they would describe the village they'd most like to see in 20 years. The answers were well thought out, informative and alike in many ways. The majority of people believe that Charlotte is a great community to live in from its historic buildings to the farmers market to recreational opportunities. Many want the village to remain much like it is today, with some carefully planned commercial infill and minimal residential growth. Maintaining open space and agricultural enterprise was a common theme. Several others indicated the desire for a pub or restaurant, while one suggested a co-op or food market. The overwhelming trend was the need for sidewalk/bicycle paths and a transit stop. It was also suggested that there be a public park or green with shade trees where people could walk or ride to and sit down. A sampling of responses follows:

*“A place for people to gather...for food (simple store and restaurant), basic services like public transportation stop, indoor activities (meeting rooms, year-round farmer’s market, perhaps shared facilities like root cellars), outdoor activities (open grassy areas with shade trees) for public events.”*

## East Charlotte Village Planning Project Final Report

*"I would like to see the Old Brick Store still there, and I would also like to see a few restaurants around, but still rural land around, too."*

*"Not much residential growth. Reforestation of some existing commercial lands. More homesteading and family farms."*

*"Maintain present character of the area. Commercial growth not needed. Population density is low."*

*"Higher density, clustered housing, and a restaurant."*

*"I think the village should look like it does now with some enhanced features like: small café restaurant; a community center – perhaps the Grange Hall could serve that purpose; upkeep of historic buildings, i.e. maintain structural integrity as well as cosmetics and landscaping; traffic control – speed limits and adequate signage"*

*"Roughly the same in 20 years. Carefully planned new growth. Few stores."*

*"Limited growth, affordable housing, public transportation, one decent full-service supermarket."*

*"I would like to see a pedestrian and bicycle friendly hub in both east and west Charlotte with locally owned and cooperatively owned businesses. The hub would be surrounded with open space, beautiful homes, duplexes, triplexes and lots of agricultural businesses (locally owned)."*

*"Residential and commercial uses would be similar to today. There is ample space closer to Burlington for development. I do not want to see more development in East Charlotte."*

*"Context is important. There is a need to concentrate development, reduce lot size and encourage one acre lots close to Spears corner."*

*"Affordable housing would be great!!! Maybe a pub/ coffee-house."*

## 4. Conclusions

The workshops and survey, in which over a hundred Charlotte residents participated, yielded a number of insights as to their perspectives on the current and future conditions of the East Charlotte village.

The village is indeed a quintessential Vermont hamlet - rich in history, with a crossroads

setting, a general store,

historic buildings and a surrounding agrarian landscape that is highly valued for its scenic qualities and functional and cultural attributes.

East Charlotte residents have expressed their interest in promoting a stronger sense of community - through better walking and trail connections and more places to meet for events and/or daily activities, both indoors and out. They want to maintain the quality of life, which they appreciate and which has drawn them to this village area.

The residents and neighbors of the village area who have participated in the planning process have found that they share concerns with regard to the village today as well as a vision for the future - a vision that sustains the positive elements of village and neighborhood life today, but allows for some development. This should be in the form of incremental development, sensitively sited and developed. It is desirable to promote the continuation of appropriately scaled, mixed residential and commercial development, as well as recreational and cultural land uses. Innovative planning approaches may support the right type of development and land use - one potential method is the adoption of a performance zoning model that would allow developers some flexibility in proposing contextual designs while adhering to the constraints and capacities of the land and the infrastructure required.

At the final workshop the prospect emerged for the potential future sale and development of the parcels owned by one landowner, the Hinsdale family. The notion of collaborative development and community involvement was discussed as an innovative approach to the planning for these properties, and the landowner was willing to explore this, through an entity such as cooperative or a local

From the Vermont Historical Gazetteer 1857  
Charlotte has always suffered the misfortune of having a ridge of hills run through the town, separating the eastern and western sections, preventing the building of a village in the center. The effect has been a separation of interest, mutual jealousy, and want of harmony between the two sections, prejudicial to the best interests of the town.

development corporation. This notion, coupled with the consideration of performance zoning approaches, provided an interesting conclusion to the first set of workshops. The success of the workshops was clearly demonstrated by the interest of the participants to continue the planning effort beyond the completion of this phase of the project.

The consensus clearly emerged for the consideration of the following key planning initiatives:

1. The need for traffic, roadway and streetscape design work on both Hinesburg Road and Spear Street to facilitate multiple modes of travel and to implement appropriate traffic calming measures;
2. The delineation and designation of a village “common” - a greenspace area for public use and recreation;
3. The establishment of some type of eating/drinking establishment - the viability and implementation of this opportunity will be up to the private sector and the market to support;
4. The continued use and enhancement of the Grange as a community gathering place;
5. The desire to develop walking trails and connectivity with other areas in Charlotte; and,
6. The exploration of performance zoning approaches to allow for creative and appropriate development of the Village District and environs.

Based on the workshops, survey results and planning work undertaken as part of this phase of the project, a number of “next steps” have emerged to guide the Town (and the Planning Commission) through the next phase of the work in developing a plan for the future of the village and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Develop a conceptual plan that addresses the physical planning and layout of East Charlotte to accommodate the growth and

development that may occur in the future.

2. Explore whether any of the following or other zoning amendments would be desirable, including:

- a. performance zoning;
- b. combining East Charlotte Village District and the Village Commercial District;
- c. revising the boundaries of the existing or proposed Village District(s).

3. Study and recommend local walking routes and trail connections to be developed as a means of providing alternative transportation, recreation and neighborhood connectivity.

4. Develop specific engineering and traffic calming plans for the implementation of desired improvements to Hinesburg Road and Spear Street.

5. Support further study with regard to options for enhancing the Grange to better accommodate different types of community events; or seek an alternative location for such a community facility.

6. Explore the creation of a cooperative or collaborative investment entity to support the development of the remaining Hinsdale parcels. This approach could be based on a community collaborative investment model or as local development corporation. The principle behind this approach would be to provide a local, community based organization to oversee the appropriate planning and development of these critical parcels within the Village District. It would allow for a certain degree of village autonomy and control with regard to the future physical development of the hamlet area.

7. Continue planning workshops for developing additional planning approaches, elements and zoning for the Village District. The notion of including representatives of all

the town commissions, boards and entities to collaboratively address the future of the village and the associated issues and opportunities was supported by workshop participants.

A preliminary Conceptual Master Plan was developed as a means of portraying in graphic form some of the key considerations and recommendations for the future physical development of the East Charlotte village area. It is intended to highlight both critical resources and initiatives, and serves as a point of departure for more detailed planning, mapping and design in the next phase of the towns work on the master planning process.

## 5. Conceptual Master Plan