

Village of  
**North Bennington**  
Vermont

1992 MASTER PLAN

Approved August 11, 1992



TRUSTEES:

Elizabeth Boepple, *Chairperson*

Steven Goodrich   Madeline Gratton   Brian Toomey   Thomas Paquin

PLANNING COMMISSION:

Rob McWaters, *Chairperson*

Clenn Frost   Kevan Jones   David Shaughnessy   John Ulrich

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I - II TABLE OF CONTENTS

## III PREFACE

### 1.0 SHORT HISTORY, TODAY, PEOPLE & ECONOMY

- 1.1 Prologue Beginnings In Master Planning
- 1.2 A Short History
- 1.3 The Village Today
- 1.4 The People and Economy
- 1.5 Housing

### 2.0 GOALS

### 3.0 LAND SUITABILITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- 3.1 Surficial Hydrology
- 3.2 Topography-Slope, Ridgelines
- 3.3 Soils and Earth Resources
- 3.4 Scenic Roads, Views, and Walking/Bikeways
- 3.5 Open Space.
- 3.6 Stream Management

### 4.0 LAND USE

- 4.1 Directions For Planning and Policy
- 4.2 Settlement Patterns
- 4.3 Land Use Element, Classification, Policies
- 4.4 Residential Districts and Standards
- 4.5 Commercial District (VC) and Industrial District (VI)
- 4.6 Educational Campus (EC) - Bennington Collage
- 4.7 Flood Hazard Areas (FH)
- 4.8 Shorelands
- 4.9 Historic District
- 4.10 Well Head Protection Area
- 4.11 Agricultural Lands
- 4.12 Historic Waterways
- 4.13 Countryside Cultural-Natural Area
- 4.14 Public, Quasi-Public Recreation Lands

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 5.0 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- 5.1 Roots and Short History
- 5.2 Numbered Structure Identification With  
Historic District Map (April, 1980)

## 6.0 TRANSPORTATION

## 7.0 VILLAGE FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 7.1 Village Government
- 7.2 Education
- 7.3 Recreation
- 7.4 Fire, Police and Emergency Services
- 7.5 Health and Social Services
- 7.6 Solid Waste
- 7.7 Waste Water Facilities and System
- 7.8 Potable Water Supply
- 7.9 North Bennington Village Capital Improvement
- 7.10 Energy Element

## 8.0 MAPS

- 8.1 Village Boundaries, Major Streets and Planning Districts  
(Land Use Plan - Official Map)
- 8.2 Additional Maps Geographical Informational System Generated

### Maps

Water Distribution System  
Waste Water System  
Parcel Tax Map  
Transportation Map  
Natural Areas  
Public Facilities

(Official VT State GIS data and Scales used.)

## **PREFACE**

The purpose of the plan is to provide a comprehensive framework to guide actions, programs, policies and implementing measures. The process leading to its preparation started in October, 1988. Commencing, the numerous subcommittee meetings and planning commission meetings were held to form its contents. An excellent response was received from a public opinion survey and the results incorporated into the plan. Committee members themselves prepared portions of the plan. Village residents provided written statements some of which are directly included. The plan is both a blueprint for the future and a dynamic document over time reflecting change and new conditions. By statute the plan expires every five years and must be reevaluated before readoption. The plan incorporates objectives, statements of policy, and recommendations and provides the foundation for implementing measures.

North Bennington is fortunate to be rich in its people, history, environment and a working village. As stated by one resident, "People and the historic character are uniquely interwoven" and "the character is genuine." \* One goal of the State Planning Act is to maintain the historic settlement pattern of compact villages separated by rural countryside. The North Bennington Plan places special emphasis on these values. The village also recognizes that it has common borders and interests with its neighbors (Bennington Town and Shaftsbury) and its function and relationships to the broader regional context. With or without Act 200, the Village recognizes its responsibilities to its residents and its neighbors. During the course of this planning process many areas were identified that suggest the need for close coordination with Shaftsbury and the Town of Bennington.

In summary no plan is forever and we are not the last generation. Like those before us and hopefully those that follow, residents will take pride in their village and its future.

\*Mrs William "Babs" Scott



## **1.0 SHORT HISTORY, TODAY, PEOPLE & ECONOMY**

### **1.1 PROLOGUE -- BEGINNINGS IN MASTER PLANNING**

In 1966, the Burgess Report, contained in a three volume compendium of facts, figures, charts, maps, recommendations, was commissioned by the Town of Bennington. It focused on Bennington Town. In its day, it was a gold mine of facts, future optimism, and fanciful prose.

In 1970, the Bennington County Regional Planning Commission published *THE REGIONAL PLAN*. To many of us, it was our first real overview of 14 of the 17 Towns within Bennington County. Its scope tied together many of the town plans already existing and suggested ways towns could better meet their individual goals within a regional framework. In 1983, they came out with, *THE REGIONAL PROFILE*, giving us further insights how much we all are dependent on one another for the quantity and quality of life we have, or want to pursue. With the passage in the early 1980's, of the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, Title 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, (ACT 200) tools and direction were added to help the towns and municipalities update their individual Master Plans and zoning bylaws.

When Rural Bennington and the Village of Bennington elected to combine their respective governments, North Bennington decided to retain its own Village Charter.

The original Master Plan of 1973 relied heavily on the 1966 Burgess Reports' description and recommendations for the North Bennington section of the Bennington Town Plan. Some of the people who labored on that earlier version were Fred Welling, as Village Trustee Chairman; and Planning Commissioners Larry Powers, Art Wickenden, Carl Jolivet, Madeline Gratton, and Lionel Nowak. Commissioners, in these earlier times, acted as a dual board, combining the duties of Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The Master Plan was renewed in 1978, 1983 and 1988 with little changed. Some of the original recommendations have come to pass. Others, for one reason or another, were lost or simply not do-able.

We are by Vermont law, required to review, and if necessary, update, and formally re-adopt Master Plans every five years. In October of 1988, a committee of Village residents formed a study group for the purpose of reviewing and rewriting the Master Plan. This Master plan is more comprehensive than earlier ones. The number of extra pages, topics covered, and maps, is an indication on how life has become ever more complicated.

The Committee has met on a regular basis at least once a month and at times more often. It conducted several surveys, a Village's Sunday afternoon get-together to explain our purpose and gain input. Suggestion boxes for comments were placed at several locations. Act 200 originally required that we address 32 areas of concern. That proved too unwieldy, the Legislature later reduced that to twelve. A goodly number of local folks contributed in the makeup of the Master Plan. While they remain anonymous, their efforts were much appreciated by those who persevered with additional countless hours of personal research and report writing and rewriting; without which progress couldn't have been made. David and Jean Aldrich, Julia Randall, Beth Boepple, Meg Woolmington, Marguerite d'Aprile-Smith, Clenn Frost, David Shaughnessy, Ralph Adler, Kevan Jones, Jon Traver, and Rob McWaters.

A very special "Thank You" for efforts beyond the normal course of duties is reserved for the BCRC and its staff: Greg Burke, Executive Director for always being there with his encouragement for constant updates and rewrites, a resourceful person, a Section author, and friend; Colette Galusha, the

interns who did much of the assembly on the computer; and Jim Henderson for pitching in when needed.

## *1.2 A SHORT HISTORY*

Joseph Haviland acquired the Patent on lands surrounding the creek running through North Bennington in 1739. He named it Haviland's Mills and settled the area in 1761. His son-in-law, Moses Sage, denounced him as a Tory in 1776, took over the settlement and renamed it Sage City. The Commissary for Colonel John Stark, fed American troops at the Battle of Bennington, with corn meal ground at the mills on the creek.

The Village prospered. What is now known as Paran Creek (a biblical name) supplied power to more than a dozen mills. Flax, cotton, furniture, carpenter's squares, shoes, soap, shirts, underwear, boilers and dressed marble were made in this Village in the nineteenth century, and well into the twentieth. Stereopticon items, and later, Kiddy Kars were manufactured by the C. L. White Company. Both items brought national recognition to the Village.

In 1852, a devastating flood washed out all the factories along the creek. In addition, a series of equally disastrous fires over the next half century destroyed the other major factories. Some were rebuilt, but the strong industrial base of the Village had already begun to erode and it gradually took on the more residential character it enjoys today. The houses on either side of Main Street were, for the most part, businesses below and residences above.

Hiland Hall, whose grandfather, (Thomas) developed a farm and in 1779, built the farmhouse off Park Street, was elected to the United States Congress in 1830. He was Governor of Vermont 1860-62. His son-in-law, Trenor Park returned to his wife's hometown in 1864. He built a "summer cottage" (Park- McCullough House.) Park also built The Bank, (1864) which he also founded in 1864, the new school on School Street (1870), the Congregational Church (1873), and the Railroad Depot (1880) which he determined to be "the most elegant station in Vermont." Park's son-in-law, John McCullough (Senior), inherited the "summer cottage." He made it his principal residence and became Governor in 1900. The house is presently on the National Register, owned and operated by a nonprofit association, and is open to the public for tours and historical research.

North Bennington is, perhaps, unique in both its political and architectural history. It should be the intent of the Village to retain its inherent vitality without becoming precious or "restored."

## *1.3 THE VILLAGE TODAY*

North Bennington Municipality comprises 2.1 square miles. Today it is a fairly compact and homogeneous complex, centered along Main Street (Routes 67 and 67a), and retaining its largely 19th century residential character. Hinsdillville, at the south end of Water Street, is somewhat isolated from the Village Proper. The Historic District (National Register) includes the heart of the Village along Main, Prospect, Mechanic, Sage, Houghton, Bank, Church, School, and West Streets.

Many factories and mills have been destroyed by fire and flood. Of the survivors, Haviland's Privilege, has been rehabilitated and converted to seven condominiums. The Red Mill, on Pleasant Street, received in 1992, a partial "face lift" and the middle section was torn down and rebuilt following the original design to preserve the outside appearance. The National Hanger complex on Water Street, while in present use, awaits restoration maintenance to improve the quality of the

approach to the Village from the south. In spite of difficulties of adapting modern industry to old industrial buildings, they continue to provide critical industrial employment for area residents. Efforts to establish an historic industrial waterway park and trailway as discussed in Sections 3.6 and 4.5 can significantly improve village quality and minimize loss of these historic resources. The surrounding farms have all disappeared, and old farm and tenant houses are converted to homes. These are being slowly surrounded by suburban sprawl, American Dream Style, i.e., houses of various patterns, materials, size, and price, strung along former dirt roads on lots ranging from one to ten acres, most frequently 1–3 acres. This is the post-war pattern of development all over the U.S., changing our landscape and destroying local ambience. Where allowed to continue, it puts increasing strain on civic resources, ruins the countryside, and endangers the sense of community that was characteristic of New England villages. To alter the pattern of development demands commitment from both private and public sectors. This plan needs to pay special attention to natural resources and policies for their protection.

