

Memorandum

To: Hardwick Planning Commission
From: Heather Carrington, CCDS
Date: April 9, 2024
Re: Hardwick Bylaw Modernization

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of topics on the agenda for the April 9th, 2024 meeting of the Hardwick Planning Commission. The consultant will be in attendance to:

- Discuss revised bylaw definitions and several parcel conflicts with VT HOME Act compliance
- Review the project schedule and discuss next steps and timeline.

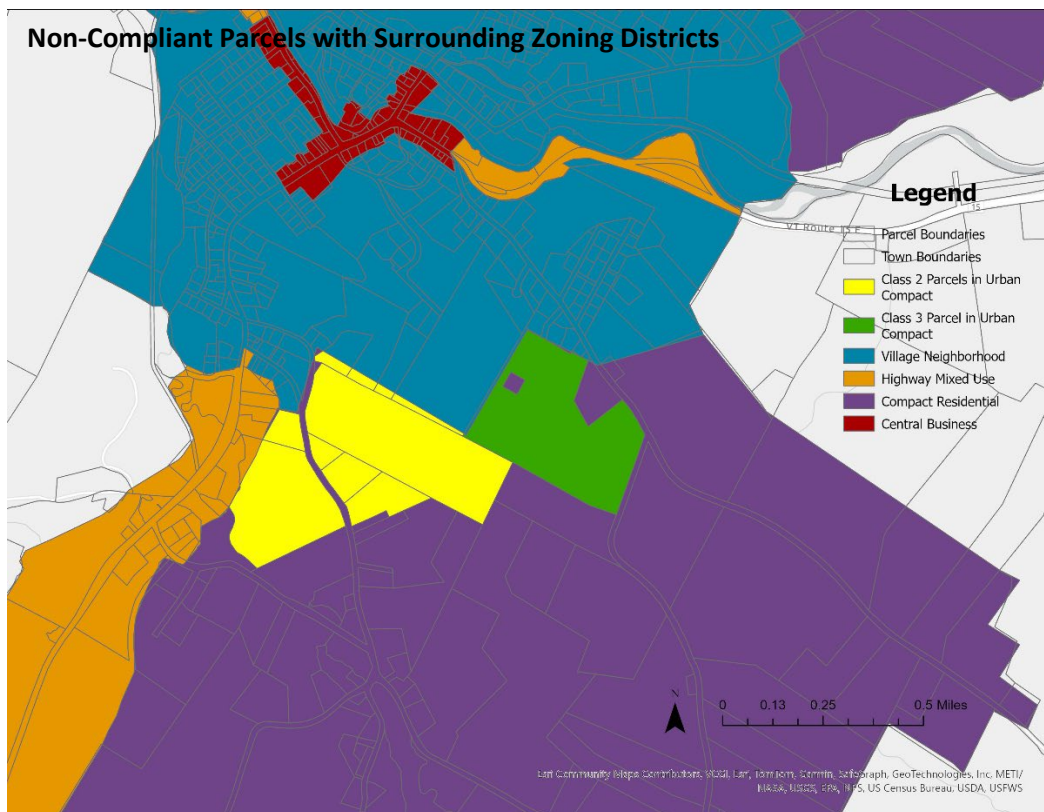
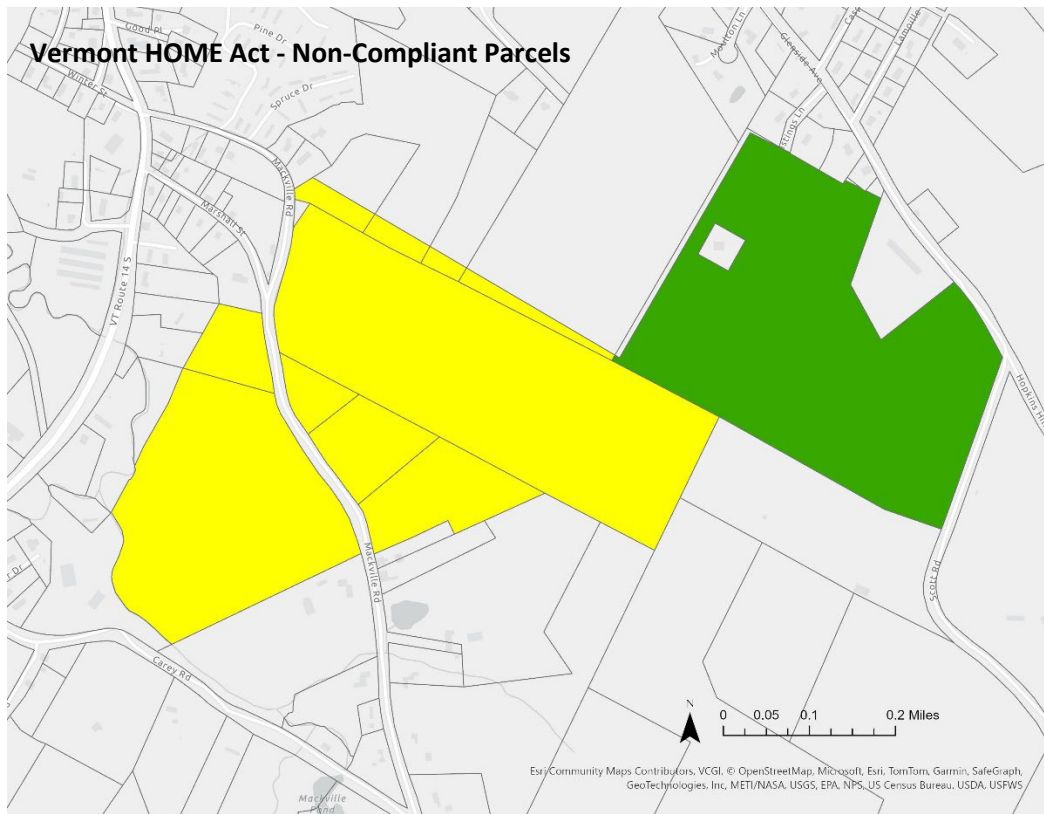
Revisions to 2024 Draft Amendments – Served by water and sewer definition

