

MASTER PLAN

Town of Mont Vernon, New Hampshire

revised 2018

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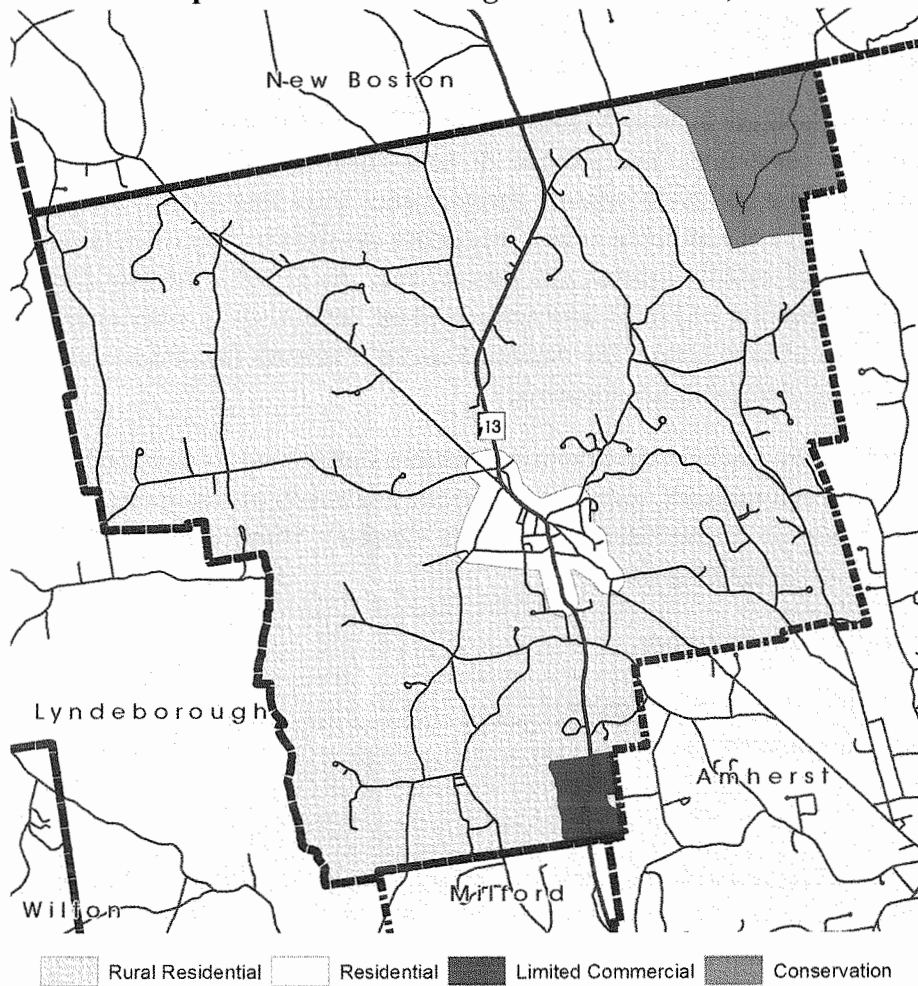
As a context for viewing this plan, the Master Plan is a future vision and policy guidebook for the Town that is meant to cover a 10 year time horizon. This plan is not a zoning ordinance or regulation; instead it is intended as a translation of our community's values into specific actions. The 2000 Master Plan; the May 16, 2011 Community Survey; and the October 1, 2011 Community Values & Goals Work Shop were used to gather community input.

LAND USE

The purpose of this chapter is to aid in articulating the most appropriate future development of Mont Vernon and to aid the board in designing ordinances that result in preserving and enhancing the quality of life, and achieving smartly considered growth, sound planning, and wise resource protection that will give legal standing to the implementation of ordinances and other measures.

This chapter will show existing conditions and the proposed location, extent, and intensity of future land use. The basis of this chapter relies on issues raised in the 2017 Planning Board survey conducted by using surveymonkey, the Mont Vernon Survey, the Mont Vernon community forum, and a number of issues included in other state and community planning documents. (RSA 674:2(b.))

Map L-1: Current Zoning in Mont Vernon, NH



LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN GOALS

1. Preserve Mont Vernon's rural character (including but not limited to: farms and other agricultural uses, fields, forests, stone walls, and no traffic lights).
2. Maintain the Town Center's historical roots while fostering an environment that allows mixed uses such as living, gathering and limited commerce.
3. Being good stewards of our town's wildlife habitat and natural resources.
4. Develop housing zoning to accommodate people of all ages and stages of life.
5. Find creative ways to utilize town owned land to generate town revenue.
6. Maintain visual separation along our town boundaries.

LAND CHARACTERISTICS IN MONT VERNON

Physical Features

In planning for future land use in Mont Vernon, we should be cognizant of existing physical features and identify development constraints. The premise of land capability is that the natural features of the environment vary in their ability to support development. Areas that contain steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains or the presence of bedrock at or near the surface can serve as major hindrances to building. We also need to be aware of wildlife habitats and uses of land. As of 2013, the New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives identified 10,770.37 land acres in Mont Vernon, 49.71 water acres, and 701 wetland acres (10,820.08 acres of total area). The Nashua Regional Planning Commission also reports that 374 acres or 3.46% of agricultural soils are conserved.

Any particular parcel may include development constraints pertaining to topography, such as depth of bedrock, water bodies, and wetlands, soils with high septic limitations, poorly drained soils, and stone walls (these maps are presented in the Natural Resources Chapter). These constraints should be carefully considered when choosing building sites.

Physical Features Recommendations

1. Create a natural resources inventory.
2. Maintain wildlife corridors.

Topography

The land within Mont Vernon's borders makes up approximately 10,820 acres. The elevation varies from a low of 318 feet, where Hartshorn Brook crosses the Milford/Mont Vernon town line, to 1,010 feet on Storey Hill, located at the New Boston/Mont Vernon town line.

As a result of this large variation Mont Vernon is a hilly community with steep slopes, which must be taken into account when building and siting driveways. Slopes in excess of 15% have poor capability to support development.

The scenic views of the community are a major component of natural resources and our hilly terrain offers many scenic vistas. The 2017 Planning Board survey showed that 70% of respondents supported

identifying and preserving scenic views. In the 2011 UNH Survey 60% of Mont Vernon residents who responded placed a very high or high priority of protecting views of hills or mountain sides. Typical view protection regulations involve height limitations for buildings and structures and/or setbacks. Height limitations have been used to preserve views of natural features such as mountain peaks, park areas and river views, and for protecting the stature of historic structures and landmarks

Topography Recommendations:

- The Planning Board should require that developers show potential home location, driveway, well, septic, grading, and boundary setbacks on lots to take into account known constraints before being able to obtain a building permit.
- Proposed lot lines should conform to topography and other existing features such as stone walls
- Protect scenic view sites.
- Develop and enact view protection regulations.

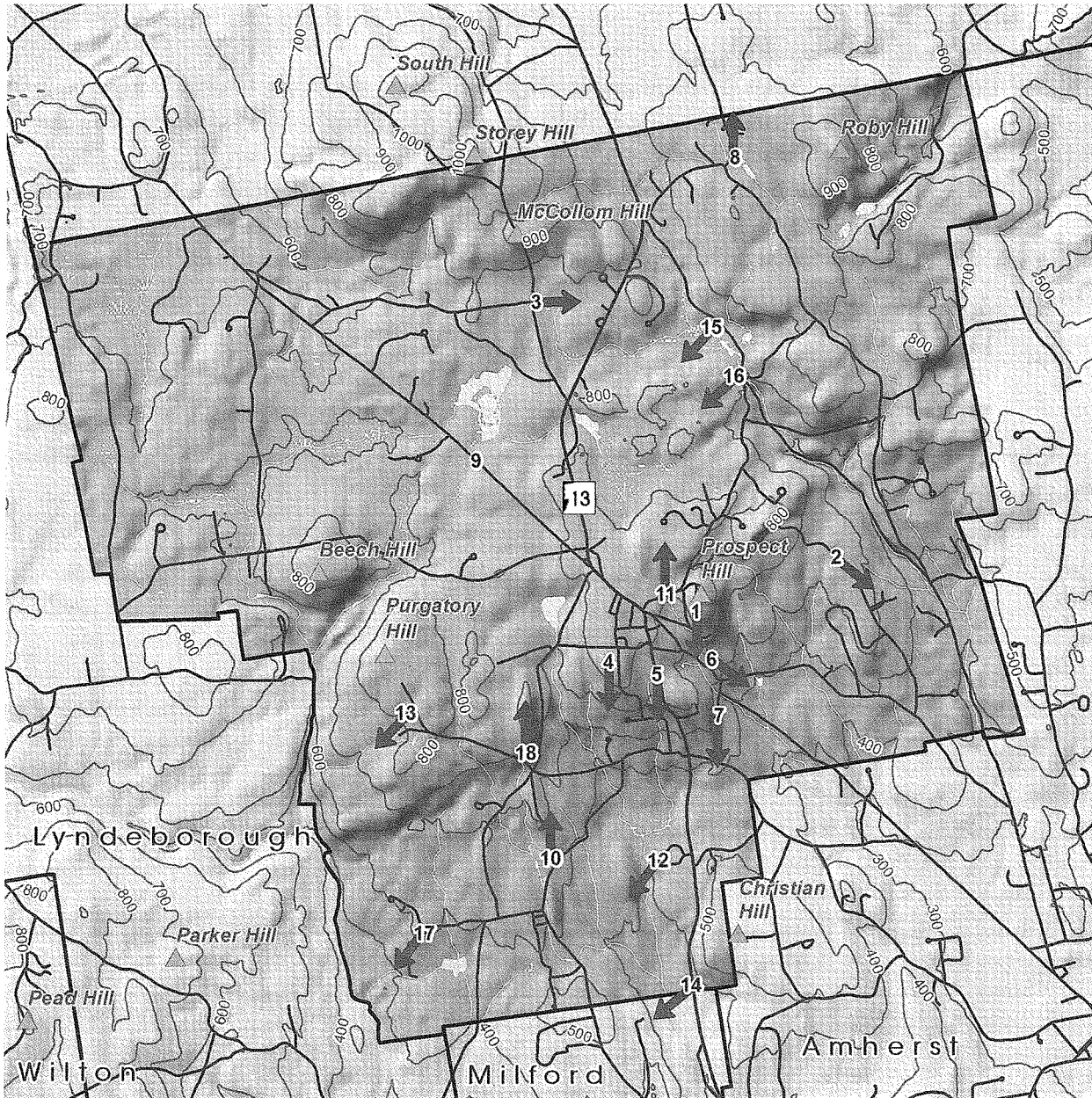
Table L-1: Scenic Views in Mont Vernon

The table below lists views that are exceptional and should be left undisturbed.

	Scenic View	Feature
1.	Grand Hill	South Viewshed
2.	Mason Road	Southeast Viewshed
3.	Lamson Farm	East Viewshed
4.	Kittredge Road	South Viewshed
5.	South Main Street	South Viewshed
6.	Smith Road	Southeast Viewshed
7.	Old Amherst Road & Carleton Road	South Viewshed
8.	Tater Street & Joe English Road	North Viewshed, Joe English Hill
9.	Francistown Turnpike	Northwest Viewshed
10.	Old Milford & Trow Road	North Viewshed
11.	Grand Hill Road	North Viewshed, Corn Fields
12.	Bancroft Circle	Southwest, Mill Ruins
13.	Purgatory Road	Southwest Viewshed, Purgatory Falls
14.	South Main Street	Southwest Viewshed, Horton's Pond
15.	Brook Road	Southwest Viewshed, Herlihy Swamp
16.	Brook Road	Southwest Viewshed, Mill Ruins
17.	Dow Road	Southwest Viewshed, Wah Lum Reserve
18.	Wilton Road & Purgatory Road	North Viewshed, Wah Lum Reserve

Map L-2: Topography and Scenic Views in Mont Vernon, NH

Reference Table L-1 for an explanation of the scenic views identified in this map. The numbered locations in Map L-2 correspond with the numbered scenic views in Table L-1.



Soils

Soil series is a level of taxonomic classification, defined by the USDA, that arranges soil types into groups according to structure and other characteristics¹. Often, these characteristics are key for determining the suitability of a parcel for development. In Mont Vernon, Canton is the most abundant soil series. These soils are defined broadly as well-drained and loamy². Much of the soil in Mont Vernon is underlain by rocky parent material, known as glacial till and there is exposed bedrock on the steep slopes and upland areas, including Grand Hill, Roby Hill, and Purgatory Hill, Mont Vernon. In areas where glacial till has compacted and formed a "hard pan", loads imposed by residential uses can generally be withstood if drainage conditions are favorable.

All major subdivision site plans should be subject to review by a third party consulting engineer. This requirement will ensure that design, land capacity for the proposed development, and storm water management/drainage systems will be properly evaluated.

Prime and statewide important farmland soils are limited resources and comprise approximately 16 percent of the total land area in Mont Vernon. Prime agricultural soils are most endangered by development projects. Agriculture has sharply diminished over the last fifty years. Farmland, being relatively flat, well-drained, and non-forested, is easily developed and is therefore in high demand for future development.

However, the majority of residents are in favor of preserving farmlands and open space. In the 2017 Planning Board survey, 84 percent of respondents were in favor of the use of town funds to preserve open spaces and 70 percent were in favor of preservation and acquisition of open farm land and open spaces. The 2011 community survey conducted by the UNH Survey Center also demonstrated high support to preserving open spaces, fields, forests, and farms. Currently, Mont Vernon has 2,167 acres listed as open space (reported by NRPC in 2016).

There are several sand and gravel deposits in Mont Vernon that are suitable for excavation. At present, the zoning ordinances treat this land use as a special exception regulated under RSA 155-E. This process does not instate fees.