The Village is in an unique position, situated entirely in the Town of Bennington, bounded on the north by the Town of Shaftsbury. The Village boundary line goes through the middle of Bennington College (eastern side) and the middle of the Scott and former McCullough properties (western side). The Shaftsbury line is just north of the Depot below Hawks Avenue, and cuts across Bank Street extension. In the opposite direction, it bisects a portion of Paran Lake to meet the Bennington Town line. The residents of Harrington Road (Bennington), Harvest Hills (Shaftsbury), Cold Springs Road (Shaftsbury), White Creek Road (Shaftsbury), Corey Drive (Shaftsbury), Paran Acres (Shaftsbury), etc. have direct ties to North Bennington; they use the Post Office, and children attend North Bennington school. The municipal/town line (North Bennington-Shaftsbury Town) does, at times, seem unrealistic, but legal hurdles discourage efforts to make changes. However it has, and continues to be demonstrated that practical and mutually beneficial cooperation does exist in solving problems as they occur. The sharing of road crews and equipment on occasion and the shoreline protection efforts for Lake Paran are good examples. Further suggestions as to how we deal with preserving open spaces would further relate as to how each municipality zones abutting lands.

The Planning Commission sought and received many comments for the plan. One in particular seemed to summarize the special quality of the Village today. As one longtime resident wrote.\* *"The strength of North Bennington over the years is that it has always had a mix of residential and small business – in a rather helter skelter way. It has made for a strong feeling of community. For instance, when I was a kid, there was a number of key places: Railroad Station; Morrissey's short order soda fountain/candy/poolroom (present Villager Restaurant); Sheperds' Store to Powers and Robinson; Ed Nash's blacksmith shop; White's Hotel; Percey's Newsroom and cab service; second floor of the Bank for movies and amateur theatrical, etc."* The letter goes on: *"Obviously trying to duplicate the past would not work, but when I look at the way the pattern interwove the people of our small community. It suggests that there might be some good contemporary applications. North Bennington's focus should be on the small, of all kinds!"*

\* Mrs William "Babs" Scott

Today, several factors give North Bennington an unusually genuine and cohesive environment as a "working" village: (1) its surviving nineteenth century architectural theme that exerts a strong sense of its original character, (2) the relative absence of recent intrusions to the historical character, (3) the sympathetic adaptation of several pivotal buildings to compatible contemporary uses, (4) the compact mix, (5) the "waterways" and old mills, (6) large and small open spaces for active and passive recreation, (7) the high utilization of buildings which contribute to the economic and social vibrancy of the Village, and (8) the contrast of the countryside relatively undeveloped and still having key open lands such as the Park-McCullough House and environs and the campus at Bennington College.

#### **1.4 THE PEOPLE AND ECONOMY**

##### ***Employment:***

In 1980, the Village provided residence to 729 employed persons, of which 90% worked in Bennington County. 85% of the employed worked less than 19 minutes from their residences. The greatest percentage of the work force by occupation was in professional and managerial areas, followed by administrative services. The top five industrial classifications for employment included, in order: (1) Educational Services, (2) Manufacturing, (3) Retail Trade, (4) Health Services, and (5) Construction. The largest employer is Bennington College with 250 equivalent full time employees.

##### ***Population Trends – 1970, 1980, 1985, 1990:***

Between 1970 and 1980 the population increased by 9.1%, adding approximately 141 residents. It is estimated that an additional 69 residents were added between 1980–85. The 1990 Census showed a drop to 1520 residents, a decrease of 165 or 9.8%. The recent rate of growth is less than the Town, and less than the Region. The Village population appears to fluctuate as a percentage of the total Town population for the past twenty years. The fluctuations may be tied to Bennington College enrollments when the Census are taken. The College enrollment in 1980 was 594, in 1990 it was 581. This is of serious consequence to the Village when computing Federal and State Financial Aid since the College Campus is not a taxpayer. The Village of North Bennington is also bordered by Shaftsbury to the north which has experienced considerable residential growth. Except when looking at a map, it is hard to distinguish between some of the Village and Town of Shaftsbury properties. It is estimated that there are 450 residents in Shaftsbury that immediately adjoin North Bennington Village. When considering the capacity of the North Bennington Graded School (K–6), consideration must be given to population growth in the Village and adjacent town areas. The 1988–89 enrollment was 147 and Shaftsbury has been roughly 40% of this amount, but this percent will continue to increase.

##### ***Age Composition:***

The median age of Village residents in 1990 was 23.6 yrs. The residency figure of 1520 people breaks down to 658 males, 862 females. A part of this division could be attributed to Bennington College enrollments. According to 1990's Census, 17% of the population is under 18 and 83% from 18 to over 85 yrs of age. Within the 2.1 square miles of the Municipality. The density rate is 723.8 people per square mile.

### Population Projections:

If you use the official census figures indicated below, the rate of growth was 702 individuals between 1970 and 1980 indicating a growth rate of 42%. The 1990 Census indicated a population of 1,520, down from the 1980 figure of 1,686. That is a decrease of (9.8%) from 1980. It would appear numbers can be deceiving. In 1990, North Bennington represented 9.2% of the Town population, the Village population projections for the future cannot be reasonably ascertained. Planning for future growth in a small place like North Bennington, it is difficult since small absolute increases/decreases in population may have greater implications on our small area. The availability of land for future growth is also a factor, as is the conversion of older homes to house more residents. The land use section of the plan will take into account any changes in land use regulations for consistency with the projected growth rate.

TOTAL POPULATION					% of Change
	1960	1970	1980	1990	1980 - 1990
North Bennington	1,437	984	1,686	1,520	(9.8%)
Bennington Town					
(includes Villages)	13,002	14,586	15,815	16,451	4.0%
State of Vermont	389,881	444,732	511,456	562,758	9.1%
North Bennington					
as percentage of Town)	11.9%	6.7%	10.7%	9.2%	(1.5%)
Sources: 1980 and 1990 Census; Vermont Dept. of Health; BCRC Regional Plans— 1970					
1983, 1992					
Note: Since 1950, the College students have been counted as residents in the area					
in which they were living while attending College.					

Sources quoted all indicate the various decade (1960 thru 1990) U.S. Census Reports as the base for their figures. However, in their own reports they come up with different numbers. The reliability of the 1990 Census had been disputed. The Census Bureau in 1991 refused to review their original Report.

### 1.5 HOUSING

Housing Units increased by approximately 73 units between 1980-87 (16.2%): 34 single family and 39 units in structures with more than one dwelling unit. The multi-family units represent conversions of existing dwellings for the most part with the exception of a new 21 units elderly housing project, (Homestead Mews, 4 buildings), built in early 1980s. The composition of housing as stated above is now in question when compared with the official 1990 Census. On site inspections do indicate housing growth. Further summarization continues in paragraphs below Housing Comparison Chart.

## ESTIMATED HOUSING COMPOSITION

### 1987 - 1990 U.S. CENSUS HOUSING COMPOSITION COMPARISONS

Housing Type	Total Housing Units 1987	Total Housing Units 1990	% of Total 1987	% of Total 1990
Detached	297	264	56.6	60.4
2 Dwelling Units	88	79	16.8	18.1
3 & 4 DU	71	44	13.5	10.1
5 or more DU	51	24	9.7 ( 1 )	5.5
Mobile Homes	18	18	3.4	4.1
Summer & "Other"	0	8	0	1.8
Total:	525	437	100%	100%

( 1 ) Difference between 1987 and 1990 may have been due to a discrepancy in counting of units in a elderly housing project.

Determining a annual housing growth rate is difficult since the 1990 Census indicates actual housing to be less than in 1980 and 1987.. Also the population decreased as a percentage of the Town (1.9% ). Small numbers can lead to wide swings in projections. Bennington College students have previously been included in people counts. As of 1990 the College enrollment has decreased. Population number would have wide swings depending on enrollment in the year of the Census count.. A growth rate projection would probably be a small positive number as building in the community is apparent judging from the Permits being issued. Rental units in 1990 represent approximately 35% of the Total units, that is: 151 rental units of 437 total. The average person per unit was 2.6 in 1987 and 3.65 in 1990. Forty three of the rentals fall within or close to the gross median rent figure. Median gross rent for a 2-bedroom house in 1980 was \$250. In 1987 the same unit with some utilities (Heat & hot water.) was \$400.. The 1990 Census, figures indicate a rental unit range from \$250 to \$999.00. The median figure given is \$368.00, (2-bedroom unit). The disparate dollar range is influenced by location, square footage, and supplied / non supplied utilities.

An effort was undertaken in 1983 to assess the potential for a housing rehabilitation program in North Bennington. Part One of the survey conducted at that time identified 38 structures having substandard conditions in one or more of these areas: roof, foundation, exterior walls, porch, and windows. Part Two of the survey included door-to-door surveys of the same structure/units based on the survey format provided by the Agency of Development and Community Affairs. A 73.7% response (28 surveys) was obtained from the pre-identified 38 structures. Based on units/households, the survey response was approximately 50%. It demonstrated that 64.3% of the households would be eligible for assistance. The total identified need for housing rehabilitation is 41 units in 24 structures. Efforts should continue to secure Grants to upgrade older housing stock in the Village, which would have the added benefit of maintaining the historic qualities of some of the structures as well.

## **2.0 GOALS**

Desired development should be guided by The Village Master Plan as approved by the voters, by Planning Commission Site Reviews and the continued evaluation of Zoning By-laws of the Village. It is important that Village residents know, or have available for reference, Village laws, Ordinances, Master Plan, and Zoning Bylaws. Current copies will be available at the Village Depot Office, and the Village Library.

The purpose of this section is to provide a overview and sense of direction of community interest and concern. The Goals enumerated are the result of expressed public opinion, select surveys, and a support committee of interested citizens and as modified through public hearings. They will also serve as benchmarks to evaluate progress and provide foundations to other recommendations and policies of this plan.

