



**Bolton Planning Commission  
Bolton Town Plan 2017 Community Kickoff Meeting  
Smilie School, 2712 Theodore Roosevelt Hwy, Bolton VT  
September 30, 2015 from 6-8pm**

At the meeting, residents ate pizza and discussed the issues facing their neighborhood. Conversation was guided by the questions below.

**What are the best things and what do you value about Bolton?**

- Sense of community—but interestingly it is centered around the smaller neighborhoods and the school rather than a wide Bolton community.
- Easy access to backcountry hiking and open land. I appreciate close proximity to urban areas yet don't want Bolton to becoming another suburb
- Nature, people, community, school
- Preston Pond
- Location between Burlington and Montpelier
- Rural community, wildlife, accessible to Burlington. Its beauty!
- Beauty, kind and down to earth people, community and neighbors, Smilie School (Lots of dittos)
- Woodlands, mountains, streams, wildlife, hiking trails, logging roads
- Recreation, community, natural resources
- Smilie School
- The great outdoors right outside our door!
- Natural resources
- Natural playground
- Close proximity to other fun things
- Great neighbors (yes!)
- Great small school
- Outdoors, not far from Burlington
- Plenty of fuel for my woodstove
- Balance: What we have (e.g. 75% of land conserved) may not be a problem—it's what we want
- Agricultural heritage
- I grew up here and want my kids to too! ☺
  - Small School

- Everyone knows everyone
- My view

### **What do you hope will stay the same?**

- Maintain/enhance liaison with organizations that help manage Bolton's resources, e.g. VLT, CRAG-VT, VAST, GMC, CTA
- Open space! Rural feel. Wildlife
- My view out my windows! (Echo this, I see the upper potholes and falls)
  - Small school
  - Community
- The natural environment and rugged feel of not only the landscape, but also the people (echo!)
- Beauty, open spaces/fields (ditto)
- Natural landscapes, wildlife habitat, the great people!
- Rugged beauty
- Don't pave the roads! (ditto)
- Open land
- Open School
- Clean river/brooks
- Maintain ridgelines
- Where is the balance between development and maintaining things?
- Grow the businesses we have
- Woodlands
- Wheeler Field
- Leverage Wheeler Field and golf course to liberate people of their money

### **What ideas do you have for the future of Bolton?**

- Community Solar (here here!) For the town offices, school and individual homeowners.
  - Could it be in the flood plain?
- Creative, beautiful commercial buildings on stilts along Route 2 that are environmentally sensitive
- More childcare providers—helps bring in more families
- Community gathering spaces—dining, farmers market on Route 2
- Go hunt up some businesses to base here
- Go hunting/solicit businesses that would be attracted to Bolton's aesthetic
- Large cash infusion (investments) for Bolton Valley Ski Resort
- Could Mountain View Drive become a commercial center?
- Play up/update Bolton Valley skiing—lodging, sports facility
- Hikers Hostel, Bed and Breakfasts at Lafreniere/Honey Hollow property
- Agrotourism or archaeological site tours
- A place for the community to gather for fun, contact, entertainment

- More businesses to generate taxes
- Leverage the golf course! Restaurant? Disk golf!
- Sarah Holbrooke property into a disk golf course?
- Posted danger signs at the Potholes?
- Community Center with classes, to share talents of citizens
- Wheeler Field: park, playground, fireworks (ditto)
- Market Bolton to people who travel internationally or nationally, like humanitarians, or state government workers
- Economic Development Committee
- Bringing tech firms to Bolton—solar/wind powered, central incubator for people with home businesses
- Could we have a yearly fundraising event for the Town?
  - Marathon, 5K, Battle of the Bands?
- Could Smilie become a magnet school for arts, music or technology? Or maybe a “land” school—nature, farming, history/culture
- Smilie IS a community gathering place

### **What do you hope will change?**

- MORE potholes parking, respect for the area
- Camping regulation
- Route 2 should reflect the vibrancy and beauty of our community
- More central gathering spots for community
  - How about under the I-89 bridge?
- Potholes! How to manage the incredible amount of use...many, many people from out of state! How to translate into money for Bolton?
- Tax base!
- Parking? Food trucks? Rental spaces? For potholes
- Better roads!
- Gathering place for community
- More businesses, tax \$\$
- Besides school, we need more community gathering spots. If you don't have kids in school, you never “go to town”
- Food truck weekly dinners at Wheeler Field? With alcohol?!
- Make Wheeler field a public owned recreation area
- Small downtown or Route 2 restaurant
- Localvore food restaurant
- More community events
- Businesses are in need of life on Route 2
- Future development and back roads need to be mindful of environmental concerns i.e. Lake Champlain TMDL
- Revoke the fireworks ordinance

- I hope Smilie will continue to evolve and continue the tradition of great care and support for our kids—our future!
- Want carbon neutral energy use
- Current design of the Notch Road (the first 1.5 miles from Route 2) is unsustainable: financially, mud, washouts, safety, etc.
- Expand the late bus so that kids can play sports
- More retail businesses to make money off of those skiers and nature lovers
- Retail businesses tied to recreation (dittoed by several people)
- Bring people from California
  - Tech
  - Base industry
  - Low impact
- Regional location with contact with Richmond, Waterbury, Burlington, etc. [really hard to read]
- Economy Development compact
- How to compete between Richmond and Waterbury? What sets Bolton apart from Richmond and Waterbury?
- Market to backpackers on the Long Trail:
  - A hostel?
  - Outdoors town:
    - Camping
    - Hiking
    - Food
    - Showers
    - Laundromat
    - Mail service
- Tax base!

### **Any other thoughts?**

- Will the plan address the possibility of Smilie closure? Or the school's path to success?
- Provide way for those that recreate here to spend money
- Bolton is "balkanized" into separate hamlets w/o much interaction. But within each hamlet is a strong sense of community. Can that be broadened or does our geography/topography present insurmountable barriers? (Ditto! Good one!)
- Lower taxes!
- I know about cake and eating it too...but taxes cannot continue to increase forever!
- Outreach group to solicit businesses (yes! Agreed!)
- Exit added off the interstate
- Economic development committee
- Brand Bolton
- Route 2 town water and septic
- Decreased conflict between town and Bolton Valley