Soils recommendations

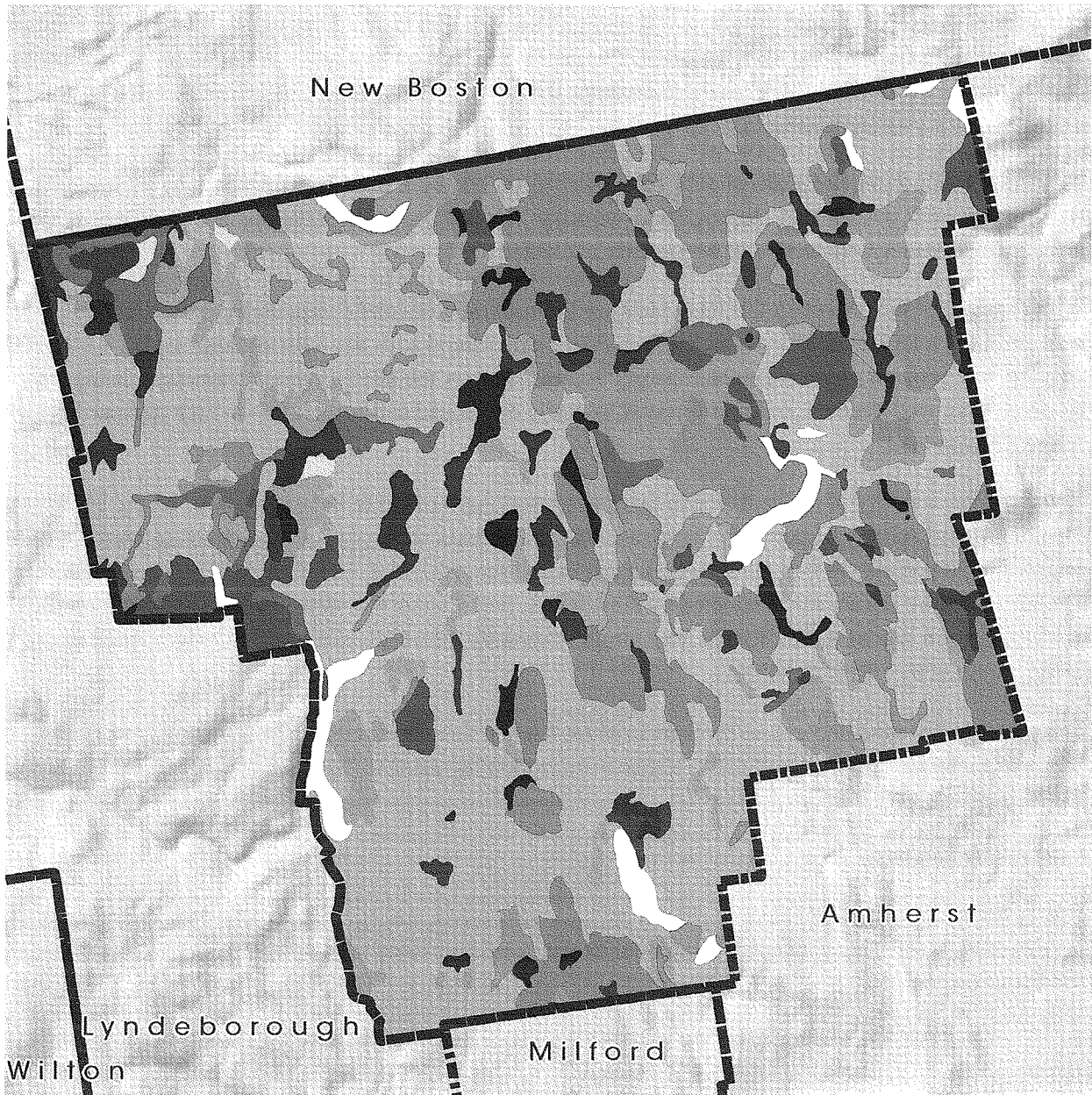
The Town should adopt measures to protect soils for agriculture and open space, and consider creating an overlay zone identifying prime agricultural lands that would preserve existing farmland and concentrate density elsewhere.

- All major subdivision site plans should be required to be reviewed by a third-party consulting engineer to assess the engineering design.
- Investigate creative methods of preserving agricultural lands through transfer or purchase of development rights, conservation easements or fee simple purchase of land.
- Pursue funding options for preserving conservation and agricultural land.
- Design open space subdivisions to ensure that contiguous open space is conserved across abutting subdivisions and keep prime agricultural land open so it can be utilized for farming, for environmental protection, and/or for recreation























1. *Soil Data Dictionary*. Natural Resources Conservation Service, New Hampshire. US Dept. of Agriculture. https://prod.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1083451.pdf. Accessed 2 March 2018.

2. *Canton Series*. US Dept. of Agriculture. https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/C/CANTON.html. Accessed 2 March 2018.

- An Excavation Ordinance should be developed that includes setbacks to protect surface waters/wetlands and that includes noise regulations.
- An excavation ordinance could include a fee structure.



Soil Series

 Borochemists	 Chocorua	 Montauk	 Rippowam	 Windsor
 Canton	 Deerfield	 Paxton	 Saugatuck	 Woodbridge
 Chatfield-Hollis complex	 Greenwood	 Pipestone	 Scarboro	
 Chatfield-Hollis-Canton complex	 Hinckley	 Pits, gravel	 Scituate	
 Chatfield-Hollis-Rock outcrop complex	 Leicester	 Ridgebury	 Water	

Watersheds

Mont Vernon has six significant watersheds:

- Purgatory Brook- flows south to the Souhegan River
- Hartshorn Brook – flows south to the Souhegan River
- Joe English Brook- flows west to the Souhegan River
- Caesar’s Brook- flows west to the Souhegan River
- Beaver Brook – flows west to the Souhegan River
- Lords Brook – flows north to the Piscataquog River

There are seven significant bodies of water in Mont Vernon feeding these watersheds:

- Woods Pond – feeds Purgatory Brook
- Horton Pond – feeds Purgatory Brook
- Sterns Pond – feeds Hartshorn Brook (via the smaller Black Brook)
- Herlihy Swamp – feeds Beaver Brook
- Carleton Pond – feeds Caesar’s Brook
- Roby Pond – feeds Ice Pond
- Ice Pond – flows into Joe English Pond

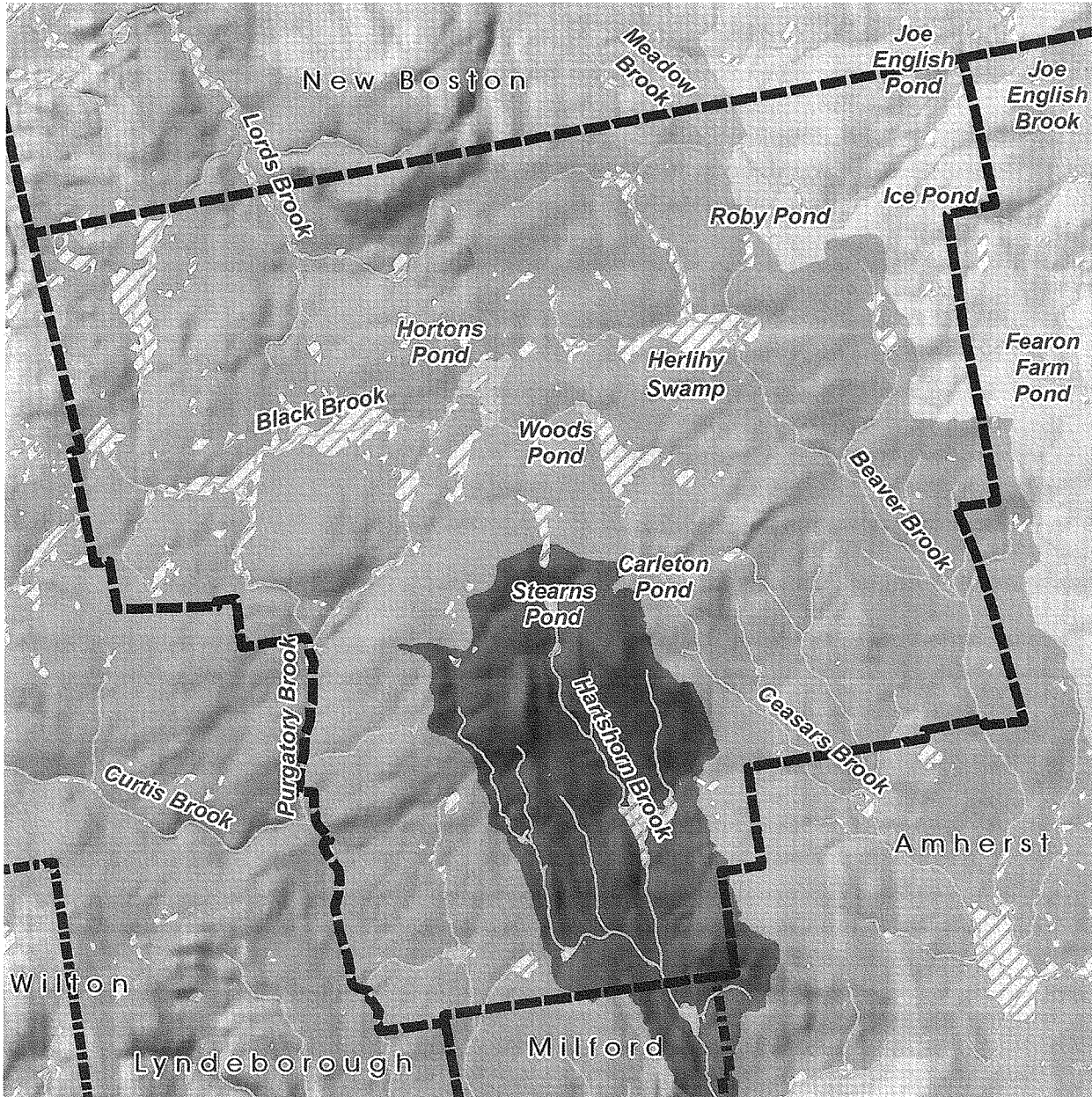
There are also many additional miles of secondary streams flowing through Mont Vernon.

Shoreline buffers can improve water quality by protecting water from threats such as road salt, subsurface waste disposal, nutrients, pesticides, storm water runoff, underground storage tanks, hazardous waste sites, and erosion and sedimentation.

Watershed recommendations

- All open water bodies and perennial streams should have a minimum buffer set back.
- Purgatory Brook should have a greater set back because of its probable use as a wildlife corridor.
- The Conservation Commission should develop a wetlands buffer ordinance.
- The Mont Vernon Conservation Commission should perform a survey to determine current wetlands and watersheds within the town boundaries.

Map L-3: Wetlands and Water Bodies in Mont Vernon, NH



Delineations sub watersheds performed using StreamStats Version 4 from USGS.



EXISTING LAND USE

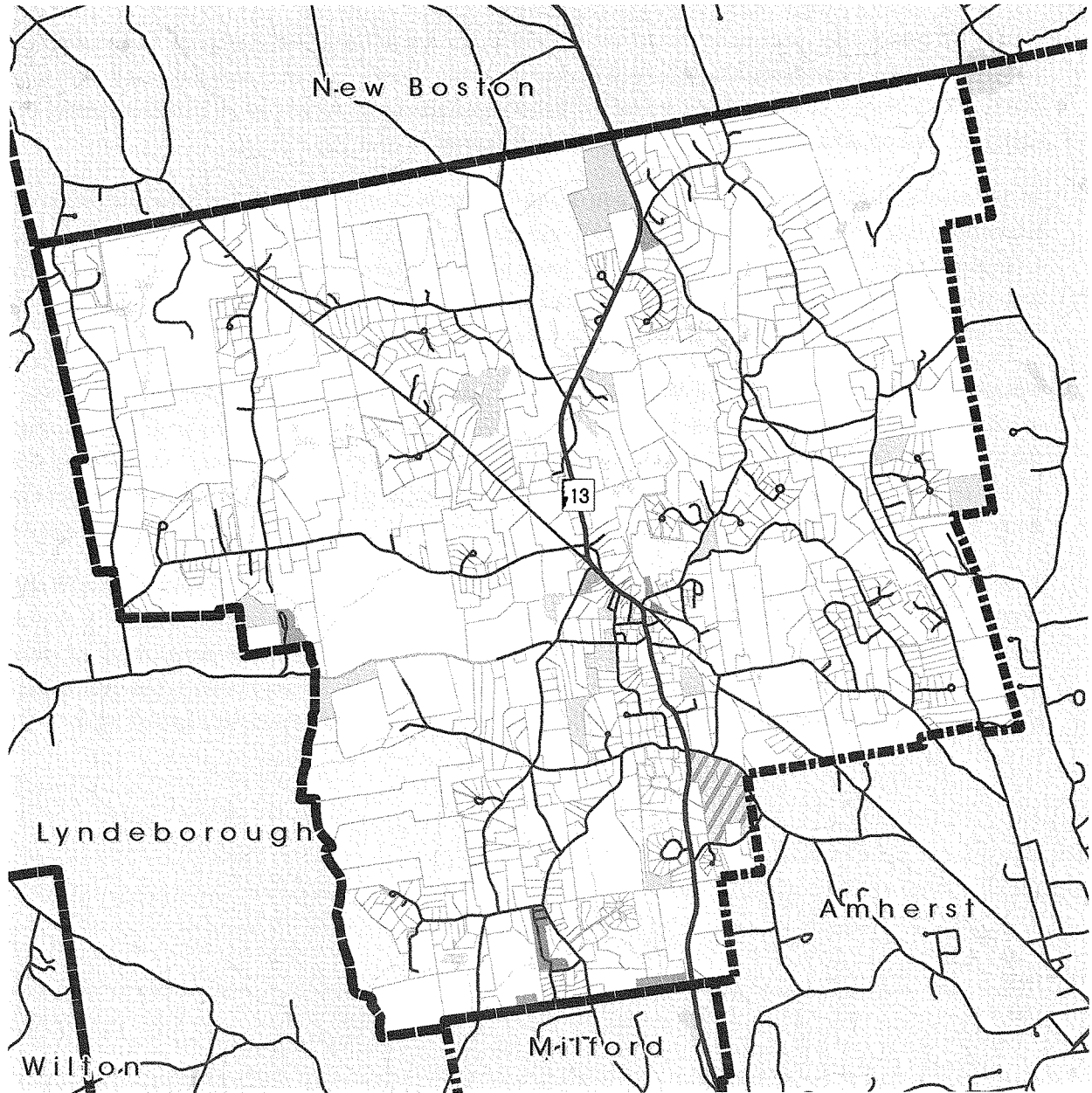
The Town survey tried to establish town-wide priorities for future Land Use strategies. In general, land use patterns in Mont Vernon are characterized by single family homes on 2 or 5 acre lots, each with a private drive. The Village Center is characterized by historic properties protected by an historic overlay district. Outlying historic structures have no regulatory designation.