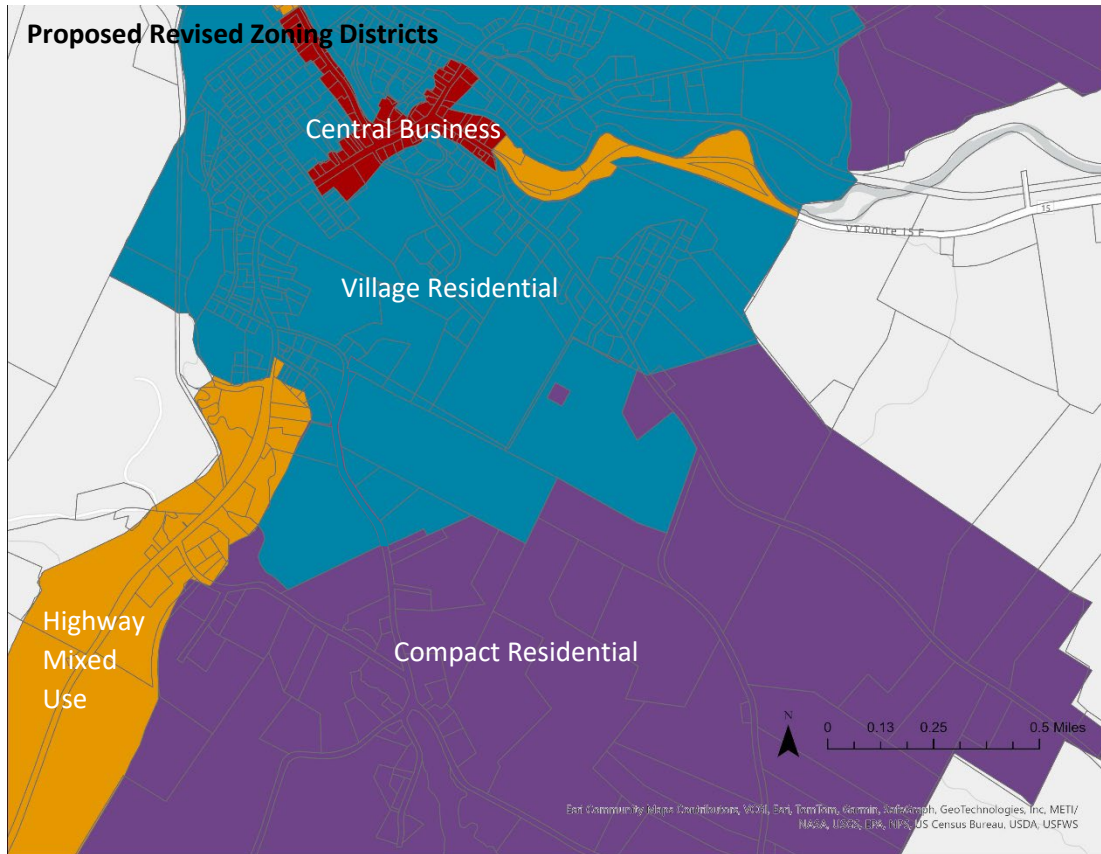
At their March meeting, the Planning Commission charged the consultant and the Zoning Administrator with developing a draft definition of “served by water and sewer” for inclusion in the bylaws. The packet contains the revised draft Updated 2024 Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws with the proposed definition included. This addition and the deletion of the 4.13 (A) (3) mobile home tree requirements are the only additional changes made to this revised draft.