### **Goals As Projected:**

1. The Village should concentrate on improvements to existing facilities, namely, sidewalks, roads, storm sewers, water system, rather than expansion.
2. Continue co-operation with the Town of Bennington regarding upgrading or potential expansion in the sanitary sewer system.
3. Continue the policy of providing public and continued encouragement of privately reserved open spaces. This includes a range from a mini-park in the higher density areas, to larger conservation and open space areas in the rural sections of the Village.
4. Restore and maintain sidewalks in the Village that have been lost to expanded street paving, parking, and traffic. Encourage the expansion of pedestrian sidewalks in the built-up portion of the Village. In regards to the remaining marble slab walks, repair or, if feasible replace slabs. A suggestion would be to combine good slabs from the Village walkways needing extensive work and utilizing usable stone elsewhere.
5. Take advantage of the semi-public ownership character (industrial, educational, highway) of the banks of Paran Creek and the Walloomsac River; by providing bank improvements, landscaping, a Greenways trail system, including easy public access.
6. Provide performance standards to preclude and alleviate existing environmental pollution.
7. Maximize citizen participation in the planning and zoning process by direct notification to affected parties, interested or concerned residents, and adjoining property owners to a project which may affect them.
8. If adequate water supply is available, permit water taps for individual properties, but not for subdivisions or properties that would consume a disproportionate amount for the property size.
9. Consider how we shall maintain, or permit altering the mix and existing settlement patterns of residential, small businesses, and public facilities in the Village which have contributed to a strong feeling of community, individual character, and scale
10. The future focus of business should be on a small scale of all types and specialties compatible with the village environment and life style.
11. A priority focus is to retain open land and the good agricultural land especially in the current VR-40 Districts. To achieve open space protection, the plan provides for reconsideration of

- density, identification of resource potential, land suitability for specific development, allowable clustering to maximize open space protection. Other measures include working with owners of larger parcels to prepare alternative site plans and the use of land trust techniques.
12. Establish a series of overlay zones (resource protection, scenery, fragile areas, land suitability, etc.) and policies for their protection.
  13. Adopt subdivision regulations requiring good site planning and engineering standards. (We now utilize Town of Bennington guidelines. We may consider having a different philosophical approach.) At a minimum, identify major development projects requiring special review procedures. (Act 250, soil and water testing, etc.).
  14. Reassess the status of the Lake Paran shoreland protection zone to ensure protection of the shoreline and recreation/scenic values of the lake. Coordinate with other municipalities bylaws and regulations. (Actually very little of Lake Paran shoreline is within North Bennington.)
  15. Protect and maintain current recreational resources and expand opportunities for access and views along greenways/waterways.
  16. Provide special designation of resources and areas that have special values such as: Historic-cultural, scenic roads and areas, open land, natural areas, wildlife habitat, stream banks and shorelines, water supply - water sheds, sensitive areas, etc.
  17. Maintain the historical and architectural heritage of the Village and encourage preservation of structures and places. Adaptive reuse should be sensitive to historic and architectural quality.
  18. Future land use and development must take into account the affect on natural and historic resources identified.
  19. Encourage full utilization of industrial space and avoid undue impacts such as noise, emissions, odor, light and glare, traffic and parking, waste disposal, etc. Consideration should be given to protection and enhancement of historic waterways and associated natural resources if in nearby proximity.
  20. Allow provision for affordable housing commensurate with the Village needs and consistent with the scale of housing in the village.
  21. Public/Quasi-Public investments should coincide with the existing settlement pattern and avoid scattered growth and uneconomical provision of services.
  22. Special attention should be given to the retention of the distinctive edge separating the built up portions of the Village from the rural countryside.
  23. Encourage intermunicipal coordination and cooperation of mutual planning interests with the Towns of both Bennington and Shaftsbury.
  24. Provide facilities and services within the existing and financial capability of the Village. Avoid a rate of growth or location of growth which burdens the ability to provide facilities and services.
  25. Encourage the use of renewable energy resources and, when appropriate encourage the siting and placement of structures for solar access. To encourage recycling, and reduction of the solid waste stream.
  26. Education. Educational prerogatives and direction are more properly left in the hands of the local School Board. Concurrently with the writing and review of this Master Plan version (1992),

the School Board, and its Committees, are conducting their own investigations regarding facilities and future direction. Section 7.2 EDUCATION, Gives a broad view.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That the Trustees be encouraged at each annual meeting to submit for voter approval, their recommendations for the upcoming year, as to any proposed improvements pertaining to municipal services and their costs, as outlined in this Section This is not meant to suggest that every goal or all portions of a specific goal under consideration has to be completed in any one year, but rather to establish an ongoing pattern of continued improvement of the infrastructure in all sectors of our Community.

## **3.0 LAND SUITABILITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **3.1 SURFICIAL HYDROLOGY**

Principal water bodies include Lake Paran, Paran Creek with its four mill ponds, a short stretch of the Walloomsac River, and Wetlands identified in the National Wetlands Inventory. There are several seasonal runoff streams.

#### **A. Lake Paran: (Also see Sections 3.6, and 7.3)**

Lake Paran is bordered by the Village of North Bennington, and the Towns of Bennington and Shaftsbury. Lake Paran was originally a natural lake. Its' shape, surface and depth were defined by natural land contours, and silting. The present lake was created with the building of the railroad dam in 1850. It now has a surface area of 36 acres, and the elevation at MSL is 647 feet. Lake Paran is a regulated water body in that the Water Resources Board prohibited boats powered by motors effective July 14, 1980. The present use is for swimming, fishing, boating and ice skating. It is estimated that 2/3rds of the lake is infested with Eurasian Milfoil, a non-native aquatic plant. Needless to say, Eurasian Milfoil threatens the value and use of Lake Paran. Aquatic nuisance control for this species is a high priority. Shoreland protection, not only from a aesthetic viewpoint, but to avoid other sources of pollution and erosion, and to maintain water quality, is equally important. The Shoreland protection zones adopted by North Bennington Village and the Towns of Bennington and Shaftsbury is a positive step to protect water quality. However, additional build-out of the shoreline from an aesthetic viewpoint can threaten the natural setting of the lake. Maintenance of water quality of the head waters of Paran Creek above the lake is also important to the overall water protection strategy.

#### **B. Paran Creek - Walloomsac River: (Also see section 3.6)**

Paran Creek is the primary tributary to Lake Paran. The creek rises in the northeastern part of Shaftsbury, east of Trumbull Mountain. There is also a large tributary from West Mountain in Shaftsbury. In North Bennington the creek flows southward from the lake through four mill ponds: Upper Mill Pond, Grist Mill Pond, Cushman Pond, and Polygraphic Pond. A study of Vermont Rivers (Vermont Natural Resources Agency, and the National Park Service) recognizes special values for both wildlife habitat and historical - archaeological sites. The historic value is especially evident with the series of mill ponds and dams. Restoration of the Stark Paper Mill (former Grist Mill) into condominium apartments, and conversion of the Walbridge Red Mill on the opposite bank, (it is a hand rug weaving establishment today)

portrays the historic, scenic, and educational values of the Creek environment. Retention and improvement of the quality of the built and man-made environment along the creek is a formidable task well worth pursuing. In recognition of these special qualities, Section 4.11 further incorporates Historic Waterways (HW) and suggests imposing an overlay district on the planning map to encourage restoration, improvement and preservation.

North Bennington has approximately 3,500 feet of frontage along the northern edge of the Walloomsac. Like Lake Paran, the Walloomsac has special natural, historic, and archaeological values. A portion of the area along the river is also designated as a flood plain. (see Section 4.6). Although the frontage is relatively small, it represents a link in a continuum for a greenway along the Walloomsac in the Town and Village.

C. *Wetland: (Wet Soils) (Also see Section 3.6)*

Wetlands are generally characterized by hydrophytic vegetation and hydric soils. The source of information for wetlands in North Bennington includes the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife Wetland Inventory, and U.S. Soil Conservation Service Soils Maps. The maps serve as a guide for wetland locations, but site evaluation is necessary to more accurately identify the perimeter of influence. Wetlands border Lake Paran, Paran Creek and its mill ponds, Walloomsac River, and in other low lying areas such as: Bennington College, College Road, Both north and south sides of Overlee Road following Vermont Railroad's track bed, and Mattison Road. Recent state law and this plan advocate the protection of wetlands. A more detailed assessment will be necessary to determine the values in each case, should modifications, filling in, draining, etc. be undertaken.

### 3..2 *TOPOGRAPHY -- SLOPES. RIDGELINES*

Slopes with grades of 20% or more were mapped for the entire Village at 1"=400' with five foot contour intervals. Slopes in this range are considered to pose severe limitations for construction. The largest area identified is at the southern end and west of Park Street. Other areas to a much lesser degree, but equally important, include: Lake Paran, western border of Bennington College near Paran Creek, and a section sandwiched between Park and Water Street running north and south. Ridges and ridge lines are not visibly apparent from within the Village. However, from certain distant viewing points the natural hillsides and tops are quite visible. The highest elevation near the lower part of Park Street is 824 feet. (presently the William and Paul Scott property.) The undulating open and wooded terrain in the more rural areas creates a more subtle type of ridge and land profile. In both cases the siting of new construction, utilities, etc. need to be sensitive to visual change, especially from important vantage points (Austin Hill, Murphy Road).

### 3..3 *SOILS AND EARTH RESOURCES*

Tables for the types and characteristics of soils are include at the end of this Section. The U. S. Soil Conservation Service is the source of the information. Original maps are of a approximate scale of

1"=1200' and are included but reduced to fit plan page format. Map(s) information included are:

SOIL TYPES BASE MAPS: (showing specific overlays)

PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL SOILS MAP - illustrates large areas along West Street, River Road (Harrington), College Road, Mechanic Street, and Mattison Road.

BUILDING CONSTRAINTS MAP - includes slight, moderate, and severe categories. For construction the severe rating translates into special engineering, design, construction, and maintenance cost, and potential adverse environmental impacts

SAND AND GRAVEL MAP - illustrates the potential for sand and gravel sites. Much of the area shown for sand and gravel is already developed.

WET SOILS MAP - and SCS Classification includes poorly and very poorly drained soils, flooded soils, and water bodies.

*Soils information provides guidance for overall growth and density and, subject to site verification, individual site development potential.*

-----

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE  
SOIL SURVEY LEGEND FOR NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

MAPPING  
UNIT  
SYMBOL

MAPPING UNIT NAME

18 - B,C	Windsor loamy fine sand
21 - A	Limerick silt loam
22	Histosols and Aquents, nearly level
23	Histosols and Aquents, nearly level
24 - A	Carlisle mucky peat
25 - A,B	Belgrade silt loam
26 - A	Raynham silt loam
27	Udipsamments and Udorthents
28	Udifluvents, loamy - skeletal
29	Occum fine sandy loam
30 - B	Danforth gravelly fine sandy loam
34	Pootatuck fine sandy loam
40 - B,D	Galway-Nellis-Farmington Complex
42 - C	Macomber-Taconic Complex, rocky
43 - C,D	Macomber-Taconic Complex, very rocky
63 - A	Combine with 26-A, Raynham silt loam
64 - B,C,D	Stockbridge silt loam, stony
65 - C	Stockbridge silt loam, very stony

66 - A,B,C	Georgia loam, stony
67 - A,B,C	Georgia loam, very stony
69 - B	Massena silt loam, very stony
70 - A,B,C,D,E	Groton gravelly fine sandy loam
71 - A	Hero gravelly fine sandy loam
80 - C,D	Combine with 42, Macomber-Taconic Complex
84 - B,C,D	Nellis silt loam, stony
86 - B	Amenia silt loam, stony
87 - A	Amenia silt loam, very stony
88 - A,B	Combine with 68, Massena silt loam, stony
89 - A	Combine with 69, Massena silt loam, very stony
91 - C,D	Combine with 41, Galway-Farmington Complex, very rocky