In addition to residences, the Mont Vernon Town Center is comprised of Town Administrative offices, recreation areas, emergency services, small businesses, a post office, town library, Village School, Congregational Church, and a cemetery. The town is in the process of developing a Town Center District and will then consider expanding business development within limits such as: independently owned restaurants, inns, personal and professional services, artist shops etc.

Residential opportunities in Mont Vernon are mostly comprised of single-family homes. However, there are also a few multi-family housing units and one mobile home park as well. For commercial opportunities, the town has a fairly limited commercial district. Presently there is only one business located there. The rest of the zone is either extremely wet and/or contains steep slopes. For agriculture, there is one commercial dairy farm, one commercial egg production farm, and assorted small hobby farms and horse properties.

Mont Vernon has several large recreational parcels, among which are Lamson Farm and the Wahl-Lum conservation area. The Nashua Regional Planning Commission has designated purgatory brook and purgatory falls as a regional priority as of 2005. This area contains about 500 acres, most of which are protected by easements. It is a popular hiking destination in the area. Horton pond is the only water body that is large enough to qualify for state shoreline protection and it does have a boat launch area.

Map L-4: Existing Land Use in Mont Vernon, NH



	Residential - 1 Household		Group Quarters		Municipal Facility		Vacant
	Residential - 2 Households		Commercial		Open Space		Road/Right of Way
	Multi Family Residential		Mixed Use		Agricultural		Water

FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGIES

The New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives has calculated population projections for the town of Mont Vernon. As of 2015, the town had 2,478 citizens. The expectation is that population will increase to 2,838 by 2040. This is an increase of 14.5 percent. New Hampshire expects to see a total population growth of 8.8 percent. The expectation is that Mont Vernon population will grow faster than the state average.

In the 2017 Planning Board survey, 84 percent of respondents replied that they would support the use of town funds to preserve open space, fields, and farms. When considering factors that sustain the rural character of the town, the vast majority rated preservation and acquisition of open farmland and open spaces, preservation of historical sites and buildings, and identification and preservation of scenic views a priority. Conversely, the subjects of keeping dirt roads and limited business development received significantly less support. The Planning Board survey conducted in 2017 also found that loss of open space was the most important factor to residents when considering future growth of Mont Vernon with 38 percent listing it as their first priority.

A second major topic that would affect future land use is business development. Respondents of the 2017 survey indicated support for expansion of business in Mont Vernon. Owner occupied businesses were favored in the town center by 81% of the respondents, bed and breakfasts followed owner occupied business with 76% of responder support, and small business and personal services received 71% of responders support. In 2017, a town center district subcommittee met to prepare recommendations to the planning board pertaining to business development in the center of town. Their primary concern was the protection of the rural character of Mont Vernon while facilitating business opportunities compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood. Their most emphatic recommendation is that all permitted uses MUST require the use to be owner occupied as a primary residence. The 2011 UNH survey also demonstrated support for business development. A majority of Mont Vernon residents favored home businesses (78%), followed by restaurants and food service (76%), small retail stores (71%), professional offices (64%), expanding existing businesses (63%), expanding limited commercial zoning (54%), and light manufacturing/technology business (44%). Business development would require some zoning changes to allow for mixed residential and business uses in residentially zoned areas.

The third point to consider is natural resources and conservation. A considerable amount of natural resources exist in Mont Vernon. These include steep slopes, scenic views, fertile and poor soils, wetlands, floodplains, and existing agricultural uses among others. The natural resources chapter, adopted in 2016, did an in-depth examination of concerns and recommendations pertaining to the use of natural resources of Mont Vernon.

Fourth, as stated in the introductory goals of this land use chapter, Mont Vernon should maintain its integrity by guarding against encroachment from other communities along our town boundaries. A high priority should be placed on acquiring open space lands and farms on our outskirts to maintain visual separation.

Fifth, recreation opportunities for hiking trails and bike paths received support in the 2017 survey: 72% and 50% respectively. However, multi-use sports fields, tennis courts, sidewalks, more public functions all received considerably less support.

The 2017 data supports the following future land use action items:

- The use of town funds to preserve open space, fields, and farms.
- Preserve and acquire open farmland and open spaces.
- Preserve historical sites and buildings.
- Identify and preserve scenic views.
- Create a town center zoning district.
- Create an ordinance that would enact the town center district subcommittee's recommendation to allow business opportunities compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.
- Require that all business uses in the town center must be owner occupied.
- Develop additional hiking trails.
- Create bike paths in town and mountain bike options where feasible.
- Establish a more viable commercial zone.

In a 2010 community forum, participants made recommendations for consideration in any future land use plan:

- Identify town lands
- Develop a volunteer base for the preservation and maintenance of trail systems and recreation lands.
- Create trail maps and newsletters

The following is a distilled list of items from the 2000 Master Plan that the Planning Board felt needed to be carried forward.

- Conduct an inventory of all wetlands.
- Plan for a trail network and a greenway.
- Publicize information about current trails.
- Develop a wildlife habitat survey.
- Monitor cumulative impact of development.

Natural Resources

Introduction

The geological, hydrological, and biological characteristics of a community form the foundation and the framework which a community can use to plan for future development. This natural resource base provides both opportunities and constraints for development and preservation. Failure to recognize the constraints or take advantage of the opportunities can result in a degradation of both the natural and cultural environment

The abundance and diversity of natural resources in Mont Vernon (wetlands, ponds, streams, fields and forests) provide opportunities for a variety of land uses while contributing to the overall quality of life in the community. Improper shoreline buffers will have negative impacts on water quality and the general character of the Town's wetlands, streams, and ponds. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the natural resource base is extremely important in determining the limits of growth and guiding future development in the community. It is important that the Planning Board encourage an environmental assessment of the subdivision/site plan review process to identify the characteristics of the land, such as habitat, agricultural potential, wildlife, and/or other natural resources as outlined in this chapter.

To capture the ideas of community residents the Planning Board held a Community Values & Goals Workshop. The Planning Board conducted a Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats (SCOT) discussion with the residents describing what they liked or disliked about living and working in Mont Vernon. In addition, the Board contracted with the UNH Survey Center to do a mail survey of resident opinions. A copy of the survey and results are available on the Town of Mont Vernon website, under Planning Board documents.

DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION LAND

Open Space is land that is not developed or substantially altered by human activity and has important natural, historic, ecological, cultural or recreational resources. Open Space can include forests, farmland, fields, shore lands, waterbodies, and wetlands. Open Space can also encompass scenic vistas, town forests, recreational areas such as non-built up parts of municipal parks, and historic sites.

Open space may have historic structures that are significant to the town's heritage and history. Open space can be public or private parcels of land that have permanent protection and size is not necessarily considered to be a limiting characteristic. Lands designated as open space may be in their natural state to protect specific environmental features or they may be used for agricultural, forestry, or outdoor recreational purposes. Some lands deemed environmentally sensitive or that have endangered species may or may not be conducive to certain recreational uses.

BENEFITS OF OPEN SPACE

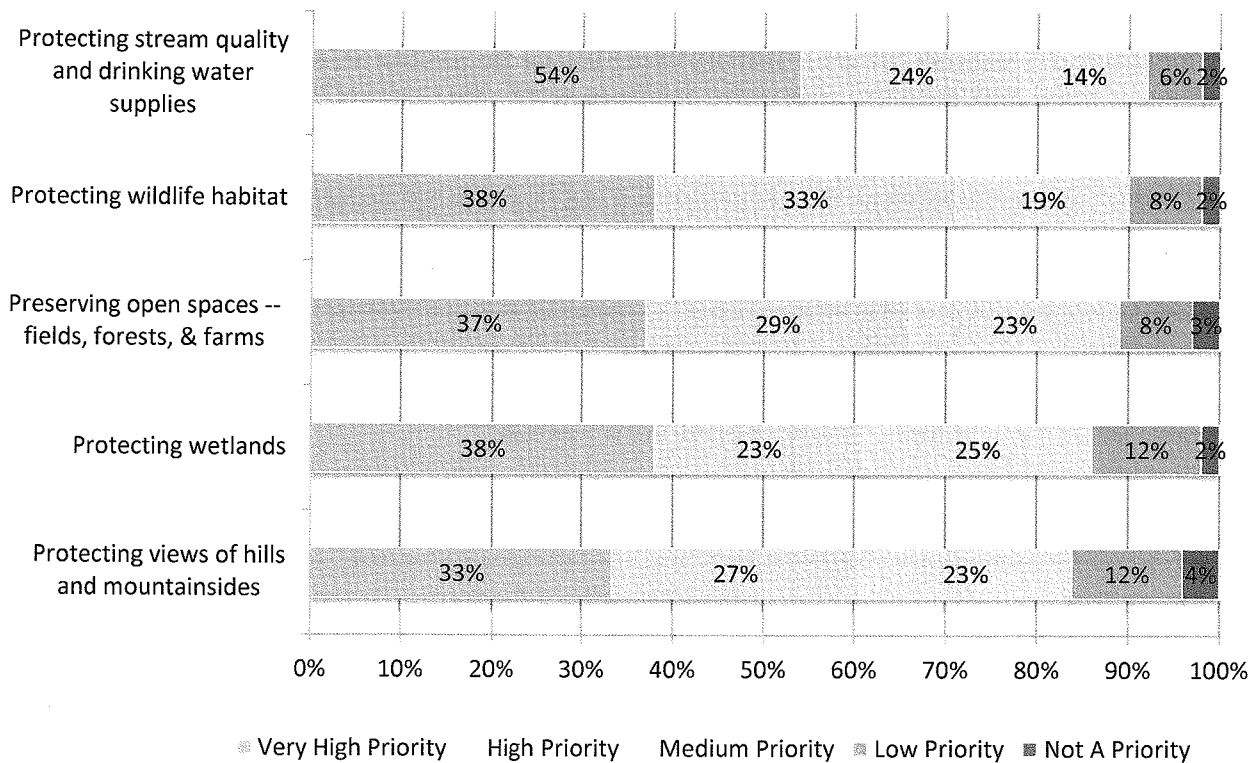
Our quality of life is enhanced by open space and the protection of our natural resources. It protects scenic vistas that we take for granted as we drive or pass by open fields and farmlands, forests or waterbodies and it offers the possibility of sustainable forestry. Open Space preserves biodiversity by protecting the habitats of the plants and animals that make up our natural communities. In a 2011 UNH Survey, 66% of Mont Vernon residents who responded were either very concerned or somewhat concerned about the loss of open space.

One of the greatest benefits of preserving open space is economic. Research conducted by UNH Cooperative Extension concludes that open space; forest, farmland, wetlands, and wildlands, is good for the municipal bottom line. In contrast, residential development almost always is a net financial drain for the community. According to the UNH Cooperative Extension, an acre of open space in the southern New Hampshire towns that were studied, generated an average three times more revenue to the town than it “consumes” in town services, while an acre of residential development consumed about 15% more than it generated in taxes.

The Mont Vernon Cost of Community Services Study which was completed in 2004 by independent consultants hired by the Conservation Commission, analyzed revenues and expenditures based on existing land uses in the tax year 2002. The authors analyzed tax revenue from the following sources: school revenue from the state, property taxes, yield taxes and land use change taxes, other taxes, motor vehicle permits, and other revenue from the town clerk. Categories of expenses include general government, educational expenses, residential expenses, the fire department, the police department, public works and highway expenses, and the conservation commission.

The Mont Vernon Cost of Community Services Study concluded that for every \$10,000 in property taxes and other revenues from residential land use we spend \$10,300 to provide services such as schools, roads and the fire department. In contrast, Mont Vernon spends eight cents to provide services for every \$1.00 it receives in revenue from open space. In other words, residential land use costs more money than it brings into the town while open space saves money.

Also ranking high in the Community Survey was preservation of ground water supply, wetlands, forests, conservation land, wildlife habitat, and scenic roads. See bar graph below.



Topography

Topography is the general form of the land surface, with elevation and slope as its major components. The terrain varies greatly in Mont Vernon with many steep slopes. The lowest elevation in Mont Vernon is 330 feet above mean sea level, near the Milford border. The steeper slopes and higher elevations are along the northern border, with the highest elevation in Mont Vernon at 1015' above sea level, (Map 7 / Lot 5) just south of the town line with New Boston on the slope to the summit of Storey Hill. The highest peak, called Roby Hill is located on New Boston Air Force Base at 988' above sea level. (USGS topographic map) Development on steep slopes can adversely impact water quality through altered drainage patterns. In New Hampshire, no septic system may be built on a slope 33 percent or greater (NHDES, 2008) Additionally, NHDOT limits commercial drives to an 8 percent grade and residential driveways to 15 percent grade to limit erosion and maintain access of emergency vehicles to the development. An example of steep slopes preservation occurs in the Hollis Rural Character Preservation Ordinance which seeks to protect the most sensitive and remote land from development and maintain scenic vistas and open spaces. This ordinance requires placing "building sites and aboveground utilities downgrade of the ridge line and locate them so they do not interfere with the identified characteristic or view or vista identified in the course of Planning Board review. The recommended minimum setback from a ridgeline is 50 feet." (Hollis Zoning Ordinance, Section XV)

The scenic views of a community are a major component of natural resources. In the 2011 UNH Survey 60% of Mont Vernon residents who responded placed a very high or high priority of protecting views of

hills or mountain sides. Typical view protection regulations involve height limitations for buildings and structures and/or setbacks. Height limitations have been used to preserve views of natural features such as mountain peaks, park areas and river views, and for protecting the stature of historic structures and landmarks.