Pursuant to the new definition of “served by water and sewer”, the consultant reviewed the bylaw for inconsistencies with the Vermont HOME Act requirements. There are several Class 2 and Class 3 parcels within the limits of the Urban Compact of Hardwick (2015) in the Compact Residential District (See Map on page 2). These parcels qualify as served by water and sewer; thus they will be held to the statutory requirements of the HOME Act. The dimensional standards for Class 2 and Class 3 parcels in this district do not meet the HOME Act requirement under § 4412:

“(12) In any area served by municipal sewer and water infrastructure that allows residential development, bylaws shall establish lot and building dimensional standards that allow five or more dwelling units per acre for each allowed residential use, and density standards for multiunit dwellings shall not be more restrictive than those required for single-family dwellings.”

The minimum lot size standards for Class 2 (10,000 sf) and Class 3 (30,000 sf) do not allow five or more dwelling units per acre for *each* allowed use. Single family homes are an allowable use and under these standards if parcels were used for single family homes, Class 2 parcels would accommodate 4.3 dwelling units per acre and Class 3 would only allow 1.5 units per acre. Changes will need to be made to ensure compliance. The consultant recommends changing the zoning district for the parcels in question rather than changing the Compact Residential District dimensional standards. The non-conforming parcels would be added to the Village Residential District which is adjacent and more closely mirrors the uses allowable in the Compact Residential District than the other adjacent district - Highway Mixed Use. The following maps illustrate the proposed change. The Planning Commission may choose to revise the Compact Residential dimensional standards if preferred.





Project Timeline and Next Steps

Following the April meeting, the consultant recommends presenting the draft amendments to the Selectboard at their regularly scheduled meeting on April 18th.

The Planning Commission has expressed a preference to hold one public hearing for the bylaw amendments. The proposed date for the hearing is June 11th, 2024, to be followed by two Selectboard public hearings on September 19th and October 17th, 2024. The date for the proposed June 11th public hearing should be formally set by the Planning Commission at their April meeting.