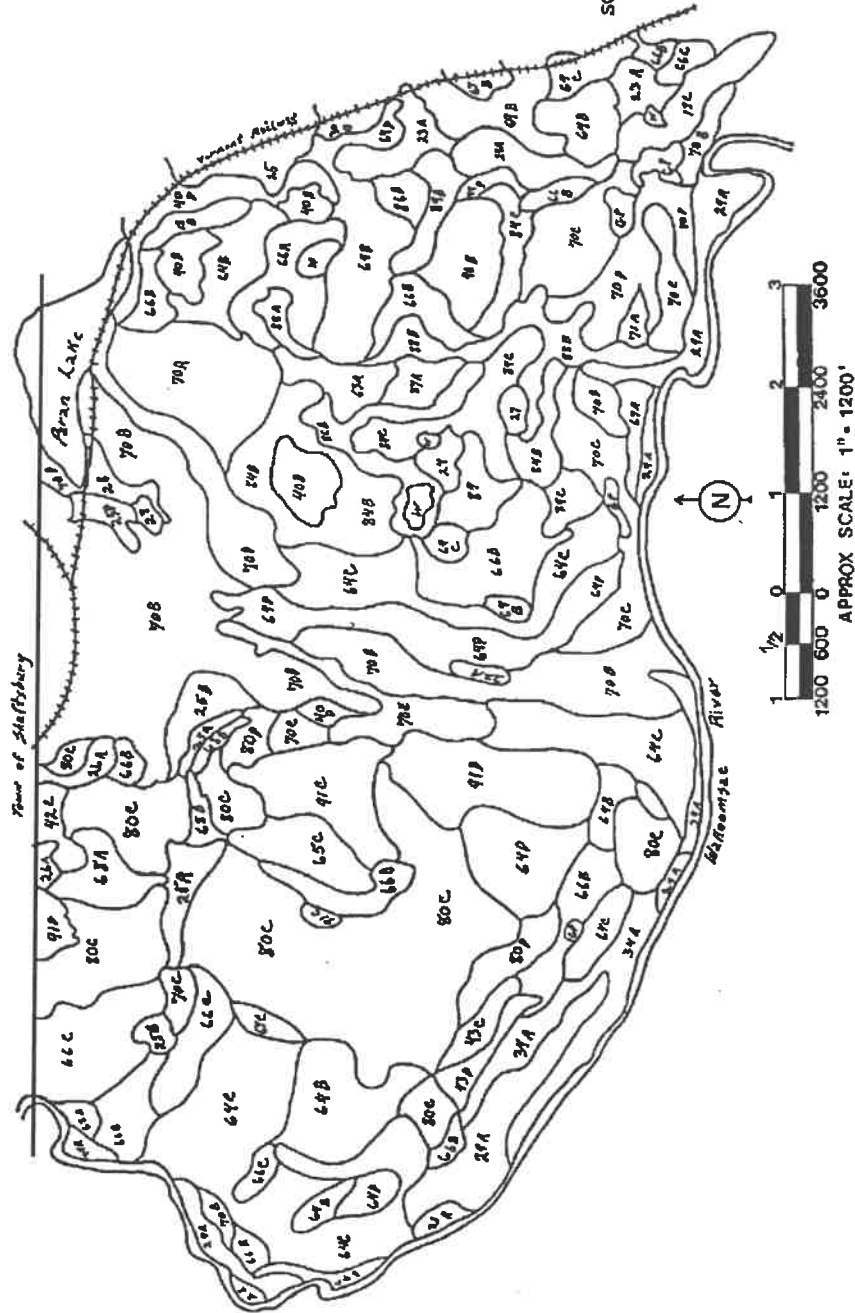
MAP SOIL SYMBOL	FLOOD PLAIN SOILS	SOIL LIMITATIONS FOR DWELLINGS WITH BASEMENTS*			PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL SOILS & SLOPES
		SLIGHT	MODERATE	SEVERE	
18		B	B		C
21	X			ALL	
22	X			ALL	
23	X			ALL	
24				ALL	
25				ALL	
26				ALL	A, B, C
27		Requires on-site evaluation			
28	X			ALL	
29	X			ALL	
30		B			
34	X			ALL	
40				ALL	
42				ALL	B
43				ALL	
63				ALL	
64		B	C	D	B, C
65		B	C	D	B, C
66				D	A, B, C
67				ALL	
69				ALL	
70		A,B	C	D,E	A, B
71				ALL	A, B
80				ALL	
84		B	C	D	B, C
86				ALL	
87				ALL	
88				ALL	
89				ALL	
91				ALL	

\* All soils have been rated severe for septic tank absorption fields, however various engineering and site design techniques may be employed to overcome these limitations.

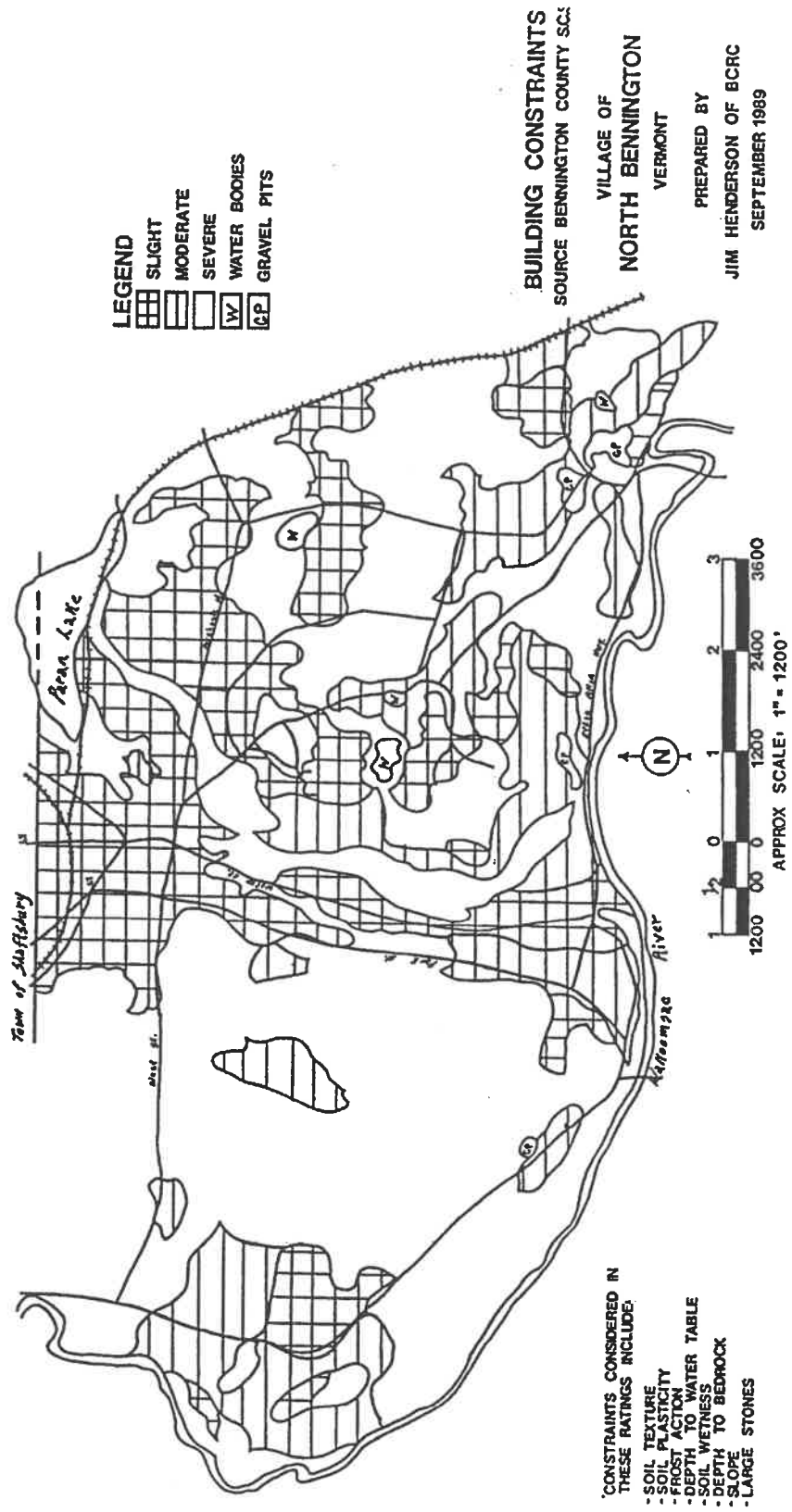
BASE SOILS  
SOURCE: BENNINGTON COUNTY SCS.