The table below contains views that are exceptional and should be left undisturbed.

Scenic Views in Mont Vernon

Scenic View	Direction		Scenic View	Direction
Grand Hill	South		Old Milford at Trow Road	
Mason Road			Kittridge Road	South
Lamson Farm			Behind Post Office at the top of the cornfield	North
Village School Library	South		Old sawmill ruins near Secomb Road	West
Top of Route 13	South		Purgatory Falls	South
End of Smith Road	Southeast		Horton's Pond	
Old Amherst Road & Carleton Road	Southeast		Herlihy Swamp	
View of Joe English Ledge	Northeast		North Wah Lum Reserve	West
Francistown Turnpike	West		Wilton Road northeast of Purgatory Road	East

Scenic Roads

Many in the Mont Vernon Survey stated the importance of keeping our rural character. In the UNH 2011 Survey, 79% of Mont Vernon Residents who responded support preserving the existing flavor and character of the town. Some aspects that contribute to rural character are stone lined roads with mature trees. Classifying roads as scenic gives them an added layer of protection since they require a public hearing before changes to trees and stone walls can occur. Below is a chart that shows the existing scenic roads in Mont Vernon. For a list of proposed scenic roads, see the scenic road section of the Master Plan Transportation chapter.

Scenic Roads in Mont Vernon

Brook Road (southern end) Old Amherst Road Old Milford Road	Old Wilton Road Purgatory Road Remington Road	Salisbury Road Upton Road
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Topography Recommendations:

Develop a rural character preservation ordinance. Responsibility: Planning Board

Determine the need for obtaining conservation easements or ownership to protect important views and vistas. *Responsibility: Conservation Commission.*

Take action on recommendations of scenic roads proposed by NRPC. Responsibility: Selectmen

Develop regulations and programs to protect and in some cases provide public access to high elevation areas in the community, *Responsibility: Planning Board, Conservation Commission.*

Soil Resources

Soil type is the principal determinant of the land's development capability, especially since Mont Vernon relies upon subsurface waste disposal. Depth to water table and bedrock, susceptibility to flooding, slope, stone cover, and permeability are factors affecting the suitability of a site for roads, buildings, and septic systems. Soil potential for septic tank absorption fields has the greatest impact on development capability. Based on the soil potential ratings for septic tank absorption fields, approximately sixty percent of soils in the Town receive a medium, low, or very low rating. This does not mean that these areas are undevelopable; however, any proposals for development in these soils should receive close scrutiny. A web based link to the soils in Mont Vernon is:
<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>.

Agriculture

Prime and statewide important farmland soils comprise approximately 16% of the total land area in Mont Vernon. In 2014 NRPC listed Mont Vernon as having 458 acres of farm land. There are several "hobby farms" in Mont Vernon and one dairy farm, located on Amherst Road. Hobby farms, with one or more animals, may have poor grazing practices, too many animals per acre, unrestricted access to streams, poor waste management practices, and poorly drained soils. Such farms have limited space and capital with which to construct facilities for animal management. They have not traditionally been eligible for cost-sharing grants from federal or State programs.¹

¹ http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/cleanlakes/documents/gp_executive.pdf

Land enrolled in Current Use (see RSA 79-A), a taxation program enacted in 1973 which gives tax advantages to land owners who meet certain criteria by encouraging them to keep open space in New Hampshire, represents 48% or 5252 acres of the land use in Mont Vernon as of 2014 (NRPC 2014). In the past ten years the number of acres in current use has decreased by over 1300 acres. (Town tax records). Under RSA 79-A:25 Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) is money paid to a town when land enrolled in current use is removed from the program to be developed. Many municipalities vote at town meeting to put some or all of the money from the LUCT into the Conservation Fund. The reasoning behind such an investment in the Conservation Fund is that the money acquired when land is developed is logically used to protect more open space.² Currently Mont Vernon does not invest any of the money collected from the Land Use Change Tax into conservation.

Agriculture Recommendations

The Town should encourage the preservation and conservation of priority agricultural lands and operations through conservation easements, purchase or transfer of development rights, or fee simple purchase of land. Responsibility: Planning Board, Conservation Commission

Present warrant article at town meeting allocating a portion of the Land Use Change Tax to the Conservation Fund. Responsibility: Conservation Commission

An educational program or the distribution of Agricultural BMPs Manuals from the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service or U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service should be made available for those people in Town who practice animal husbandry or manage hobby farm. Responsibility: Conservation Commission

Mining and Excavations

The Town does not address Excavation of sand and gravel resources in the Zoning Ordinances. This is treated as a Special Exception regulated under RSA 155-E, Local Regulation of Excavations. The statute requires that municipalities provide "reasonable opportunity for excavation" of construction materials on unimproved land within the community. Under NH RSA 155E municipalities have the authority to adopt regulations that apply to gravel excavation. These regulations, along with the process of reviewing permit applications for gravel removal areas, should be designed to ensure that fuels and lubricants used by earth moving equipment are handled properly and the areas are secured against illegal dumping. (NHDES). The purpose of regulatory oversight of gravel operations is to prevent land and water pollution, hazards to public safety, promote soil stabilization and maintain aesthetic features of the environment. Many towns in New Hampshire have adopted ordinances for gravel excavation with specific consideration given to protection of drinking water supplies and/or water sources. In addition to excavation ordinances NH DES suggests planning boards consider additional ordinances to oversee rock blasting which can have adverse impacts on the quality and quantity for drinking water supplies. (NHDES, Model Groundwater Protection Ordinance, April 2010).

² <http://clca.forestsociety.org/publications/saving-special-places-book.asp>

Excavation Recommendations

Include an Excavation Ordinance in the Zoning Ordinance. *Responsibility: Planning Board.*

Include setbacks for excavations and associated processing operations in the Zoning Ordinance to protect surface waters and wetlands. *Responsibility: Planning Board.*

Adopt a Noise Ordinance for mining or gravel excavation. *Responsibility: Planning Board.*

Forest

Forested landscapes are essential to maintaining the rural character of Mont Vernon. Multiple threats exist to wildlife and forests such as invasive species, development and climate change. Forested landscapes perform many ecosystem services for local residents such as carbon reduction through storage and purification, soil stabilization and aquifer recharge areas. Coniferous, deciduous and mixed forests compose Mont Vernon's forest cover. Forest cover across the state has been steadily diminishing since the early 1980s. This loss, which totals about 17,500 acres per year, is largely driven by land development" (SPNHF, 2010). In 2014, Mont Vernon has 4632 acres of forested land comprising approximately 43% of total land cover in Town (NRPC). The forests of Mont Vernon are relatively young and fragmented by the network of roads in towns. Decreasing forest area adversely impacts groundwater recharge, drinking water supplies and the economic viability of forest based industries such as logging and outdoor recreation. (NRPC Environmental Master Plan 2014). Large tracts help to protect biodiversity and maintain healthy wildlife populations.

Certain species of trees favor specific soil conditions, one of which is Appalachian oak pine forest which can be found mostly below 900 feet in southern New Hampshire, and is present in Mont Vernon, see Map 1, NH Wildlife Habitat Map. Appalachian oak pine forest currently is covering less than 10% of the state's land area and only 7.3% of the state's potential Appalachian oak pine forest is on permanently protected lands. This forest type supports 104 vertebrate species in New Hampshire, including 8 amphibians, 12 reptiles, 67 birds, and 17 mammals. Not only is it important to preserve forested areas, but evaluation of specific habitat and species must be weighed more heavily with future development. (NH Fish and Game Dept., Wildlife Action Plan)

Forests deliver a vital economic role and historically there have been working forests in Mont Vernon. In 2007, citizens voted at town meeting to designate the Hebert Forest (lot 6-17) as an official town forest and all revenues generated are placed into the general fund. A forestry management plan was developed in 2007, resulting in \$47,000 of timber harvest which was added to the general fund that year to help with tax relief. This forestry plan should be updated every 10 years to ensure proper wood production for the future. Firewood is still widely used as supplemental heat source in the winter. Woodlots owned by private land owners continue to be harvested as supplemental income. Timber taxes are collected by the town when a land owner harvests wood on his/her land and provide a source of income for the town. Timber taxes can vary from year to year depending on the market price of wood and rate of development in town, but promoting renewable sources of revenue through forestry and preserving forests should continued to be encouraged.

Timber Tax Revenue

Year	Timber Taxes
2006	\$14,872.79
2007	\$14,461.10
2008	\$18,028.36
2009	\$10,971.28
2010	\$2,548.23
2011	\$4,961.84
2012	\$2,019.32
2013	\$3,247.11

Source: Annual Town Reports

Some limited performance standards and plan review for forestry are regulated by the State through timber harvesting and water quality laws: regulation prohibits the placement of slash and mill waste in or near waterways, and limits some clear-cutting near great ponds and streams. These requirements may mitigate to some degree water quality impacts associated with timber harvesting, however they may not be adequate in all situation and there is no set policy on clear cutting in Mont Vernon. Residents are required to obtain an Intent to Cut form with the Selectmen's Office. The Conservation Commission could provide education to land owners on Forestry Best Management Practices.

Forestry Recommendations

Increase Communication to Conservation Commission when Intent to Cut request has been filed with the town, especially in sensitive areas or near conservation properties. Responsibility: Conservation Commission and Selectmen's Office.

Update Forestry Plan for Hebert Town Forest every ten years. Responsibility: Conservation Commission

Any proceeds from harvesting resources on town property should be applied toward the Conservation Fund. Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen

Provide educational programs for the general public about forestry best management practice, sponsoring workshops or walks of recent harvests, working with professional foresters. Responsibility: Conservation Commission

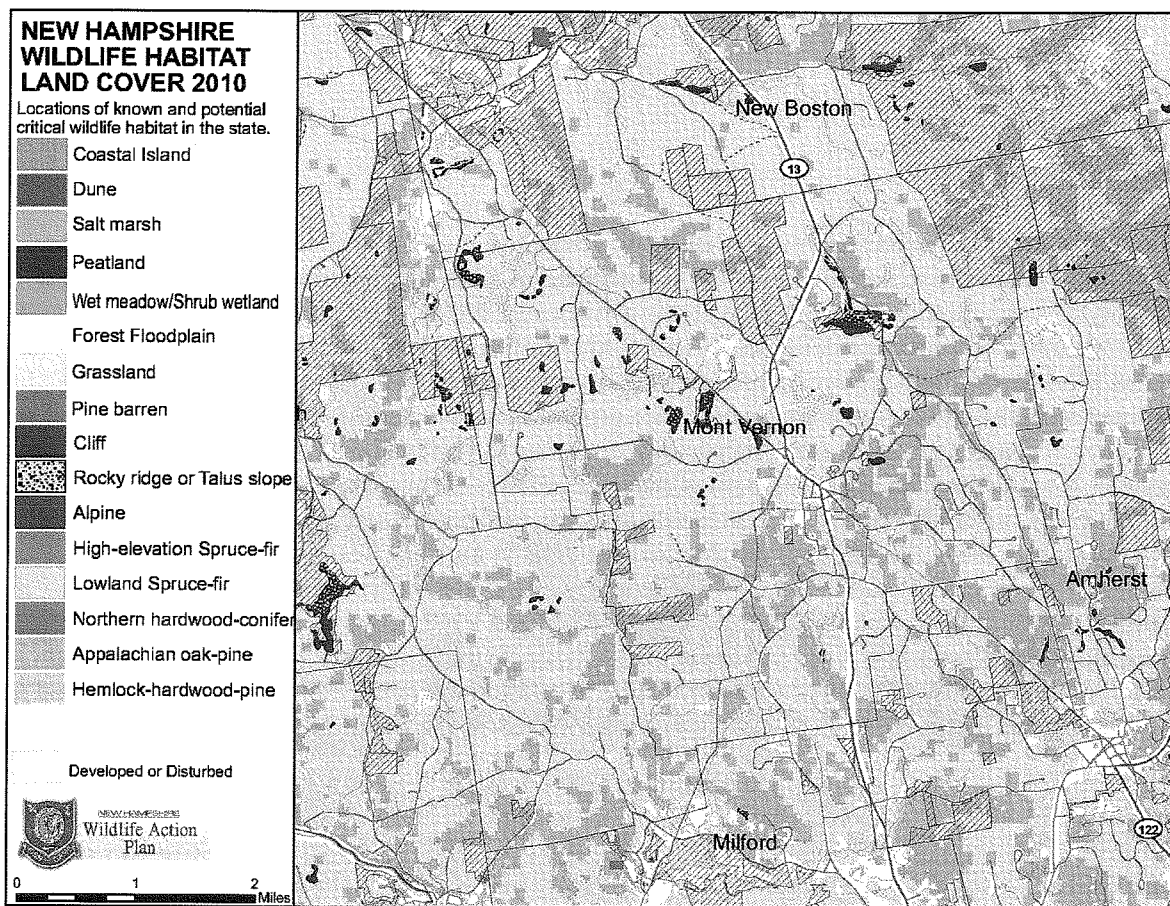
Preserve large forested areas under subdivision/site plan review whenever possible to prevent fragmentation, loss of habitat and loss of potential revenue. Responsibility: Planning Board, Conservation Commission

Grasslands and Other Open Lands

Mont Vernon's open fields consist of hay and dairy fields, corn fields and abandoned farmlands. Examples of open field habitat can be seen on each side of Route 13 between the summit of the Mont Vernon Hill and Purgatory Road. Open areas have been identified by residents of Mont Vernon as an important piece of our rural character. These areas are particularly vulnerable to development. In the

2010 survey, 45% were very concerned about the loss of open space and 29% more were somewhat concerned. At the 2010 Public Forum, called the Community Values and Goals Workshop loss of habitat, keeping open space, and rural character were all named as desired in Mont Vernon.

