



**Bolton Planning Commission
Bolton Valley Neighborhood Forum
Fireside Room, 4302 Bolton Valley Access Rd, Bolton VT
October 6, 2015 from 6-8pm**

At the forum, residents discussed the issues facing their neighborhood. Conversation was guided by the questions below.

What is the best thing/what do you value about the Bolton Valley area?

- People love the road—it's fun to drive
 - “The road is what keeps us here”
- People love the people, everyone is very welcoming
 - A couple who had just moved to the area from California mentioned that they had been welcomed very warmly (and they were grateful that there's water here, unlike in California!)
- There's easy access to resort trails for hikes outside of the ski season
- It's an aesthetic wonderland, and puts you in a spiritual state to look at. There are “no words” to describe it.
- Easy access to everything—very centrally located
- Skiing and the Catamount Trail are right outside people's back doors
- The changing seasons and the climate
- The tavern at the resort
- The neighborhood is family friendly with fun opportunities for the kids
- The ski resort is great to have nearby—it's outdated but on its way up
- The views are beautiful
- There's a lot of community pride
- Contribution from one Smilie School student attending: the trees!
- It's like a family party all the time up here
- There's lots of camaraderie and great neighbors
- Wild mushroom foraging is widespread and delicious

What do you hope will stay the same?

- The road being so fun
- The 4X4 center should keep the same footprint
- The 4X4 center should remain an attraction

- The openness of the area
- Bolton Valley being low key, not as commercial as Stowe
- The open agricultural land that remains needs to be protected. It should stay as open, unforested land with the potential for future ag production at least, but should be actively farmed or turned into pasture in the best case scenario
- The presence of community gardens and backyard gardening
- “Good fences make good neighbors”—people don’t want too much oversight
- Keeping the school going
- Potholes need to be maintained and not trashed by visitors

What do you hope will change?

- Resort needs to be expanded so users can have more space
- It would be nice if the sports center at the resort were open year round
- Bolton Valley becoming a four season resort
- Hiking trails should be extended to meet the trails coming out of the Mad River Valley
- Snowmobile trails should be expanded to reach the resort (this would need to be discussed with the state)
- The Town Plan should promote an ethos of low-impact development
- Could the possibility of an interstate exit for Bolton be revived?
 - It would make the resort viable but it has been a challenging issue to work with in the past
- It would be good for Bolton Valley and the town to have a friendlier relationship with one another, especially between BV and the DRB
- Zoning regulations are antidevelopment and are so complicated and overly directive that they’re hard to understand, comply with or enforce correctly
 - How can the town and Bolton Valley build a better relationship?
- This plan must recognize the static and aging nature of the population in Vermont

What ideas do you have for the future?

- Promoting Bolton Valley as a 4 season resort close to an international airport
 - Summer tours, events and activities happening at Bolton Valley
- An economic development committee that can solicit investments and businesses should be established
 - Small businesses in town should be solicited for membership/input for this committee
- Bolton needs its own zip code!
- Need a statement or goal in the plan about protecting people’s property rights
- Need a faster process for DRB review, and to make the DRB process a more transparent and understandable one
 - Could there be an “Express Route” for new development?
- Revising zoning/the development bylaws should be a goal in the plan

- It was mentioned that it's much easier for the DRB and the Planning Commission to take people's feedback into account if there are specific sections people take issue with. For example, it's easier for them to revise Section XX Paragraph YY than to address a big issue
- Fireworks in town again for the 4th of July
- The school should be utilized during the summer while people are traveling to the Bolton Potholes
 - Paid parking in the parking lot, \$5/car to park and walk to the potholes
 - Food truck stop so tourists can spend money there
- IF Smilie School was closed (there are no plans for this, it is only a hypothetical question) it could be turned into a skate park for people to practice their snowboarding moves during the summer, or into a water park that connects to the potholes