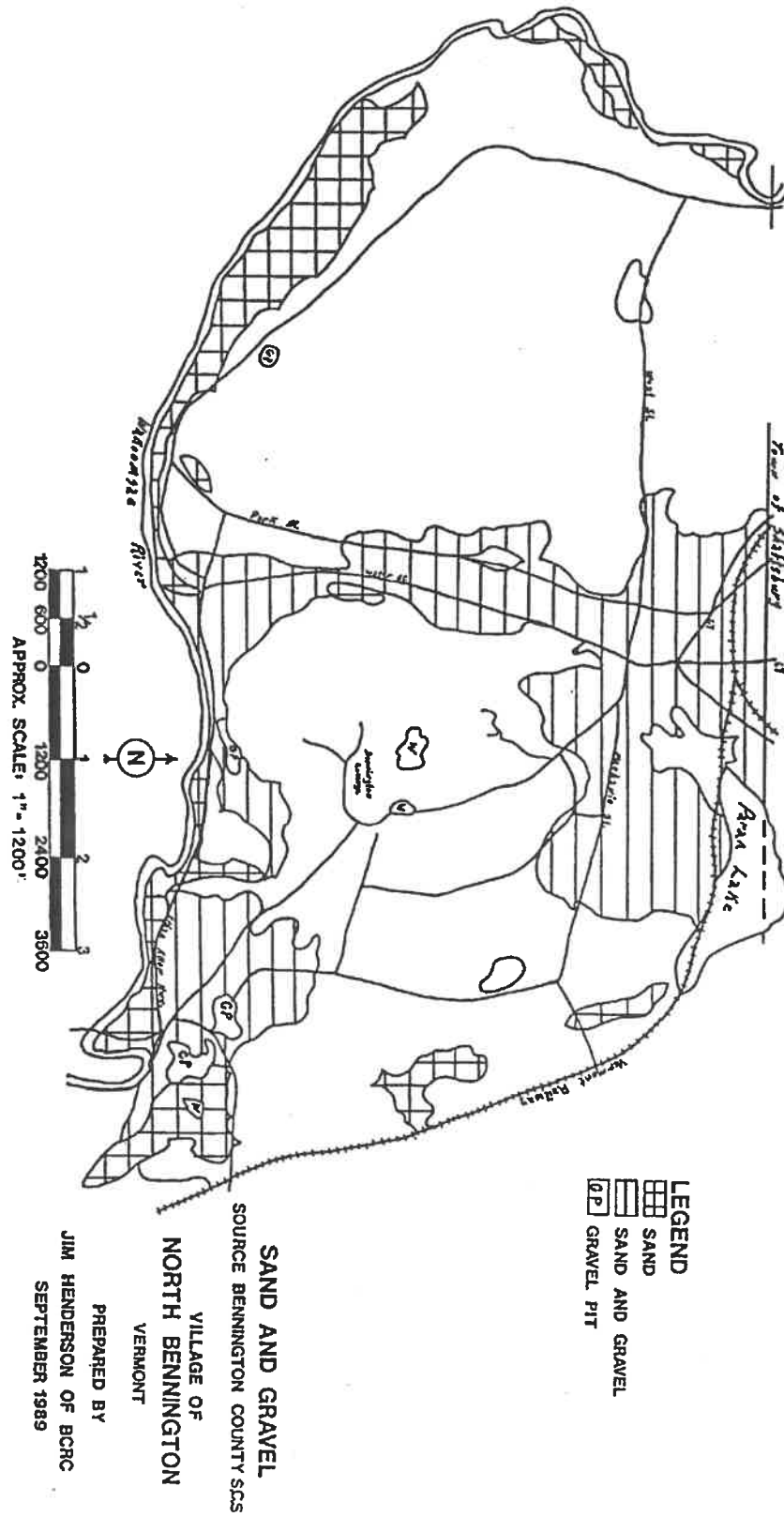
VILLAGE OF  
NORTH BENNINGTON  
VERMONT

PREPARED BY  
JIM HENDERSON OF BORC  
SEPTEMBER 1989

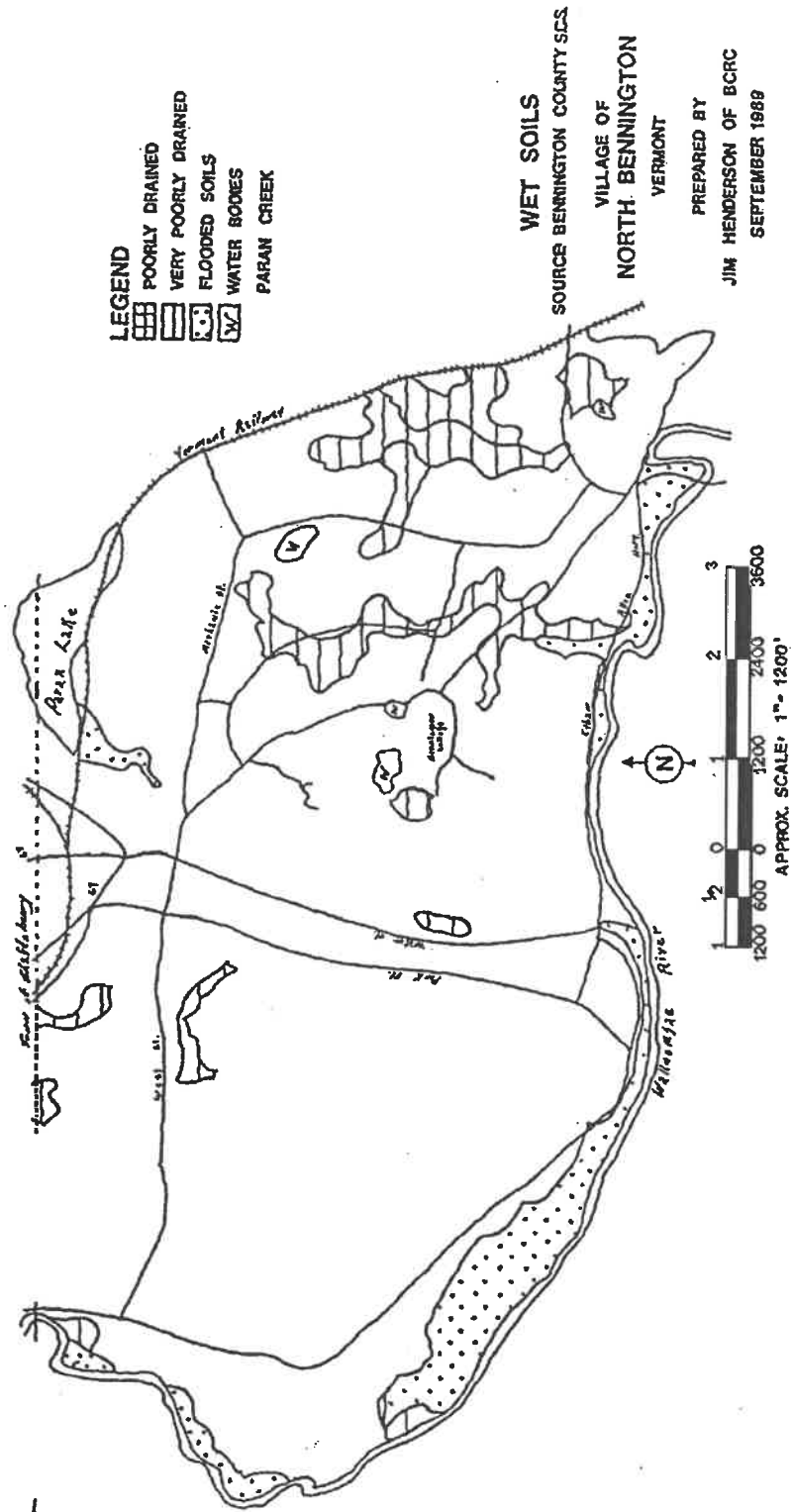








Village of North Bennington -- Master Plan 1992-1997



### **3.4 SCENIC ROADS, VIEWS, AND WALKWAYS/BIKEWAYS**

**Scenic Roads:** On March 13, 1990, the Village Trustees approved the designation Scenic Road to the following.

**1. Park Street running south from West Street to River Road.**

Park Street is the only dirt surfaced road left within the confines of North Bennington. The Trustees also approved maintenance, and improvements such as ditching, regrading and installation of new culverts. Such improvements when done, must bear in mind, the scenic and historical character of that stretch of road as a thoughtful reminder to our past. Traveling north from the southern end of Park Street, the western side of the road, is bordered by the steep wooded slope of the William/Paul Scott property, leading to the lands and remaining farm buildings of the Kenneth Nolan property and, finally to the stone-walled lawns of the Park-McCullough Historical Association's holdings. The eastern side of Park Street from its southern beginnings starts with wooded lands until the junction with Hillside Street. Thereafter more dwellings become apparent. As the road travels north, the downward slope of the land on the eastern side of the road becomes more pronounced. Established homes, some erected in the 1950s, several from earlier times, plus more recent construction, dot the eastern side of the road. Continuing north, next comes land known as "The Night Pasture," formerly part of the large Hall Farm holdings. This has passed into new ownership (1990. R. Pembroke Jr.). Deed restrictions limit construction on this land to only one dwelling and the balance kept to agricultural use. Finally, approaching the juncture with West Street, the buildings of the Former Prospect School. These buildings are now used by United Counseling Service of Bennington to run "Head Start" Early Childhood programs add their charm and character.

**2. Knapp Road running west from the intersection of Park street to the Town of Bennington boundary.**

Knapp Road has been blacktop paved for many years. It is a continual link with Park Street and Harrington road, for walking, jogging and, as a bike pathway around that tract of land locally known as the Hall Park McCullough farm property. Traveling West, Knapp Road is bordered on its southernly side, by a stone-wall area of the Park-McCullough Historical property, then John McCullough's home and lands then flowing into open lands still within the Village and exiting into Bennington Town. The northerly side of the road starts with land owned by William Scott, (Paralleling the Park McCullough Historical House property on the eastern side of the road.) adjoining next is Carl Jolivette's/ M.Manning's open land then spaced along its remaining length within the Village, six dwellings toward the Bennington Town boundary. This "trail" continues to be enjoyed by all generations of North Bennington residents.

While the above named roads have some protection under the scenic designation, there are other areas within the Village that are worthy of consideration and protection. College Road, with its college swamp, smaller wetland areas. Wetlands bordering the Village boundary stemming from Lake Paran along the railroad bed leading to Bennington Village, are havens for much small wildlife and flora.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Protection in these areas, if deemed desirable, must include concerned property owners and complimentary zoning bylaws. Presently, much of the land under consideration here is in VR20 and VR 40 designations. Perhaps it's worthwhile to consider additional or redesignate zoning. Consideration of the larger tracts, to be zoned/rezoned as VR 50 or RC (Rural Conservation.) One rationale for considering VC 50 and RC zones is the limited future ability of the Village to extend and supply adequate municipal services for higher population density.

It is appropriate to refer here also to Section 3.2 Topography - Slope, Ridgelines in discussions of esthetic values.

### **3.5 OPEN SPACE**

#### *Public Open Land Availability*

The continual improvement of Village public lands for the use and enjoyment of its residents.

Although the Village has public open spaces, some are not clearly defined nor particularly inviting. The addition of trees, shrubs, and simple benches would encourage their use as well as enhance the Village as a whole.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

We would propose a planned improvement schedule, phased over ten years, with yearly phases proposed for voter approval at the annual Village meeting under Capital Improvements Planning by the Board of Trustees.

1. *Lincoln Square.* It does not appear to be a "square" and the traffic pattern is confusing as well as dangerous. A study should be undertaken to determine if a redesign of the Square is feasible, and the probable impact on this area of the Village.
2. *Depot and Village Office* At the other end of the Village Center, the Depot has been well landscaped, (Needs upkeep.) but the public land to the east ignored. The Depot could be visually connected to the playground on Houghton Street by the extension of lawn and trees along Depot Street.
3. *Paran Creek at the Firehouse* The small triangular plot on the Creek's Eastern shore should be landscaped and benches installed. Simultaneously, the lot to the West of the old firehouse on the South side of Prospect Street needs clearer definition as to borders. Plantings and a bench or two would indicate public access to the river.
4. *Paran Lake* Although the space around the swimming access to Lake Paran is privately administered, it is a natural resource of great value to the Village. Well-designed plantings of trees and shrubs on the hillside above the lake and around the parking area should continue to be encouraged. Development and protection of Paran Lake has to be done on conjunction with the Town of Shaftsbury. Their proposed 1990 Master Plan under Section 5.2 Natural Resources show similar concerns.