Grassland habitats are an increasingly rare sight in New Hampshire. More than 70 species of wildlife use these open areas of fields and wildflowers to meet their needs for food, cover, or breeding. Bird species that depend on grasslands have declined, along with their habitats, faster than any other group of birds in New England. Grasslands of any size benefit wildlife, however those 25 acres or more benefit the greatest number of wildlife species. Most grasslands or fields require mowing to prevent shrubs and small trees from growing otherwise they will eventually become forests. The time of year when fields are mowed are also important to wildlife. May and mid-July is a time that corresponds with the nesting season for most grassland-nesting birds. Mowing during this period can destroy nests and eggs, kill fledglings, or cause adult birds to abandon their nests. Working with farmers and land owners in the community on stewardship and maintenance programs for grasslands is strongly encouraged (UNH Cooperative Extension, Grassland Habitat).³



Map 1

³ <http://extension.unh.edu/Grassland-Habitats#wildlife>

The view lots located on route 13, Lamson Farm, and North Wah Lum Reserve are town owned lands with grassland habitat but several privately owned properties through town have open fields and grassland as can be seen on the NH Wildlife Habitat Map.

Grassland Recommendations

Develop list/inventory of grasslands or fields located in town. Responsibility: Conservation Commission

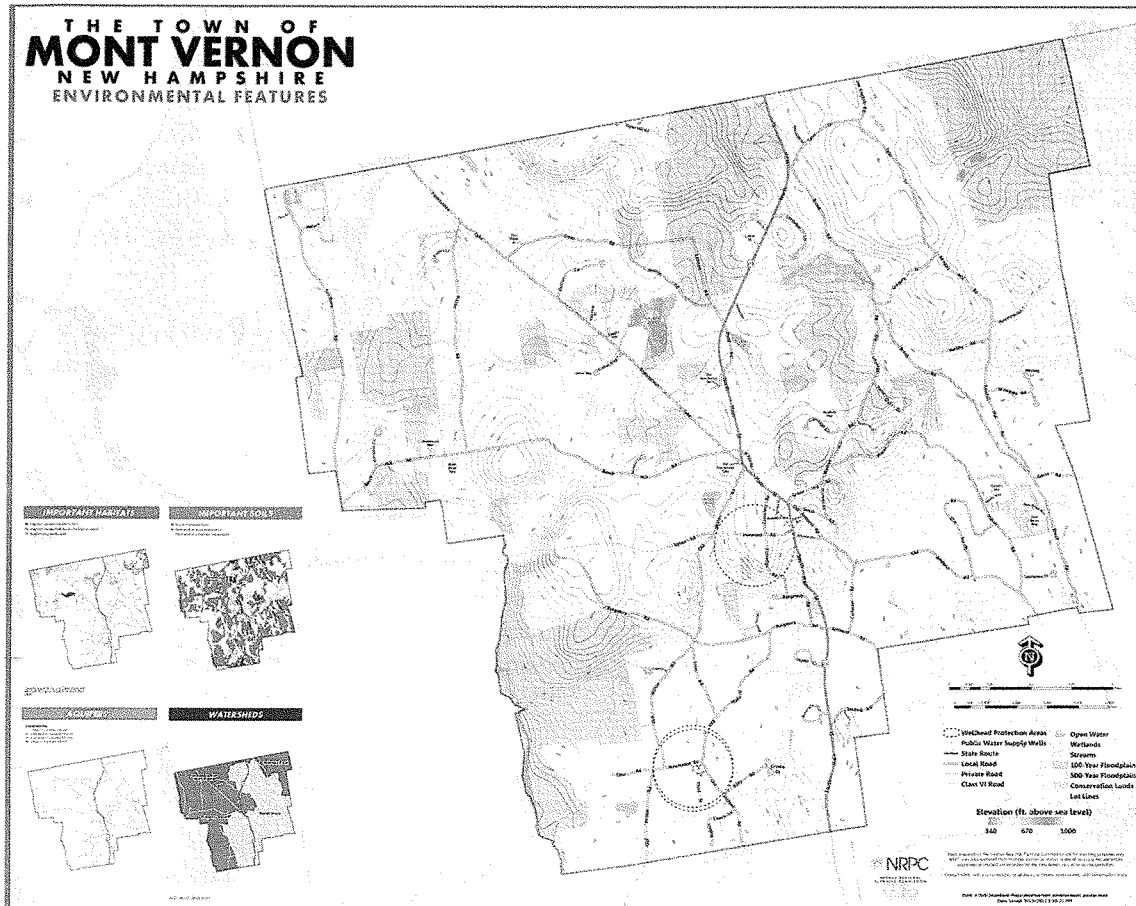
Focus land conservation on grasslands, with priority to large grasslands (25 acres or more).
Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Planning Board

Establish stewardship guidelines for grassland habitat on town owned properties. Responsibility:
Conservation Commission

Provide education to landowners and farmers on the importance of grasslands and maintaining wildlife habitat. Responsibility: Conservation Commission.

Water Resources

Lakes and ponds, rivers and streams, wetlands and groundwater compose the hydrologic cycle. The quality and availability of surface water and groundwater is a factor in determining the development capability of a community. The lack of accurate and consistent data to accurately assess regional water quality is a major issue for communities. Water quality testing is expensive and time consuming. The updated MS4 permits will require communities to complete additional testing for water quality. (NRPC) The water resource network of a community also provides fish and wildlife habitats. It conveys and stores floodwater, recharges groundwater and provides numerous recreational opportunities and unique scenic character. The Master Plan survey responses show that 78% of the residents who responded to the survey place a high or very high priority on town goals/activities that protect and preserve the community's natural resources, including streams and drinking water supplies. The Town currently has three designated "no or reduced salt" roads: Old Wilton Road to Upton Road; Frankestown Turnpike to Cranes Crossing; and Beech Hill Road to Chestnut Circle. The town's public works department would suggest adding the end of Beech Hill Road and lower Brook Road, to the designated list. The town should consider expanding low salt roads in sensitive areas to minimize negative impacts of continued road salt use. This section discusses Mont Vernon's water resources and the major issues confronting their use and management.



Map 2

Watersheds

The Town of Mont Vernon is located within the greater Souhegan River watershed. The Souhegan River Watershed occupies approximately 220 square miles spanning seventeen communities in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. In Mont Vernon, eighty-five percent of the land area is within this watershed. The Souhegan River Watershed Management Plan (SRWMP) analyzes the River at the watershed scale, which allows for water resource goals to be realized across community boundaries in an ecologically sound manner. Mont Vernon has a total of five sub-watersheds, four of which drain into the Souhegan River Watershed. Precipitation from Purgatory Hill, Beech Hill, and Black Brook flow into Purgatory Brook, which flows south through Milford. Portions of Kendall Hill, Weston Hill, and McCollom Hill feed Beaver Brook, which flows in a southeasterly direction into Amherst. Hartshorn and Joe English Brook also flow in a southeasterly direction and drain to the Souhegan River. Precipitation falling on the west side of South Hill and Storey Hill flows into Lords Brook, which drains to the South Branch of the Piscataquog River.

Buffers

The best way to protect streams, rivers, lakes, and estuaries is to leave an area of undisturbed native vegetation adjacent to the water body. Preserving and restoring riparian buffers is essential to protection of surface water quality and wildlife habitat. Several factors such as slope, soil type, adjacent land use (including amount of impervious cover), floodplain, vegetation type, and watershed condition all influence buffer width, in most cases, a minimum buffer width for water quality and habitat protection of

35 to 250 feet are recommended. Buffers of less than 35 feet have not been found to sustain long-term protection of aquatic communities. A minimum 100-foot buffer width is recommended in *Buffers for Wetlands and Surface Waters: A Guidebook for New Hampshire Communities*, as a standard width for all surface waters and wetlands in New Hampshire (Chase, et al. 1997) Even for narrow creeks or intermittent streams that run through residential neighborhoods or commercial developments, riparian buffers are important for sediment control and aquatic integrity. (Chapter 2.6 Shoreland Protection: The Importance of Riparian Buffers, *Innovative Land Use: Planning Techniques: A Handbook for Sustainable Development*).⁴

A minimum fixed buffer width of 66 feet is documented in the scientific literature as providing 70% or greater sediment and pollutant removal while providing minimal general wildlife and avian habitat value. (Center for Watershed Protection).⁵

Buffers protect water quality by maintaining favorable water temperatures for aquatic life and providing nutrients for these organisms. Buffer areas serve as filter areas for sediment and other debris in runoff waters, trapping it and preventing it from entering the main water body. The wider a buffer area is, the better the chance that any foreign substances will be caught and filtered (United States Army Corps of Engineers, 2006). Shoreland protection is a regulatory mechanism that towns can adopt to protect water quality and reduce sedimentation, erosion and other pollution such as fertilizer. During storms buffers help prevent shifts in water levels which would otherwise disrupt the life in a stream. They also provide wildlife habitat for both wetland and upland species.

A Town can rely solely on the state's Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act (NH RSA 483 B-3 CSPA) to protect the specific types of surface water bodies that fall under the jurisdiction of the CSPA or the town can adopt stricter regulations than the minimum standards. Protected waterbodies under the CSPA include lakes, ponds and impoundments greater than 10 acres, 4th order and greater streams, rivers and coastal waters. The CSPA strongly encourages municipalities to adopt land use control ordinances, such as site plan review or zoning ordinances designed to protect the shorelands of waterbodies in their town not subject to the CSPA, such as first and second order waterbodies (headwater streams and tributaries), third order, streams, lakes, rivers or ponds.

Buffer Recommendations

The town should prioritize waterbodies that would benefit from increased buffer widths as well as determine the proper widths. Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Planning Board

The town should adopt Shoreland Protection zoning/ordinances to protect specific water bodies of priority in town. Responsibility: Planning Board

Perennial Streams

Over 18 miles of perennial streams flow through Mont Vernon, including portions of the five major named streams. Purgatory Brook plays an important role as a wildlife corridor, as it connects the Pisquataquog River corridor to the north and Souhegan River corridor to the south.

⁴ http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/documents/ilupt_chpt_2.6.pdf

⁵ www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp.

Perennial Streams in Mont Vernon

Name	Location	Total Length (miles)	Mont Vernon Length (miles)
Lords Brook	Northwest	3.9	2.4
Beaver Brook	East Central	9.3	3.8
Hartshorn Brook	Central	4.0	2.8
Caesars Brook	Central	3.3	2.1
Black Brook	Northwest	1.6	1.3

Sources: USGS topographic maps.

Water quality classifications are established by the legislature. There is no water quality information available for the streams within the Town. No water quality assessments have been done on any of the Mont Vernon's perennial streams. Potential threats to these streams include pollution from lawn fertilizers, septic systems, sediment from timber harvesting, and runoff from roads such as petroleum, heavy metals and road salt.

Stream Recommendations

The town should initiate a volunteer-based effort to collect water samples and analyze life in the water with the help of either NRPC or the state Department of Environment Services (DES).

The Town should adopt maximum buffer width along Purgatory Brook to ensure that it will continue to be a viable wildlife corridor. (See wildlife section).

The Town should adopt an increased shoreline buffer requirement for all perennial streams in accordance with the recommendations in the Buffer section above.

Floodplains

Floodplains are areas adjacent to water courses and water bodies that are susceptible to flooding during periods of excessive runoff. According to the Federal Emergency Management Administration's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and the Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs) there is only one floodplain in Mont Vernon, and it is adjacent to Purgatory Brook. This small strip is on the east bank and is designated Zone A, which is a special flood hazard area that can be inundated by a 100-year flood. Flood Insurance Rate maps delineate 1% (100-year) and .2% (500-year) storm events for all communities in the region (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2014). The identified flood plain lies along Purgatory Brook, see Map 2. A more detailed copy of the FEMA map can be viewed at the town hall.

Ponds

Mont Vernon has five named ponds less than 10-acres and many unnamed ones. Horton Pond and Joe English Pond are the only two water bodies in Mont Vernon listed on the DES Consolidated List of Waterbodies Subject to RSA 483-B, the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act. Horton Pond is 14 acres with a surface elevation of 719.19 feet. Joe English Pond is 22.3 acres with a surface elevation of 498 feet. The Shoreline Protection Act has State mandated buffers and activity restrictions. Within the protected shoreland, new construction or construction that modifies the footprint of existing impervious surfaces, using mechanized equipment to either excavate, remove or form a cavity within the ground and filling any areas with rocks, soil, gravel or sand requires a shoreland impact permit. Many low impact activities that propose no greater than 1,500 sq ft of total impact area, of which no more than 900 sq ft is new impervious area, may qualify for a shoreland permit by notification under RSA 482-A. Horton Pond is actively used for recreation. Although there are several houses in close proximity to the pond, most of the shoreland along the pond has not been developed. Any further development along its shoreline should follow the DES Shoreline Water Quality Protection Act. Horton Pond feeds Black Brook, which flows in a southwesterly direction to Purgatory Brook, which drains into the Souhegan River. The only stratified aquifer in Mont Vernon is located in the Black Brook area. Any degradation of Horton Pond in either size or water quality has ramifications downstream to the Souhegan River. Also, a small un-named stream flows in a southeasterly direction to Woods Pond. Stearns Pond is the headwaters of Hartshorn Brook, which flows in a southerly direction to the Souhegan River.

Ponds in Mont Vernon

Name	Location	Acres	Elevation	Other
Stearns	Central	8.0		
Hortons	Central	10.4	705	9ft deep
Woods	North central	5.6		
Carlton	Central	.56		
Roby ICE POND	New Boston air station (northeast)	.75 2.8		Dam Dam

Sources: NH Office of State Planning, Inventory of Lakes, Ponds, and Reservoirs, Biological Survey of Lakes and Ponds in Cheshire, Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties; U.S Geological Survey

In addition, there are many smaller ponds that are unnamed.

