



**Bolton Planning Commission
West Bolton Neighborhood Forum
3324 Nashville Rd, Bolton VT
October 20, 2015 from 6-8pm**

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

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

- Forests
- Gorgeous view of rock ledges
- Preserved land
- Good place to grow up
- Neighbors and mountains
- Hamlet
- Trails
- People and sense of neighborhood
- Size of community
- Close to things but feels far away
- Lots to do
- Proximity to wilderness
- Easy commute for those who work in Burlington
- Lots of work is being put into the road
- Great community
- Lots of young moms and wise moms
- Fiber internet availability, great for those who work from home
- Just enough of everything
- Skiing at Bolton Valley
- Trails to neighbors
- Cross country skiing on golf course
- Quiet forest and natural resources
- Nashville Road
- Love the land and the sense of community and tolerance
- History

- Family property
- Wildlife
- Neighbors know and care about each other
- Diversity of people
- Kids can play outside
- Dogs can run free in the wood

What do you hope will stay the same?

- The woods
- Wheeler Field
- Skiing on the golf course
- Keep Smilie School!
- Sense of community
- Desirable for wildlife
- No wind turbines in views
- Coming home to see lights at Bolton Valley
- Challenging roads at certain times of year
- Rural, but still feels like a neighborhood
- Golf course
- No more buildings
- Hikes
- Bolton Valley
- Maintain rural character
- Undeveloped mountains
- Lots of colorful trees
- Tax rate (not rising at least, falling at best)
- Approximate population density

What ideas do you have for the future?

- We should recognize that West Bolton isn't stagnate, it's always changing
- Need well-planned growth
- Well thought out growth/planning
- Plan for Potholes management—the area needs some love and maybe some new polices
- Someone should take care of Wheeler Field so kids can play
 - Playground and open space
 - Something for all ages
 - Retail space on a small part
 - Festival space/facilities?
 - Could the town buy it?
 - Planned Residential Development/Planned Unit Development/Clustered Housing?

- Celebrate the history of the area, identify historic buildings, collect the memories of elders in West Bolton
 - Create a historic society and/or give tours of historic buildings and areas?
- Decide if the area is going to feel like a village or feel rural
- Need to improve trails, such as those near Preston Pond
- Designate areas for growth in town
- Design contest for floodplain development
- Local energy production in “dead” spaces
- Low-income/senior housing or cohousing for people
- Think about the aging population
- Website for info/volunteer exchange?
- Need a good way to help people age independently if possible
- No more growth
- Town-wide events—open mic night?
- Single family windmills/small scale wind power generation
- Growth “off the grid” or low energy growth
- Community solar can help reduce the number of trees that must be cut down for solar panels and having enough panels helps tap into economies of scale
 - The solar could power public buildings
 - However, it’s also important to note that people like their open fields and some people don’t want them covered in solar panels
- Could the town provide information/be a knowledge clearinghouse for information on how to build green?
- Could there be a campsite in town near the Long Trail to make money?
 - In West Bolton, or in the floodplain on the Sarah Holbrook property
- Properties connected through trails
- If Smilie School was closed, the building could be used for senior housing
- It could also be used as a magnet school or a ski academy
- People really hope it stays a school

What do you hope will change?

- Get rid of abandoned trailers at the Jonesville town line
- Tax rates need to be controlled and there needs to be lower taxes
 - School taxes are a burden, people are “sick of them,” especially business owners
- Bolton can’t currently keep its young people—the town needs to grow responsibly to have jobs for people, and should increase the number of businesses
 - We need to talk more about business development
- Seniors can’t afford to live here
- The town needs to take advantage of being so close to things like Waterbury and Richmond
- Route 2 should be developed as a village center, or the bottom of the Access Road

- Need an economic town center that's accessible to everyone
- Could stilts and boardwalks on buildings make development in the flood plain more feasible?
 - Maybe Bolton could hold a design contest to get ideas from architecture and engineering students
- Bolton name recognition should be increased
- Bolton should have an economic development committee
- The town could use a medical practice, maybe a satellite office of another practice
- The town needs to have a conversation about a highway exit and whether it's a good idea or not
- Residents could benefit from public transport down Route 2, or a Park and Ride
- The town needs to confirm that zoning isn't preventing home businesses
- Traffic slowing on Route 2 is needed—perhaps a garden in a median strip, or a traffic circle
- West Bolton is a very distinct and unique area. How can that character be maintained and how can we help the area thrive?
- A solution for Wheeler Field needs to be found that is both financially viable for the owners and good for the town and neighbors.