5. *Welling Field* The access road, fishing/boat ramp area could be considered in further park style landscaping. Paran Creek from the dam base to Sage Street bridge would make a worthwhile first stage walking, bicycle, trailway. Further down in time a continuation of this trailway alongside the Paran creek utilizing both public and private land, extending the path to the Walloomsac, with an extension to the Burt Henry bridge. However, while the Planning Commission is actively encouraging a Green Trail philosophy, it should be clearly understood that private property owners shall be actively involved in any study of projected green pathways and they shall be contacted to gauge their interest and willingness. It is not the purpose here to imply a roughshod treatment toward anyone's property rights.
6. *A Design Study* To improve the intersection of Main and Bank Street.
7. *General Tree Planting* While there is no space between curb and sidewalk on most village streets, homeowners should be encouraged to join in a unified planting on the inside of the sidewalks. In 1991, the Trustees, in cooperation with the Town of Bennington, planted 17 trees within the Village. This was under a Federal SPA Grant. In the 1992 Federal defense budget, additional grant money is available. It is hoped we are able to continue with this program. There are organizations dedicated to reintroducing disease resistant American Chestnut and Elm, which could return some splendor to the Village scene.
8. *Signs* Simple signs should be posted at the Village limits to identify its boundaries and to aid travelers.

### *Rural Open Space*

In May, 1989 an inventory of open land, use and acreage, was obtained from the Listers office in the Town. Without consideration to development potential or plans for future use, open land was simply divided by zoning requirements for the areas to determine housing units. The results for some of the areas follow: College Road - 40 units; Harlan Road - 28 units; Mattison Road - 129 units; Mechanic Street - 100 units; Park Street - 250 units, (total-547 units). While these projections may never come to pass, it serves to illustrate the potential for change and would undoubtedly impact many of the goals the Master Plan advocates. Some of the larger parcels are located along Mattison Road, Park Street, River Road (to the Town line), and West Road. In order to protect many of the values advocated by the plan, several sections articulate policies. Additionally Section 4.0 identifies many special overlay districts which provide an additional set of values for a particular area. These are to be taken into account for future growth and can be encompassed as part of the zoning bylaws. The concept of "net" density is also provided so that land development is logically fitted to land suitability and resource values. Early in 1992 former McCullough Farmlands bordering Knapp Road were further sub divided. Several parcels were acquired by a local resident, also the "McCullough Woods" came under Land Trust protection. While the Deeds are heavily restricted, it is a indication that people, as private citizens, take very seriously the preservation of the Village's open lands.

### 3.6 STREAM MANAGEMENT

While the Village of North Bennington does not have a extensive network of rivers and streams within its borders, attention should be given to several areas of potential concern.

The Walloomsac River, for a short distance, is the southern boundary of the Village. The riverbank, land currently owned by Chemical Fabrics Corp., was in previous years used as a dumping ground by the Polygraphic Company of America for old wood skids, paper bailing wire, old inks cans and miscellaneous metal discards. A monitoring system should be established to alert to any possible leaching of undesirable wastes. This riverside is also discussed and covered under Section 4.8 Flood Plains.

Paran Creek, from Paran Lake dam, flows through the Village, onward down Paran Valley on the eastern side of route 67a to its egress into the Walloomsac River. Paran Creek contains four separate millponds. The upper one with it's dam by the firehouse on Prospect Street. The middle upper one situated on the Haviland's Privilege condominium complex. The middle lower one with it's dam at the head of National Hanger's stone mill building. The lower one with it's dam behind the present BCIC building. In times past, there was some historical value in the Paran Valley as many mills operated there. Fire and flood removed most traces. The last foundations removed were where Chemical Fabrics now has its propane storage tanks next to the creek on the south side of route 67a. Efforts are being made, and should continue, to establish a public use walkway along the creek from the dam to the Walloomsac. According to Flood Hazard Maps dated February 21, 1975 and June 17, 1986, only that few hundred yards from the 67a crossover bridge south to its meeting with the Walloomsac is shown on Flood Plain maps. (See Section 4.8. Flood Plain management.)

There are also several lesser known streams and streamlets. Some feed and meander through wetlands. Others act as natural storm runways and channeling only during the spring runoff. Their location, paths of flow, should be located and documented. They are a important resource in preventing storm and water damage to property and buildings.

#### *POLICIES:*

1. Restrict development and filling in of wetlands, along the main stream channels, to protect their recharge and water storage benefits as they relate to flooding and to protect them as wildlife habitats.
2. Encourage appropriate setbacks from streams in areas where soil conditions might result in pollution, soil erosion, and sedimentation.
3. Encourage the natural state of streams except when there is a potential threat against life and property.

#### *RECOMMENDATIONS:*

1. Generally encourage and improve the anesthetically pleasing aspect of the waterways.
2. Continue to pursue the idea of a Greenway trail from Paran Dam to the Walloomsac.
3. Locate, identify, and document streams on Geographical Information System map overlays (GIS).

4. Generally follow VT State Agency of Environmental Conservation guidelines. Often stream ways and wetlands are closely entwined.

## **4.0 LAND USE**

### **4.1 DIRECTIONS FOR PLANNING AND POLICY**

For more than two years a subcommittee of interested citizens and the Planning Commission took on assignments, sought public opinion, and met regularly to prepare the updated Plan. Several common themes relevant to this land use chapter were identified. Some are similar to and, complementary to the overall Goals enumerated in Section 2.0:

- Maintain and upgrade the Village infrastructure and support improvements and expansions which complement existing facilities and land use policies. Infrastructure may include: sidewalks, roads, utilities, water, sewer, trails, parks, etc.
- Continue to encourage public and private reserved open spaces. This can range from small greens and parks in higher density areas, to larger conservation and open space tracts of the Village countryside.
- Provide performance standards for future growth to avoid potential environmental impacts and to mitigate existing impacts.
- Retain the mix, scale and balance of the existing settlement pattern for all types of uses: residential, commercial, industrial, and public uses. Together they contribute to individual and community character.
- Future business should be on a small scale and be of various types and specialties compatible in a Village setting.
- Provide for high and low density of development which reinforces the historic-cultural settlement pattern. Use conventional and creative planning techniques to achieve this theme:
  - Size, bulk, and density standards
  - Special overlays for resource protection and consideration to land suitability for development
  - Preservation of open space through clustering especially on larger tracts in the rural sections
  - Scenic designations of landscapes and roads
  - Shoreline and waterway designations
- Consider design review of the built environment and the use of broad standards to ensure overall compatibility of new and adaptive uses. Such standards need not prescribe a particular period or style.
- Assess the compatibility of land use in the bordering towns of Bennington and Shaftsbury, and work toward consistency of common planning objectives.

## **4.2 SETTLEMENT PATTERNS**

Topographically, the Village occupies generally undulating terrain bisected by the narrow valley of Paran Creek, a tributary of the Walloomsac River. The Creek falls a total of 110 feet over a series of dams (5) and cascades while flowing through the Village from its northeast to south boundaries. Southeast of the creek valley, the village climbs the north slope of 750 foot Bingham Hill.

The water power of Paran Creek provided the original impetus for the settlement of North Bennington, and a succession of mill-ponds along the course of the Creek marks the sites of former or existing mills and factories that constitute a linear industrial area. The largest pond, Known as Lake Paran, lies northeast of the Village: its dam was constructed to serve also as the embankment for the railroad that connects North Bennington with Bennington Village five miles to the southeast.

The modest commercial center of North Bennington ascends the slope northward from the Creek along Main Street (the principal north-south axis) to the main railroad line (an east-west axis) that passes through the north section of the Village. More precisely, there are two small clusters of commercial buildings standing at the street line: an older (early nineteenth century) one surrounding Lincoln Square at the foot of Main Street and a slightly larger (and somewhat later) one occupying the vicinity of the Bank Street intersection (from the bank north along Main Street to the railroad tracks). The other stretches of Main Street are residential in character with detached houses set back from the street, although interrupted by the railroad and related buildings north of the commercial center. The principal residential areas of the Village radiate from the commercial center along intersecting streets

The street plan of North Bennington evolved through a period of about a century, becoming roughly radial in pattern surrounding the Village core; most street intersections occur at oblique angles. Building setbacks along the streets vary with the terrain, building types, and period of development. Scattered small parks and the triangular Lincoln Square contribute landscaped open spaces, especially along Main and Prospect Streets. Where the later street crosses Paran Creek, mini-parks provide openings to the millponds both upstream and down stream of the arch bridge.

Along most of the streets of North Bennington there formerly stood large deciduous shade trees, most commonly maples and elm. These trees have succumbed to encroaching vehicle traffic, highway salt, disease, and age. Sadly the demise of the formerly luxuriant street-side canopy has removed some of the olden Village charisma.

Remnants of marble slab sidewalks constitute a distinctive element of the village's street environment. The marble slabs may have been the product of a marble sawing mill that operated on Water Street early in the nineteenth century (A enterprise with a short life due to the poor quality of local marble). Only a few short stretches of the slabs remain in place, principally along Main and Bank Streets, many of the slabs are cracked and broken.

Today, several factors give North Bennington an unusually genuine and cohesive environment as a "working" village: (1) its surviving nineteenth century architectural theme that exerts a strong sense of its original character, (2) the relative absence of recent intrusions to the historic character, (3) the sympathetic adaptation of several pivotal buildings to compatible contemporary uses, (4) the compact mix, scale, and diversity of uses in the high density areas, (5) the "waterways" and old mills, (6) large and small open spaces for active and passive recreation, (7) the high utilization of buildings which contribute to the economic and social vibrancy of the Village, and (8) the contrast of the countryside relatively undeveloped and having key open lands such as the Park-McCullough Historical house and

grounds, Hall Farm home and property, (now Nolan's), the Hall "Night Pasture" (now Pembroke's), and Bennington College.

#### 4.3 LAND USE ELEMENT, CLASSIFICATION, POLICIES

A fundamental part of the Village Plan is the Identification of planning districts to guide the type, location, and density of land use and future growth. The districting plan in the present zoning does not adequately address the needs and expectations that have been identified. The following classification is expanded to more effectively deal with the quality of change and future growth. The land use classification for the Village is divided into several planning districts and keyed to the land use plan map and several resource maps. In some areas with unique or special features the use of overlay districts is used. This type of designation highlights significant resources that might otherwise be overlooked.

##### CLASSIFICATION

###### **Residential Districts**

Village Residence (VR):

VR-3, VR-8, VR-10	(Connected to public water and sewer)
VR-20	(Connected to either public water or public sewer)
VR-40	(No public water or public sewer)

###### **Commercial-Industrial Districts**

Village Commercial (VC)

Industrial (I)

###### **Educational Campus**

Bennington College (EC)

###### **Special Overlays**

Flood Hazard Areas	(FH)	(Walloomsac River, Paran Lake*)
Historic Waterway	(HW)	(Paran Creek, Mill Ponds and Dams)
Shoreland Protection	(SP)	(Lake Paran)
Historic District	(HD)	(Village Core area)

*\* The Lake Flood Hazard Areas of Lake Paran are in the Town of Bennington. Only a small length of the Walloomsac River borders North Bennington.*

#### 4.4 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS AND STANDARDS

##### **Residential Districts: VR 3, 8, 10, 20, 40:**

North Bennington has approximately 321 structures with 432 units (Listers Records- May, 1989). The type of units include: Single Family (78.5%), Two-Family (10.3%), Multi-Family with 3+ units (4.7%), Mobile Homes (5.0%), and mixed uses with an apartment (1.5%). Density varies considerably but is generally grouped into two categories: Higher Density (VR 3, 8, 10, and 20), and Lower Density (VR 40). The VR figures refer to the minimum lot sizes in thousands of feet per dwelling unit. Example: VR 3 requires a minimum of 3,000 square feet per dwelling unit, VR 40 Requires a minimum of 40,000 square feet per dwelling unit.