Pond Recommendations

Enforce DES regulations for ponds in town under the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act in any future development. Responsibility: Planning Board

Identify ponds in town that would benefit from having increased buffer protection.

Wetlands/Vernal Pools

Wetlands

Wetland soils, also referred to as hydric soils, are classified as either poorly or very poorly drained. Mont Vernon currently has 1,200 acres of hydric soils. In addition to hydric soils, Mont Vernon has 701 acres classified as wetlands (NRPC 2014 Environmental Master Plan). Wetlands are of great importance for flood control, water purification and wildlife habitat. There is increasing fragmentation of wetlands for roads and driveways and increasing concern that development will impact the function and value of wetlands, especially because NH is the fastest growing state in New England with 20 percent more people expected between 2005-2030 (NH Office of Energy & Planning, 2006). Wetlands are productive ecosystems which provide rich stores of food for wildlife. Conditions in the uplands surrounding the wetland areas in Mont Vernon can either protect or alter these habitats. Individual habitat size requirements vary among animals with predators needing the largest amount of unfragmented habitat. Wetlands are important as they often provide wildlife corridors and stopover areas for migrating birds.

The Wetland Conservation District in Mont Vernon includes areas identified and delineated as poorly or very poorly drained soils (hydric). This includes bodies of water as defined by the current HISS maps for the State and the most recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Plant Species List. Approximately 12% of total land (1,200 acres) in Mont Vernon contain hydric soils.

Currently the Town of Mont Vernon does not require any wetland buffers. In addition, wetland areas can only be used to satisfy twenty-five percent of the minimum lot area requirement. All septic systems and leach fields are required to be set back a minimum of seventy-five (75) feet from wetlands. Other uses may be permitted by special exception of the Zoning Board of Adjustment depending on the soil characteristics.

Regulatory methods the town should consider for protecting wetlands from degradation include: requiring and enforcing erosion and sedimentation plans for developments; establishing minimum setbacks for buildings, structures, septic systems and other site developments; maintaining a vegetative buffer directly adjacent to the wetland; general education on the importance of wetlands; and prime wetland designation.

Vernal pools are temporary wetlands that fill with water sometime between fall and spring and are usually dry by late summer. Vernal Pools are known by many names such as spring ponds and ephemeral wetlands. These forest pools are essential for the life cycle of many invertebrates and amphibians. The nutrients from fallen leaves support a rich food web. There is no statewide inventory of vernal pools and few community wide studies are available. Communities can begin to map vernal pools on community owned property to establish a baseline and make educated decisions on development with baseline information. (NRPC Environment Document)

Wetlands and Vernal Pool Recommendations

Prioritize wetlands that would benefit from increased buffer widths. Responsibility: Conservation Commission.

The Town should develop a wetland protection strategy. Responsibility: Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

Establish an inventory of vernal pools. Responsibility: Conservation Commission and Planning Board.

Prime Wetlands

Prime Wetlands must have at least 50 % very poorly drained soils and be of substantial significance in one or all of the following: size, unspoiled character, fragile condition, and/or other relevant factors. Prime Wetlands provide important functions such as flood control, recharge groundwater, protect drinking water supplies as well as important endangered species habitat and provide shoreline stabilization. Under RSA 482-A:15 a municipality can vote to designate, map and document prime wetlands within its boundaries if they meet certain criteria. Designated Prime Wetlands have greater buffers to protect the function and values of the wetland. They also have increased levels of protection through a specific permitting process involving greater scrutiny and public involvement. (New Hampshire Assoc. Conservation Commissions, NH DES).

Mont Vernon does not have any identified prime wetlands at this time. The benefits of prime wetland designation include:

- Identifying and recognizing wetlands as locally significant based on their size, unspoiled character, diversity of flora and fauna, water storage capacity in combination with other characteristics
- Notifying landowners, developers and the New Hampshire Wetlands Board of the municipality's strong belief that certain wetlands should remain undisturbed
- Assuring that the Wetlands Bureau will give additional consideration to proposals for activities within a designated prime wetland.

Prime Wetland Recommendations

The Conservation Commission should do a prime wetlands survey to determine if any wetlands in town meet criteria for increased protection. Responsibility: Conservation Commission

Selected wetlands that meet criteria should be designated as prime wetlands. Responsibility: Conservation Commission, and Planning Board.

The Planning Board must address the presence of any designated prime wetlands within future development. Responsibility: Planning Board

Ground Water

Ground water from bedrock deposits provides water for most of the residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial users in Mont Vernon. Bedrock wells are drilled into rock fractures that provide substantial volumes of water. Since 1984, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) has required that information be provided to them including but not limited to, the completion date, type of well, and depth. From the year 2000 to 2008, the number of bedrock wells that range in depth of 100 to 1,000 feet in Mont Vernon on file with NHDES Water Supply and Pollution Control Division have more than doubled from 207 to 486. The need for aquifer protection and increasing buffer widths for water bodies to protect ground water in town will become even more important in the future as southern New Hampshire continues to be one of the fastest growing areas in New England. Due to the high level of metals in our bedrock, 20.1 to 30.0 percent of the wells in Mont Vernon have a concentration of arsenic greater than 0.010 milligrams per liter. (United States Geologic Survey, 2003, NRPC). New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Private Well Testing Program provides private well owners with recommendations for testing schedules, fact sheets and a list of certified testing laboratories.

There are no regulations in Mont Vernon that provide direct protection to groundwater resources. According to the NHDES Water Supply and Pollution Control Division there are six public water supply wells in Mont Vernon. This includes two at the Rolling Acres Mobile Home Park, the Village School, Town Hall, the McCollom Building, and the Mont Vernon Inn. Consideration should be given to test the closed well behind the Post Office as a source for present and future water supplies. One more public water supply has been approved by the planning board for a cluster open space subdivision on Riley Way and Crosby Drive but has not yet been constructed. Public education is an important part of maintaining the quality of groundwater.

The most common causes of groundwater contamination in New Hampshire are leaking underground storage tanks, mishandling of industrial solvents, and storage and use of road salt. The gasoline additive MtBE, an especially potent contaminant, has been found in 182 public water supply wells in New Hampshire and has been found to be present in some wells in Mont Vernon. (NH DES).

Groundwater is a critical natural and economic resource for Mont Vernon. It is the most important source of drinking water and vitally important for fish, wildlife, and recreation. Although there are some state and federal programs that are in place to protect groundwater, it is generally acknowledged that the most effective protection requires local involvement. The most effective way to protect groundwater is to exclude potential threats from the contributing area by controlling land uses. To control land use completely, municipalities can acquire the land or obtain restrictive easements. Cities and towns can also place regulatory limits on what kinds of development are acceptable in specific areas of a community to protect water supplies. For example, 212 New Hampshire cities and towns have created zoning districts that prevent or restrict industries and businesses in important aquifer areas.

Planning boards can also use site plan review regulations with new development to focus on ground water protection. For groundwater protection, NH DES recommends including regulations to ensure that on-site wastewater disposal systems (septic systems) and the application of lawn chemicals do not contaminate groundwater or surface water. They should also discourage landscaping that requires extensive watering and/or chemical inputs. (NH DES "Guide to Groundwater Protection" revised 2008).⁶

⁶ <http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/wd-07-29.pdf>

Ground Water Recommendations

Develop ordinances/regulatory limits on what kinds of development are acceptable in specific areas of town to protect water supplies. Responsibility: Planning Board.

Identify areas that should be purchased by the town or obtain restrictive conservation easements on to protect groundwater and drinking water supplies. Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Planning Board.

Create a process and regulatory structure to mitigate the cumulative effect of development pressure on ground water. Responsibility: Planning Board.

Increase the number of roads designated as low salt use in sensitive areas to minimize impacts of salt use and decrease groundwater contamination. Responsibility: Selectmen, DPW, Conservation Commission.

Provide educational information to town residents about water resource conservation, pollution prevention, wetlands, groundwater, use of lawn chemicals (fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides), and proper use and care of septic systems readily available, especially as residents move into town who are not accustomed to municipal water and sewer services. Responsibility: Conservation Commission, Planning Board.

Appendix and Resources

New Hampshire Dept. of Environmental Services (NHDES) “Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook”, Section 2: Environmental Characteristics Zoning, 2.4 Wetlands Protection, Complete Chapter and Model Ordinance for Wetlands Protection Template.

http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/documents/ilupt_chpt_2.4.pdf

Buffers for Wetlands and Surface Waters: A Guidebook for New Hampshire Communities.

<https://www.nh.gov/oep/planning/resources/documents/buffers.pdf>

NH Office of Energy and Planning and NHDES, Model Groundwater Protection Ordinance, revised 2010.

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/wd-06-41.pdf>

NHDES, “Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook”, Section 2: Environmental Characteristics Zoning, 2.5 Protection of Groundwater and Surface Water Resources, Complete Chapter and Model Groundwater Protection Ordinance Template.

http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/documents/ilupt_chpt_2.5.pdf

NHDES, “Guide to Groundwater Protection”.

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/wd-07-29.pdf>

NHDES, “Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook”, Section 2: Environmental Characteristics Zoning, 2.6 Shoreland Protection: The Importance of Riparian Buffers, Complete Chapter and Model Ordinance for Shoreland and Riparian Protection Template.

http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/documents/ilupt_chpt_2.6.pdf

NHDES, “Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques Handbook” Complete Handbook with Model Ordinances in Word. http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/repp/innovative_land_use.htm

NHDES, Environmental Fact Sheet, “Suggested Water Quality Testing for Private Wells”.

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/dwgb/documents/dwgb-2-1.pdf>

New Hampshire Fish and Game Dept.: New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan.

<http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/wap.html>

Nashua Regional Planning Commission, 2014 Environmental Master Plan.

http://www.nashuarpc.org/files/8914/2186/6199/Environment_Final_Adopted_121714.pdf

University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. <http://extension.unh.edu/Natural-Resources>

Town of Mont Vernon, Official Website. <http://montvernon.nh.us/>

4. Facilities

4.1 Introduction

The present-day structural and mechanical conditions and uses of current (Town Hall, McCollom Building, Fire Station) and future (building presently housing Daland Memorial Library) Town government facilities, as well as the strategic location of each Town government office, were presented in the adopted report¹ of the Mont Vernon Building Use Study Committee (BUSC) and its allied Facility Use Survey.² The subsequent independent Historic Building Assessment and Feasibility Study report³ amplified the recommendations put forth in the BUSC report for the Town Hall, McCollom Building and Daland Memorial Library. Each report drew attention to 1) current and future Town government office needs, 2) strategic future location of Town government offices, and 3) current infrastructural conditions of each of the three aforementioned Town facility.

Prior to issuance of these reports, the Select Board appointed ten members to the BUSC “to develop and consider” 1) available options for the use of current Town buildings and 2) cost-benefits of possible new facilities at other locations. The BUSC met weekly from July 9, 2105 through September 14, 2015. Minutes of each announced, public meeting were appended to the adopted BUSC report.

The initial recommendation of the BUSC was formulating a warrant article to retain a qualified professional architect and qualified structural engineers to “aid in developing a true plan for Town Hall, McCollom Building and Daland Library uses.” The resultant warrant article was adopted at the 2015 annual Town meeting.

The two central long-term, cost-effective recommendations of the BUSC were 1) preservation/rehabilitation is a more judicious strategy than a demolition/rebuild approach for sustaining the longevity and useful life of the Town Hall and McCollom Building and 2) consolidating the rehabilitation/preservation of the Town Hall and McCollom Building as a single-package project provides not only long-term tax certitude but also business incentive to potential contractors and allied associates.

The independent feasibility study³ emphasized the deteriorating structural soundness, the outdated, inefficient mechanical systems, and the oftentimes code-violating state of the various electrical systems currently present in the Town Hall, McCollom Building and Daland Memorial Library. Additionally, the independent feasibility study concurred with BUSC recommendations

¹ Building Use Study Committee, Committee Recommendations, September 28, 2015 (available at Mont Vernon Town Hall office)

² Mont Vernon Facilities Use Committee, July 2015 Department / Facility Use Survey (available at Mont Vernon Town Hall office)

³ Historic Building Assessment and Feasibility Study, February 15, 2018 (<https://www.montvernonnh.us/images/2018%20FINAL%20DRAFT%20with%20Addenda%20Assessment%20report.pdf>)

to consolidate Town government offices in the Town Hall and to dedicate the McCollom Building to housing the Police Department.

During review of the independent feasibility study draft report, the BUSC put forth two warrant articles to establish and fund a Mont Vernon Heritage Commission (MVHC) and one warrant article for Town purchase of the building presently housing the Daland Memorial Library. Each of these three warrant articles were approved by large majorities at the 2018 annual Town meeting.

MVHC members were appointed by the Select Board in 2018. The first public meeting of the MVHC was convened in July 2019. The MVHC established two teams of MVHC members to 1) conduct and publish a survey of Mont Vernon's historical resources and 2) prepare applications to organizations/agencies established to provide partial funding for community bodies created to preserve community historical resources.

Items listed for the Town Hall, McCollom Building and the present building housing the Daland Memorial Library were extracted from the BUSC and independent feasibility study reports. Items listed for the Fire Department are derived from those enumerated in the BUSC report and its accompanying Department Head survey. Items listed for Department of Public Works (DPW) buildings/facilities are based on detailed discussions with DPW personnel. Current and future facility use needs are defined by time intervals of 1 – 5 years and 5 – 15 years, respectively.

Building structural, infrastructural and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) deficiencies documented in the feasibility study report¹ and its appendices are listed under the **Structural and Infrastructural Deficiencies** header for the Town Hall, McCollom Building and the building currently housing the Daland Memorial Library. Each deficiency was catalogued by an independent qualified expert. Whenever the feasibility study report¹ or the specialized expert report³ contained a corrective recommendation, that deficiency is so identified with a bolded and italicized notation within a concluding set of parentheses. Noted deficiencies not containing any advisory stipulations, but catalogued because of code or safety concerns, are listed without a concluding parenthetical identifier. Any verbatim expressions extracted from cited sources are designated by opening and closing quotation marks.