### **Higher Density Districts:**

The higher density districts are generally located in the upper part of Water, Bank and Main Streets and the lower section of Water Street. These areas of compact development require the provision of public water and municipal sewer connections. They also require higher standards of street improvements, curbs, sidewalks, gutters, storm sewer, and street lighting. The variety of density patterns is reflected in the multiple districting plan for these higher density areas.

In the Town of Shaftsbury is a similar compact type of development (Upper Main Street) It is planned for Village Residential requiring similar infrastructure. Policies should reflect the complementary of the adjoining bordering areas. Because of the amount of open land available for future growth outside the Village, there needs to be a cooperative understanding to review inter-municipal impacts.

The preceding paragraph refers specifically to the District One segment of the Town of Shaftsbury. In a overall, larger context, it would also include those portions of the Town of Bennington in close proximity to North Bennington's municipal borders, also the need for inter-municipal cooperation exists in dealing with adjoining Low Density Districts.

#### **POLICIES:**

1. Provide a variety of residential districts to reinforce the existing density and settlement patterns and diversity of such patterns.
2. Provide compact residential single, two-family, and multiple family dwellings provided they are served by public water and sewer.
3. Individual Multiple Family (MF) structures should not exceed six dwelling units, although there may be more than one structure per site consistent with density standards. MR projects may not be compatible in all locations, and the relationship to surrounding land uses should be given special attention for compatibility. MF projects should be treated as conditional uses.
4. Larger projects (5+ units) should be accommodated with higher standards of site and off site improvement, accountability under Act 250, sub division regulations, and impact costs/fees for such improvements as: sidewalks, storm sewers, landscaping, streets, project access considering both public and fire and emergency vehicle requirements, drainage, etc.
5. Encourage the provision of open space such as mini-greens/parks and linear open space paths along streams or hillsides and connecting nodes of activity in the Village.
6. Maintain the values and integrity of the man-made and natural historic character of the Village.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Improved, to a larger scale, and more clearly defined Zoning Maps are needed. On the present publicly available map, VR-3 is indistinguishable. A large scale zoning map of the Village Core should be made.
2. Generally, official maps should be of the same scale as being developed under the Vermont's GIS system 1:1250. This will further facilitate the development of more meaningful and understandable specific overlay projects.

understandable specific overlay projects.

**Low Density Districts:**

The balance of the Village is designated in the current plan as Village Residential VR-40 and requires 40,000 square feet per unit. This area consists of scattered single family dwellings and a significant amount of open lands. Based on a survey of open lands and current zoning, 300+ new units can be accommodated. Conventional zoning alone will not achieve the goals of open land preservation and resource protection. Likewise, down zoning to a lower density may not achieve the goals unless there is a substantial reduction of density (5+ acres per unit). An alternative or complementary approach to rezoning is special recognition that not all lands are alike to support a given level of density. Land suitability combined with recognition of special resource lands provides a framework for how the Village should evaluate future growth. Agricultural lands, scenic areas, forested areas, Shoreland of waterbodies and streams, flood hazard areas, soil suitability and steep slopes, and well head protection (North Bennington Water Source) are included as a special overlay to the underlying district as an added consideration of future land use. Other voluntary efforts are also commended and encouraged, such as the initiatives of the Scotts and McCulloughs to preserve open lands in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy/Vermont Land Trust. Bennington College is a major land owner and a significant contributor to open space. The campus should be given a special district zoning to reflect actual use rather than classifying it as Village Residence, VR-40. (See Section 7.2 for further information.)

Overall, the low density district must avoid conventional cookie-cutter type development to achieve the goals and values of the plan. The application of creative techniques such as clustering and planned residential designs must be applied to maintain the integrity and character of a site and surrounding area.

**POLICIES:**

1. Provide for and maintain a density of at least 40,000 square feet for single family dwellings with suitable private on - site water and sewer. Density for any particular parcel should reflect land capacity - suitability and resources which have been identified.
2. Residential projects of greater than three lots and containing [five (5)], [ten (10)] acres shall be evaluated for appropriate density based on land suitability and to retain, to the maximum extent possible, special resources such as agricultural and open land.
3. Require and provide incentives for creative site planning and design such as: cluster and planned residential development (PRD).
4. Avoid the extension of municipal capital improvements such as water and sewer. Likewise, maintain the existing Village road network and avoid new municipal roads in the low density districts.
5. Encourage the provision of parks and open space through public, quasi-public, and private means.

**Supplemental Performance Standards:**

In addition to the foregoing residential and other district policies, the following standards generally apply to all residential development. In some cases they may also apply to nonresidential uses.

**Density:** Residential diversity should maintain a level of density compatible with land suitability to support a project. While zoning prescribes an overall density scheme, not all land has the same development potential. All development must carefully assess land suitability.

**Natural Condition:** Natural features of the land including terrain, natural ground cover, trees, wetlands natural or unique features should be integrated in the preliminary site planning stages.

**Settlement Pattern:** New development must carefully be integrated into the Village. This requires sensitive integration and fit in the built-up compact area as well as in the outlying rural countryside. For example, grid/cookie cutter conventional subdivisions would not be consistent with this standard in the rural areas.

**Infrastructure:** Utilities and roads should be sited in a manner that provides the least possible intrusion, especially in the open undeveloped portions of the Village.

**Slopes:** Residential development should be limited and carefully planned on slopes that are greater than 15%. Where natural slopes exceed 20% no residential development and associated improvements should occur.

**Natural Ridgelines and Hill Profiles:** Natural ridgelines and profiles are an important natural asset of the Village; (Bingham Hill and McCullough Woods, to name two). The siting of permanent construction must be done in a manner to mitigate any aesthetic impacts that might result. Ridgelines and hill profiles are not necessarily higher elevations in the Village, but could include the natural ridge profile around Lake Paran.

**Water Supply and Sewer:** Residential development should be supported by adequate water supply and sewerage disposal. On-site sewerage systems must obtain required local and state permits.

**Erosion Control and Earth Modification:** During construction, builders should follow state and SCS conservation practices to minimize erosion and effect on natural drainage patterns. Such work should avoid filling of natural drainage, wetlands, floodplains, and other fragile environmental areas.

**Site Planning and Design:** Projects must assess the viability of creative site design techniques such as clustering to maximize protection of special resources identified in the plan. Relationships to adjoining properties shall also be considered.

**Traffic and Access:** Safe and suitable access is required as is storm water drainage from connecting roads and driveways. Projects should avoid excessive curb cuts along Village roads. Projects which generate traffic must have road capacity, safe and efficient access, or a new road must be available. One goal of the plan is to maintain the existing Village road system vs. new Village roads.

**Major Development Projects:** The subdivision of the land into three lots of any parcel of land existing on the date of this plan and/or prescribed in the Zoning Bylaws should be subject to special review procedures as provided for PRD's (Planned Residential Developments-- See related portions of Sections 4.0 and 8.0 (Maps) of the Bylaws). Such projects shall take into account special resources identified in the plan. Additionally, rather than simply dividing a tract area by the zoning density factor, consideration should be given to net density. Net density and development potential is determined by netting out those land features having severe constraints for construction: wetlands, water bodies, steep slopes- 20%+, rock ledge, and floodways.

steep slopes- 20%+, rock ledge, and floodways.

#### **4.5 COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (VC) AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (VI)**

##### **The Village Setting – Main Street Business Core:**

The purpose of the VC District is to promote the sound economic development of the Village, by encouraging a level of commercial, business, and service uses at a scale and intensity of use which reinforces the existing pattern. Retention of the diversity of the "working" Village appropriately commingled within a primarily residential setting, is a goal of the plan. The rationale behind the districting plan is to provide for existing established commercial/business uses consistent with the historical settlement pattern. The appearance of "spots zones" on the map, are an integral part of the plan. This is different from spot zoning reflecting a piecemeal approach to land use over time without regard to a plan. North Bennington acknowledges the need, thought its Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment, for caution in its approach to minimize nuisances or impacts to surrounding residential areas.

The Village Commercial/Business District (VC) currently encompasses upper Main Street, going south to lower Main Street at junction with Prospect Street, (Lincoln Square) and certain other specifically zoned pockets of buildings. (The Railroad Depot and land, Post Office, Paulin's Laundromat and gas station, Merchants Bank Building and parking lot, and the Northwest Variety store/trolley barn property .)

In addition to businesses, (restaurants, garage, plumbing tradesman, brick mason's shop, architects office, bank and general grocery store) the core district contains single family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, the McCullough Library. The character of the Village is partly defined by this mixture and the architectural variety found in all of the buildings.

The residences interspersed with the businesses along with the park areas reflects the historical aspect of the Village and should therefore be protected and maintained. This blend also reinforces the Village's identity and is crucial in considering future development.

To allow further business development in the Village center, low intensity businesses that generate minimal traffic and parking should be encouraged. Professional offices, small retail specialty shops, should all be included as desirable businesses. One or two residences with rooms available within the principle dwelling and with ample parking on their premises, may be suitable for overnight transits with or without meals. There could be a mixture in some existing buildings for one or more of these types of businesses within a residence.

Several problems need to be confronted in order to maintain and preserve the identity of the Village. Use of buildings located in and surrounded by residential areas must be made compatible with the premise that businesses and residences can and should co-exist. Specifically the mill on Sage Street and the Trolley Barn on Bank Street Extension. The Trolley Barn presently contains Brian Toomey's woodworking establishment as well as the Northwest Grocery Store. The mill (Shea's) is home to the Arlin Brown Machine Co. It is under study for other or concurrent uses.

##### **POLICIES:**

1. To promote the sound economic development of the Village. Collectively the business enterprises should reflect specialized service in a village residential setting. While not

specifically limited to village residents, it is not intended to create a regional or town service center which would cause unresolvable impacts such as parking and traffic congestion.

2. The total developed area of a business property should be specified in the Zoning Bylaws.
3. Historic buildings of state and national significance should be reserved and protected. Any new development must be compatible with the historic nature and character of the Village.
4. Significant natural or topographic land features should be retained.
5. To preserve the historical character and compatible nature of residences and businesses; signs, the lighting, size and placement of them should be carefully controlled.
6. Provide for special amenities in a village residential and pedestrian setting: walkways, lighting, signage, street furniture, bicycle racks, historic markers, etc.
7. Encourage adaptive reuse (recycle) of older structures with permitted uses which are sympathetic to the historical character of the building and setting.
8. Continue provision of small open spaces and greens in the Village.