A summary of the Daland Memorial Library's planning for a new, state of the art facility is included under that portion of this chapter. The facility needs and the current structural and infrastructural deficiencies listed under the Daland Memorial Library heading become relevant only at the time the Town designates a use for the library building space. The Town purchased the library building in 2018 as part of a systematized rehabilitation/preservation plan for the Town Hall and McCollom Building put forth by the BUSC.¹

Mont Vernon's government records are now electronic. Computer security, cybersecurity or information technology security is the protection of computer systems and networks from the theft of, or damage to, their hardware, software or electronic data, as well as from the disruption or misdirection of the services provided. Protecting the Town's computer-generated business, meeting and financial information is vital in today's ever-increasing efforts to digitally breach such records. Not incorporating enhanced cybersecurity as a topmost planning priority places

Mont Vernon and its residents in needless jeopardy. Initial and annual costs necessary to provide and maintain rigorous cybersecurity has become not only a business necessity but a fiducial responsibility.

Mont Vernon should begin exploring workable options for the live broadcasting of official Town meetings to Town residents. Such a system would be akin to the online learning technology used by multiple educational organizations and by many of today's governmental bodies.

Population and housing trends of regional municipalities are presented in the tables and figures of Appendix A. Appendix A also contains tables of student enrollment and capital improvement trends.

While not official Town government facilities, Mont Vernon's cemeteries and Village School have been included for comprehensiveness.

Reported office hours are those in effect for 2019.

4.2 Town Hall

Location: 1 South Main Street

Town Hall Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM; Friday 9:00 AM – Noon

Tax Collector Office Hours: Monday 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM; Wednesday 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Building Inspector Office Hours: 2nd and 4th Mondays 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

4.2.1 Town Hall Overview

The Town Hall was built in 1781. The building presently houses first-floor office space for the Town's Administrative Assistants, Treasurer, Tax Collector, Assessor, Building Inspector, Supervisors of the Checklist and Select Board members. The facility as also has first-floor meeting space for public meetings of the Town Select Board and its appointed Commissions, Boards and Committees, the Trustees of Trust Funds. Currently, the majority of file cabinets used for short-term and long-term document storage are shared by each Department, Commission, Board and Committee. Trustees of Trust Funds have a dedicated 4-drawer, fire-proof file cabinet for storage of its records.

There are concerns with the Town Hall existing structural integrity, inefficient heating and cooling systems, outdated and oftentimes code-violating electrical systems, and current inadequacy of essential, mandatory storage space. Restoration plans will determine which expert recommendations will, and will not, be enacted. For example, if preservation of the inactive chimney is not planned, the recommended repairs will not be undertaken.

Twenty-four parking spaces are available for Town or Fire Department business. Three spaces are reserved for Town Staff and three spaces are reserved for those with handicap license tags or valid windshield placards.

General contact information for each Department is listed in the Town's annual reports.

4.2.2 Town Hall Current Facility Use Needs

- Installation of "Reserved for Staff " parking signage
- Installation of a minimum of three (3) "Reserved for Town Business" parking signage
- Improved access to tax and lot maps necessary for each Town officeholder to perform official duties
- Dedicated computer systems with appropriate software packages, up-to-date telephone lines with voice mail capability and an exclusive e-mail address for each Town officeholder
- Installation of a an adequate number of file cabinets (lockable and fire-/water-proof) for Town Hall officeholders' short-term storage of non-archived records (currently eleven (11) file cabinets (three (3) lockable) shared by each Town Hall official)
- Installation of an adequate number of lockable, fire-/water-proof file cabinets for Town Select Board, Treasurer, Tax Collector and Assessor paper records that must be archived *in perpetuity* per State of New Hampshire statutes

4.2.3 Town Hall Future Facility Use Needs

- When the Town Hall is redesigned as part of its preservation/restoration, recommended needs include
 - installation of sufficient "Reserved for Staff" parking signage to accommodate office-hour schedules
 - sufficient space earmarked for required storage of archived Town records
 - upgraded security system, including a system emitting a signal, whenever office public access door is opened/closed
 - modernized public entrance space affording added level of security, including a staff-activated system that would allow visitor entrance into central office space
 - office space designs affording added levels of confidentiality for Town documents lying open on staff desks during business hours
 - dedicated storage area for general office supplies
 - office desks with adequate active-file storage for each Town officeholder
 - installation of sufficient "reserved for Town Business" signage
 - increased parking availability, likely necessitating Town purchase of additional property

4.2.3 Town Hall Structural and Infrastructural Deficiencies

- Foundation and crawl space
 - establish below-grade depth of current foundation and bedrock (ledge) to determine if crawl space height can be increased to allow efficient installation and maintenance of today's mechanical and electrical systems (***recommendation***)
 - reduce exposure of main level framing to excessive, degradative levels of below-grade moisture
 - overlay vapor barrier over any exposed earth (***recommendation***)

- west façade exposed stones rotated inward, with some twisted out of alignment
 - replace existing crawl-space piers (*recommendation*)
 - replace rot-damaged and other timbers not compliant with current structural standards (*recommendation*),
 - seal openings wherever any exterior-interior air exchange possible (*recommendation*)
 - shorten joist spans to accommodate planned load weights (*recommendation*)
- Main level floor
 - level and replace main floor
 - insulate underside of flooring
- Upper level floor
 - restrict use to “light foot traffic” without further structural inspection
 - determine structural conditions of existing framing before use expanded to public traffic (*recommendation*)
- Roof framing
 - reinforce connection points between ceiling joist ends and tie beams (*recommendation*)
 - construct two attic walkways (*recommendation*)
 - install sufficient lighting to facilitate inspection and maintenance (*recommendation*)
- Roof exterior
 - main roof asphalt shingles in fair to good condition
 - square (lower) tower
 - correct water penetration from asphalt shingle nails holes penetrating original metal roof
 - belfry
 - substantial rust formation on copper roof from iron nails securing domed roof
 - repair bell wooden frame if reinstating swinging of bell
 - chimneys
 - furnace (active) and kitchen antique cooking stove (inactive)
 - lead flashing currently surrounds each
 - no roof crickets abut either chimney
 - prioritize repointing of brick masonry (*recommendation*)
 - prioritize replacement of missing bricks on each cap (*recommendation*)
 - prioritize inspection of chimney interiors (*recommendation*)
- Mechanical systems
 - consider installation of heat pump system (heat plus air conditioning), with advanced control system, to accommodate consolidation of Town offices in Town Hall
 - prioritize alleviation of moisture currently condensing on outer surfaces of mechanical systems
- Electrical systems
 - power service and distribution
 - replace entire existing incoming service, main distribution panel and all distribution systems with systems compliant with current code standards (*recommendation*)
 - include power requirements necessary for planned limited-use lift and/or elevator that comply with current American with Disabilities Act standards
 - consider power requirements necessary if fire pump installed
 - replace exterior south-side distribution panel compliant with current code standards (*recommendation*)

- replace exterior portable generator receptacle compliant with current code standards (**recommendation**)
- install electric receptacles in all building areas compliant with current code (number, location, type) standards (**recommendation**)
- connect backup generator presently not connected to sewage pump
- no clearly identified circuit for building well pump
- upgrade all interior lighting to comply with current energy efficiency standards
- emergency lighting
 - upgrade current inadequate or nonfunctioning emergency lighting systems to comply with current code standards
 - correct inadequate illumination of current building exit signs
 - install exterior emergency lighting at exits to comply with current code standards
- security and fire alarm
 - consolidate present security systems to accommodate planned building future use
 - upgrade fire alarm system to accommodate planned building future use
 - include fire sprinkler “as part of any significant renovation” (**recommendation**)
 - update current, noncompliant upper level fire egress to comply with current code standards
- Accessibility
 - ramp landing area not ADA code compliant
 - locked access door not ADA code compliant
 - lack of roof structure over landing area not ADA code compliant
 - lack of handicap access to men’s room not ADA code compliant
 - public access through front-of-building doorways not ADA code compliant
 - existing Town Hall office handicap access route not ADA code compliant

4.3 McCollom Building

Location: 2 South Main Street

Police Department Public Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Town Clerk Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM; Tuesday and Thursday 8:00 AM – Noon

4.3.1 McCollom Building Overview

Construction of the McCollom Building was completed in 1853. The Appleton Academy, in operation since 1850, moved into the McCollom Building at the start of the 1853 academic year. In 1871, a former Mont Vernon resident bestowed a permanent endowment of \$10,000 to the Appleton Academy with the stipulation that its name become the McCollom Academy. Later in 1871, the Appleton Academy name was changed to the McCollom Institute, and operated as such until 1905. In 1906, the McCollom Institute became the Stearns School, and remained in operation until its closure in 1937.

The McCollom Building sat empty until the land and building were deeded to the Mont Vernon School District in 1947. Mont Vernon children in grades 1 – 6 attended school in the McCollom Building from 1947 – 1970. Grades 4 – 6 moved to the newly constructed Mont Vernon Village School in 1971. The remaining grades continued to attend school in the McCollom Building

until 1990, when the Mont Vernon Village School was expanded to accommodate grades 1 – 6. Only Town offices have occupied the McCollom Building since 1990.

The McCollom Building presently houses the Police Department and Town Clerk, each of which share the Building’s first floor. The second floor is used as storage space by various Town entities. Twelve parking spaces are available. Three spaces are reserved for Police cruiser parking. Four spaces are reserved for Town business. One space is reserved for those with handicap license tags or valid windshield placards.

The incremental, piecemeal interior and exterior renovation strategies (structural and infrastructural) done after the late 1940s was highlighted in the feasibility study report.¹ Consequently, multiple safety and code-noncompliant specifics were catalogued.¹ Current fire egress from main and upper levels is especially problematic.

Contact information for each Department is listed in the Town’s annual reports.

4.3.2 McCollom Building Current Facility Use Needs

- Update current “Reserved for Town Business” signage with office hours

4.3.3 McCollom Building Future Facility Use Needs

- Complete compliance with Federal and State handicap access requirements

4.3.4 McCollom Building Structural and Infrastructural Deficiencies

- Foundation and basement
 - repair of east façade “ignored”
- Main level floor
 - repair floor joists “overly modified by various plumbers” (**recommendation**)
 - consider adding line of new columns and beams under main level floor joist centerlines if public assembly space planned
- Upper level floor
 - restrict use to “current business use” (**recommendation**)
 - “fully assess and repair” floor joists damaged during installation of plumbing and heating (**recommendation**)
 - determine structural conditions of existing framing if public assembly space planned
 - consider sistering current joists or adding additional joists
 - determine if adding “steel” framing necessary
- Roof framing
 - determine condition of steel fittings at “crucial eave connections”
 - construct two side attic walkways to facilitate inspection and maintenance
- Roof exterior
 - repair of chimney “ignored”
- Mechanical systems

- confirm existence and proper operation of check valves in all three zones of the existing heating system (*recommendation*)
- consider installation of more energy efficient heat pump system with advanced control for improved heating and cooling
- Electrical systems
 - Power service and distribution
 - replace knob and tube wiring concealed behind existing walls and above finished ceilings to comply with current code standards (*recommendation*)
 - perform necessary structural reveals and inspections to determine if existing systems require replacement to comply with current code standards (*recommendation*)
 - inspect existing replacement and original cable types
 - inspect existing replacement and original cable connections
 - existing number and types of cables in single connector
 - remove all disconnected cables
 - correct inadequate physical support of cabling in basement
 - improve backup generator wiring systems to be code compliant
 - no automatic transfer switch
 - no dedicated output breaker at generator
 - increase clutter-free space around main feeder (Clerk office) and backup generator distribution panels to comply with maintenance code standards (*recommendation*)
 - upgrade interior lighting to comply with current energy efficiency standards
 - emergency lighting
 - require battery-powered emergency lighting throughout building if backup generator not updated as outlined above
 - upgrade existing front porch emergency lighting with system that illuminates front steps and wheelchair lift to comply with current code standards
 - correct inadequate illumination of current building exit signs
 - install exterior emergency lights at exits to comply with current code standards
 - identify electrical circuit servicing existing wheelchair lift
 - install emergency call system in existing wheelchair lift
 - security and fire alarm
 - no specific security matters catalogued
 - update fire suppression system to accommodate planned facility future uses
 - “strongly consider” sprinkler system
 - include second interior, upper-level fire egress stair within fire-rated enclosure (*recommendation*)
 - dismantle existing non-compliant fire egress stair
- accessibility
 - existing wheelchair lift
 - monthly testing and “regular” inspection (*recommendation*)
 - exposure to prevailing weather conditions
 - correct door threshold currently a “little’ high
 - door closure set “too tightly”
 - provide wheelchair height access points to meet ADA code for conducting business
 - Police Department
 - Town Clerk Office

- non-compliant restroom interior design
 - tissue paper holder
 - grab bars
- no handicap access to upper level

4.3.5 Police Department

4.3.6 Police Department Overview

The Police Department has a staff of eight (3 full-time; 5 part-time) officers on duty from the hours of 6:00 AM to 12:00 AM. A part-time administrative assistant is presently employed. In 2019, there were three police cruisers in service.

Currently, there is no booking facility at the Police Department. Therefore all subjects arrested by Mont Vernon officers are transported to either Amherst or Milford for booking, a process that requires an average of two hours. There is an on-site evidence room. However, Police access to the evidence room is restricted whenever the Police Department or the Town Clerk office is open to the public. Active and archived files are currently stored on-site as well.

The Police Department has raised concerns regarding the existing lack of privacy when interviewing suspects or taking personal statements. Currently the McCollom Building needs to be closed to public access during such times to ensure complete privacy which often prohibits the Town Clerk from addressing the personal needs of the townspeople. The 2015 and 2018 studies^{1,2} concur with the Police Department recommendation that the McCollom Building be a dedicated police facility not only for the issues outlined above but for increased safety.

Detailed services information is available in the Police Department reports published in annual Mont Vernon Town and School Reports.

4.3.7 Police Department Current Facility Use Needs

- Sufficient office space for short-term storage of active files and records
- Dedicated, non-basement dedicated space for storage of archived records mandated by statute
- Installation of service telephone beside the McCollom Building entrance door to provide a direct, after-hours link to the dispatch center

4.3.8 Police Department Future Facility Use Needs

- When the floorplan is reorganized during its preservation/restoration, recommended needs include
 - on-site booking room
 - garage/sally port affording secure cruiser parking as well as direct, secure access to on-site booking area
 - appropriately located evidence room
 - dedicated evidence processing space

- dedicated space to securely store ammunition and to secure and service firearms and Tasers
- larger training class room
- appropriately sized and equipped fitness room for officers to maintain physical fitness certification
- dedicated locker room with shower

4.3.9 Town Clerk Office

4.3.10 Town Clerk Office Overview

The Town Clerk office has a staff of two (Clerk and Deputy Clerk). The Town Clerk office currently processes voter registrations and absentee ballots, vehicle registrations and licensing, marriage licenses and dog licenses. Presently, records are stored on-site. The 2015 and 2018 studies^{1,2} recommended moving the Town Clerk office to the restored/renovated Town Hall.

4.3.11 Town Clerk Office Current Facility Use Needs

- Sufficient office space for short-term storage of active files and records
- Sufficient space for long-term storage of compulsory archived files and records

4.3.12 Town Clerk Office Future Facility Use Needs

- Dedicated computer system for the Town Supervisors of the Checklist

4.4 Fire Department

Location: Main Street

4.4.1 Fire Department Overview

The Fire Station, built in 2007, is adjacent to the Town Hall. The Station contains six total apparatus bays, chief's office, radio and report room, training room and an office for the Emergency Management Director. The station also contains maintenance, storage and work rooms. According to the 2017 Town Report, seven vehicles were in service.

The Mont Vernon Fire Department is an on-call fire department, which means the on-call volunteers are paid when responding to an incident. Members of the Department volunteer their time for many activities, including trainings, safety programs, Town events, inspections, and issuing permits. The 2018 Town Report lists twenty-two on-call Department volunteers and four Department auxiliary members.

Department personnel train twice a month, covering all aspects of today's fire service. Members are highly trained professionals who work together to insure they maintain their skills and knowledge.

Twenty parking spaces are available. Ten spaces are reserved for Fire Department and Police Department use. Ten spaces are open to the public.

Detailed services information is available in the Fire Department reports published in annual Mont Vernon Town and School Reports.

4.4.2 Fire Department Current Facility Use Needs

- Additional storage for seasonal Department equipment

4.4.3 Fire Department Future Facility Use Needs

- Replacement of back-up generator
- Increased parking availability

4.5 Department of Public Works

4.5.1 Highway Garage

Location: Mason Road

Public Hours: Monday through Friday 6:30 AM – 3:00 PM

4.5.2 Highway Garage Overview

The highway garage is located in a 13 year-old, 5,604 square foot facility that also houses the majority of all essential Department equipment. Currently, the Department consists of a full-time Director, four full-time employees, one half-time employee and one seasonal employee. The Department's primary duty is maintenance, including snow removal, of approximately 83 lane miles of the Town's paved and unpaved roads. The Department maintains the condition of road-side ditches, as well as conducting culvert and catch basin cleaning, and brush cutting programs, to provide adequate drainage of run-off water. The Department is responsible for replacement of failed culverts and catch basins, and review of roads in need of total reconstruction. The Department also maintains the cemetery, mows the lawn of the War Memorial, and is responsible for the Transfer Station.

The Town salt shed consists of four bays. One bay is used for storage of miscellaneous supplies and equipment. Two bays are used for salt. One bay is used for a sand/salt mix.

Additional contact information for the Highway Garage is listed in the Town's annual reports.

4.5.3 Highway Garage Current Facility Use Needs

- Replacement of buckling siding
- Replacement of furnace
- Replacement of present entrance (non-garage) doors
- Increased main-floor file storage capacity for active records not yet slated for archiving

- Moving storage of archived records to second floor

4.5.4 Highway Garage Future Facility Use Needs

- Installation of upgraded windows
- Construction of a fourth full-depth bay

4.5.5 Former Salt Shed

The former salt shed (Weston Hill Road) was built in 1963 and is now used to store Department signs, cones and barricades.

4.5.6 Former Salt Shed Current Facility Use Needs

- Replacement of entire shed
 - walls collapsed to point that complete demolition is the rational, cost-effective option
 - only current garage door salvageable
 - replacement storage shed footprint ideally expanded to allow storage of all Department small-to-medium sized equipment, thus opening additional space for storage of sand or salt in present salt shed

4.5.7 Transfer Station

Location: Weston Hill Road

Open Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 PM – 6:00 PM; Saturday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

4.5.8 Transfer Station Overview

The Town Transfer Station is part of the Souhegan Regional Landfill District (SRLD). The Town has an active recycling program. Recycling guidelines are listed on the Town website (<http://www.montvernonnh.us/index.php/departments/transfer-station>). Recycling rules are currently undergoing revisions, and SRLD will advise its members of such revisions. Revised plastic recycling guidelines were highlighted in the November 2019 Town newsletter. Plastics labeled inside a triangle with 1 (PET: polyethylene terephthalate), 2 (HDPE: high-density polyethylene), or 5 (PP: polypropylene) are recyclable, and can be placed in the dumpster labeled “Plastics.” All other plastics are currently non-recyclable, and are to be placed in the general trash dumpster.

Recycling guidelines are included in Town annual reports. One of the main responsibilities of Transfer Station personnel is confirming Town residents follow posted recycling guidelines.

Use of the Transfer Station is restricted to Town residents, and requires a valid sticker on each and any vehicle using the Station. One no-cost, 12-month Station sticker is sent to each Town property owner with the mid-year Town tax bill. Additional stickers can be purchased at the Transfer Station or Town Hall. Station attendants will advise residents about the disposal of all non-recyclable, solid waste materials. A disposal fee schedule for non-recyclable household,

recreational and electronic items is sent to each Town property owner with the mid-year Town tax bill.

Hazardous waste guidelines and disposal dates are published by the NRPC, and are available at <http://www.nashuarpc.org/energy-environmental-planning/household-hazardous-waste/>. A hyperlink to this NRPC webpage is also provided on the Transfer Station page of the Town website (<https://www.montvernonnh.us/index.php/departments/transfer-station>).

Official North East Recycling Association (NERA) signage was installed in 2019. Additional NERA signage will be ordered as required.

4.5.9 Transfer Station Current Facility Use Needs

- Installation of dedicated, dependable telephone service (essential public safety issue)
- Replacement of southeast cement-block retaining wall
- Installation of compactors for plastics, aluminum and cardboard
- Replacement of northeast cement-block retaining wall

4.6 Daland Memorial Library

Location: 5 North Main Street

Open Hours: Tuesday through Thursday 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM; Friday 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM; Saturday 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

4.6.1 Daland Memorial Library Overview

The Daland Memorial Library was built in 1909. The Library has an interior (net) area of approximately 1,300 square feet, with a footprint (gross) of nearly 1,400 square feet. Library staff, all part-time employees, include a Director, a Children’s Director and three Library Assistants. Parking is available onsite for seven vehicles, two of which are used by on-duty staff. The net area excludes the areas required for collection space, staff work space, meeting space, storage, and restroom facilities. The present library building is not fully compliant with today’s handicap accessibility standards.

Based on American Library Association and National Institute of Building Science standards, an analysis in the 2018 Needs Assessment Report⁴ calculated that a gross square footage of 7,151 – 7,437 was required to meet the projected 20-year population growth of Mont Vernon. This additional gross square footage would accommodate 1) increased book and media collection shelving with appropriate aisle widths; 2) a demarcated, secure children’s room with self-contained rest rooms, storage, and service desk; 3) defined staff space for computer stations, an appropriate reference/circulation desk, administrative office and private eating area; 4) sufficient storage for audiovisual equipment and other supplies; 5) dedicated young adult and

⁴ Planning for the Future: A Needs Assessment, The Daland Memorial Library of Mont Vernon, New Hampshire, May 2018 (<https://dalandlibrary.files.wordpress.com/2018/10/needs-assessment-2018.pdf>)

adult reading, quiet reading and public computer areas; 6) sufficient space for public library programs, community/private meetings, staff training, handicapped-accessible rest rooms and utility closets; and 7) a multipurpose room with access to kitchen and restroom facilities and without after-hours access to the main library.⁵

In July 2018, the Library trustees issued a Request for Proposals soliciting design concepts for a new Town library. After the selection committee interviewed four potential firms, it voted unanimously to award the design contract to DSK Architects. DSK Architects relied heavily on the 2018 Needs Assessment Report, and thoughts voiced by Town residents at the September 2018 public input session, for the blueprint space allocations for a state-of-the-art Mont Vernon library. For example, 25% of the area of the proposed library is dedicated to a secure children's room. A timeline leading to the ultimate architectural proposal is contained in the Town 2018 Annual Report.

A comprehensive land survey of the projected building site on Town property, purchased in 1997, behind the present post office to determine the precise locations of the new facility and access road was approved at the 2019 Town Annual Meeting. The comprehensive site survey was completed by the end of 2019.

The Mont Vernon Library Charitable Foundation was introduced in the 2018 Town Annual Report. The foundation is presently finalizing a capital fund raising campaign for the new facility.

The Library is managed by three voter-elected trustees and fully maintained by the Sophia G. Daland Trust. Detailed program and services information is available in the Daland Memorial Library reports published in annual Mont Vernon Town and School Reports.

As stated in the chapter introduction, the needs listed below become relevant at the time a Town department, or appointed Commission, Board and/or Committee, has been assigned space in this Town-owned building (purchased in 2018). Depending upon facility occupant, some of the listed needs may be unwarranted.

4.6.2 Building Future Facility Use Needs

- Additional parking space
- Professional assessment of water purity
- Professional assessment of septic system, including leach field on south side of lot abutting east side of Town Memorial lot

4.6.3 Building Structural and Infrastructural Deficiencies

- Foundation and basement
 - no specific recommendations

⁵ Ibid, pages 17 – 18

- flooding⁶ during prolonged, storm-induced power outage
- Main level floor
 - reinforce floor joists if floor considered “too bouncy” if “full Assembly Space” increases collapse risk
 - toe-screwing joist ends
 - adding additional posts if necessary
 - establish second means of egress (*recommendation*)
 - reconfigure basement entrance with dedicated door and code-compliant stairway
- Roof framing
 - existing structure “not well-suited to much remodeling or repurposing”
- Mechanical systems
 - existing heating and cooling system “oversized for its true heating and cooling load”
 - insulate basement ductwork
 - consider installing programmable thermostat
 - conduct air flow testing
 - reduce fan speed to that required for cooling
 - recalibrate (if possible) furnace burner to reduce heating supply air temperature to lessen reported “short cycling”
- Electrical systems fire alarm systems)
 - Power service and distribution
 - replace existing cable between service meter and main panelboard to comply with code standards (*recommendation*)
 - determine extent of knob and tube wiring
 - determine if existing systems require replacement with systems compliant with current code standards
 - cable type
 - connections and grounding states of replacement and original circuits
 - electric receptacles in all facility areas to comply with current code (number, location, type) standards
 - mop board receptacles not Americans with Disabilities Act compliant
 - additional circuits may require replacement of existing panelboard
 - upgrade interior lighting to comply with current energy efficiency standards
 - consider interior lighting to “properly illuminate this facility” and “highlight some of its architectural features”
 - install portable generator hook-up (*recommendation*)
 - current system inadequate if future planned facility use results in occupancy of 50 or more individuals at any one time
 - emergency lighting
 - install code-compliant illuminated exit signs, interior emergency lights and emergency lights at building exit exteriors (*recommendation*)
 - security and fire alarm
 - no discussion of existing security system
 - install fire alarm system (*recommendation*)
- accessibility

⁶ Mont Vernon New Hampshire Town and School Reports 1983, p 60

- building completely non-compliant with American with Disabilities Act standards
- include handicap access as part of second egress construction (*recommendation*)
- replace existing restroom with one handicap accessible (*recommendation*)

4.7 Mont Vernon Cemeteries

Location: Main Street and Cemetery Road (Green Lawn Cemetery)

4.7.1 Mont Vernon Cemeteries Overview

Mont Vernon, has one active cemetery. Green Lawn Cemetery has been in service since 1781. There are three active gates, one located on Main Street and two located on Cemetery Road.

A second cemetery has yet to be developed on Town property behind the current post office and building site for the new library.

Green Lawn Cemetery is managed by three elected trustees and maintained by the Department of Public Works. Burial plots are available for purchase only by current and former Town residents. Interested parties should contact the Board of Cemetery Trustees.

Four small family burial plots are located in Mont Vernon.

Contact information is included in the Town's annual reports.

4.8 Mont Vernon Village School

Location: 1 Kittridge Road

4.8.1 Mont Vernon Village School Overview

The Village School educates students from kindergarten through sixth grade. The school offers a full day kindergarten program. As part of SAU39, seventh and eighth grade students are "tuitioned" into Amherst Middle School and our freshmen through senior year students attend Souhegan Cooperative High School in Amherst. Programs offered at the Village School include technology/library, guidance, art, music, physical education and Spanish. There is a library onsite as well as a multi-purpose room in which students participate in physical education, eat lunch or provide presentations. The multi-purpose room is also made available for public Town meetings. There is a large fenced playground with blacktop as well as grass surfaces, and a ball field across the street.

Parking is available onsite; bus services are available through Butlers Bus in Milford.

Student enrollment in 2010, 2018 and 2019 is detailed in Appendix A (Tables A-7a and A-7b).

Major capital improvement priorities are reviewed annually during public hearings and subsequent deliberative sessions when the School Property Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund warrant article is discussed. Capital improvement priorities and current fund balance, targeted withdrawals and proposed future contributions are detailed in Appendix A (Table A-8).