#### **Village Industrial District (VI):**

The Village Industrial District, like the Village Commercial, is keyed to existing uses. This approach reinforces the existing settlement pattern, and supports the retention of diversity and the working Village goal. A difficult challenge is to retain or improve viability of the older historic manufacturing facilities. (See Section 9.5.) Modernized and competitive enterprises often follow modern infrastructure and potential for expansion. Although the industrial buildings-enterprises are relatively confined and hemmed in, they do represent a substantial industrial base for a small village. Much of the growth in new industrial employment has been and will continue with small enterprises. The historic settling of Village industry is along Water Street paralleling Paran Creek. The mill pond by National Hanger stone buildings, (formerly Cushmans), and the so-called Polygraphic Pond, now the BCIC building, offer a unique environment and visual impact. Some upgrading of properties and the streetscape would be a asset to a Industry's image. A historic linear theme park, (A greenways multiple use walkway / trail.) along Water Street could be a inducement to future investment as well. Industrial operations are close to residential areas in a relatively tight topographic setting. Minimizing off site impacts such as excessive noise, reflective glare, odors, air pollutants, hazardous materials storage and handling are concerns that must be addressed with any proposals regarding new or expanded uses.

#### **POLICIES:**

1. Provide for various types of light manufacturing and industrial uses, especially those having less impact on surrounding properties and the environment. Discourage large retail stores and Factory Outlet Chains." and the manufacturing or assembling of large or heavy goods.
2. Encourage investment in the physical plant and landscape setting, especially along Water Street-Paran Creek. One of the proposals now being studied is the creation of a Village green trail from the Paran Dam following the Creek to the Walloomsac River.

3. Require use of the best practical technology available to minimize off-site impacts such as smoke, fumes, lowering air quality, noise, unshielded light and glare, handling and use of hazardous materials and pollution, etc.
4. Industrial uses require a minimum area of 40,000 square feet. ft. with specific treatment for yards, landscaping, parking, and driveways prescribed in the zoning bylaw.
5. As in Village Commercial Districts, outside amenities for pedestrians - employee enjoyment and use, should be provided.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Review Zoning Bylaws as to requirements. Present Bylaws require 40,000 square feet plus ancillary regulations. Actual developmental space available for use should be ascertained. Bylaws should be tailored to allow use of land actually available, perhaps to encourage specific types of use.
2. Survey land available on east side of Water Street located between National Hanger Property and BCIC property as to actual usable land suitable to promote as a professional office complex or additional light manufacturing building(s). Survey to include municipal services available and any limitations necessary for the Village supplied services to cope with any planned development.
3. To reaffirm availability or unavailability of other locations within the Village borders, suitable for some type of industrial site. This should be undertaken when suitable maps with soil condition overlays become available.
4. Pursue to completion the Village parking lot at the fire station including black topping ,space markings and landscaping.

## NORTH BENNINGTON INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES – 1992

---

### WATER STREET –

CHEMICAL FABRICS CORPORATION *Material coatings*

#### Bennington County Industrial Corporation Building:

BROWNSTEIN AND EHRLICH STUDIOS *Sculptor / Painter*

CULLIGAN'S WATER CONDITIONING *Water Cond. Equip. & Services*

EIGHT HOOTER HUNTING CALLS *Hunting Calls*

JLF / BENNINGTON LEATHER *Leather Luggage*

MATT KELLY *Photographer*

K & H PRODUCTS INC *Camera, Video Bags*

NO. B.I.A.S *Art Gallery*

NEW DIRECTIONS *Management Training / Consultants*

NORTH BRANCH TRADING COMPANY *Restaurant Equipment Rebuilding*

PREPRESS CONSULTANTS *Ind, Computer Rebuilding*

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE INDUSTRIES, INC *Waste Testing*

REHM - BRANDT'S DESIGN *Danish Furniture/Carpeting/Kitchen Cabinetry*

RFD II *Music*

STATE OF VERMONT, AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES *Permit Field Office*

VERMONT MAPLE WATER *Maple Flavored Water*

WISE EXPRESS *Business Form Printing*

#### North Bennington Industrial Building:

NORTHERN LIGHTS FIBERGLASS OPTICAL CABLES *Fiber Optical*

FURON INC *Plastic Machining*

HEMMINGS MOTOR NEWS *Archive Storage*

NEW ENGLAND GRAPHIC MACHINE *Machining and Rebuilding*

#### Old Cushman/Green Mountain Stone Mill Complex:

NATIONAL HANGER CORPORATION *Plastic clothes hangers*

NATIONAL HANGER CORPORATION *Factory Store*

### SAGE STREET -

A. BROWN CO., INC. *Metal Machining and Engineering*

## **BUSINESS, INSTITUTIONAL, AND GOVERNMENTAL DIRECTORY: 1992-93**

### **Restaurants and Grocery Markets:**

1. No Baloney, *Family Dining* (Main Street)
2. Gimme Pizza, *Fast Food Take-Out* (Main Street)
3. North Bennington Main Street Cafe (Lincoln Square)
4. Powers Market (Main & Sage Streets)
5. Northwestern Market and Variety Store (Junction of Rte. 67 & White Creek Road)

### **Automotive:**

7. Redeemed Repair, *repairs, used car sales* (Main Street)
8. Paulin's *gasoline, laundromat, and convenience store* (Bank Square)

### **Small Business and Commercial Establishments:**

9. Brian Toomey, *woodworking* (Trolley Barn)
10. Tim Smith & Associates, *architects* (Village Depot Building)
11. Merchants Bank, *financial services* (Bank Square)
12. Quality Plumbing, *plumbing and heating* (Main Street)
13. Countryside Garden Equipment (Lincoln Square)
14. Whitman's Feed and Garden Supplies (Greenwich Street)
15. Keefe & Wesner Architects, *architects* (Red Mill, Pleasant Street)
16. McAdoo Hooked Rugs, *rug hooking* (Red Mill, Pleasant Street)
17. George Glanzberg, VMD, *veterinarian* (White Creek Rd, Shaftsbury)
18. Cutler's, *wood novelty products* (Water Street)
19. David T. Mance, PC, *forestry and land surveying* (West Street)

### **Governmental - Institutional - Religious**

20. Village Offices (old RR Station, Main at Depot Streets)
21. U.S. Post Office (Middle Main Street)
22. McCullough Library, *public* (Main and West Streets)
23. Park/McCullough Historical House (West and Park Streets)
24. North Bennington Fire House (Lower Prospect Street)
25. Prospect Nursing Home (Upper Prospect Street)
26. North Bennington Baptist Church (Church Street)
27. St John The Baptist Catholic Church (Houghton Street)
28. Congregational Church (Bank and School Streets)
29. Second Congregational Church (Water and Hillside Streets)
30. Southshire Community School (Bank Street)
31. Village Highway & Water Dept. Garage (Prospect Street)
32. Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (BCIC Building, Water Street)
33. North Bennington Graded School (School Street)
34. Masonic Lodge (Bank Street)
35. Village Government Office: *Trustee's Office, Village Treasurer, Village Clerk, Water Board Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment*  
(old RR Station, Main and Depot Streets)
36. United Counseling -- Head Start Programs (Park and West Streets)

#### **4.6 EDUCATIONAL CAMPUS (EC) - Bennington College**

Bennington College is a significant social, economic, and physical asset to the Village and Town. The College is a major land owner with approximately 525 acres (400 acres in North Bennington). Institutions such as this are often afforded a special status under zoning bylaw. (Title 24 VSA, Chapter 117, Section 4409) because of the special public benefit they provide. In many respects the College is like a planned unit development which allows various uses and distribution on a larger tract in single ownership guided by a master plan for expansion and build out. Since the College is a high density use compared to other uses in the Village, adequate attention must be given to community fit and impacts: surrounding land use, natural resources, traffic, intensity of use, landscaping and buffering, water -sewer demands, etc. Currently the College is zoned for village residential (VR-40), which is inconsistent with actual use. This Municipal Master Plan proposes a new district for contiguous lands owned by the College at the primary campus. The purpose of this designation is to facilitate a homogeneous grouping of uses and related services.

##### **POLICIES:**

1. Establish a new Educational District which encompasses the lands owned by Bennington College at the main campus.
2. Provide for a homogeneous grouping of uses and related services guided by a master plan of the institution. Examples of uses include, educational facilities, performing arts and events, library, recreation, day nursery, nursery school, dormitories for temporary dwellings of persons attending the College, dwellings for faculty and employees, and service buildings related to the institution's operation.
3. Establish a review procedure for new construction, any significant change in use, or the division of land to non-institutional ownership.
4. Significant expansion should be based on an overall master plan of the College.

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. In any expansion of the College's physical plant, a study of the effect on the Village's municipal infrastructure of provided services should be included in any proposals; an evaluation of impact charges to be leveled in providing necessary construction to supply increased services, to be a part of such determination.
2. Concurrently, the Village cannot assume that such lands will always stay in College ownership, and therefore consideration as to protocol necessary in transfers to non-institutional ownership and its reversion in status to a adjoining zoning district. The consequences of such transfers will need to be reviewed/revised in terms of other goals of the plan

## ***Special District Overlays***

### **4.7 FLOOD HAZARD AREAS (FH)**

The purpose of this designation is to minimize hazards from flooding through the control of land use in flood hazard areas. The official designation of these areas are the Flood Hazard Boundary maps effective June 17, 1986 entitled: FLOOD PLAIN INFORMATION, WALLOOMSAC RIVER - SOUTH STREAM - ROARING BRANCH. TOWN OF BENNINGTON, VERMONT.

Of the maps on file under the above title, Map # H 03 dated February 21, 1975 is applicable to North Bennington. It indicates a small portion of the Walloomsac River that also serves as North Bennington's southern border. Also included is about 200 yards of Paran Creek from the Route 67a bridge south to its flow into the Walloomsac River. The Soil Conservation Service has also identified "flooded soils" which generally correspond to the federal study. In addition to the primary purpose of mitigating flood damage, flood designations have a secondary benefit of maintaining the natural state of streams and river environments.

Of interest and concern to North Bennington is that while the maps indicate portions of the land in North Bennington as being in the flood plain, the Federal flood Plain insurance carried by the Town of Bennington does not cover that flood plain segment within the North Bennington municipal boundaries because this area is under our zoning control. The Paran valley, with its five dams, four mill ponds and large lake at the head of the valley is not even included in any flood plain studies. It should be noted that in the Bennington Town Plan adopted in 1987, page 87, Lake Paran is acknowledged as a flood hazard area and is shown on NFIP Flood Insurance Rate Map, Panel # 5 effective June 17, 1986.

The five dams are of varying heights on Paran Creek. We presently assume they are all in safe condition and monitored. It would be prudent for the Village to review Policies and procedures in dealing with dam inspections and liability. If such a Policy does not exist, the formulation of one should be considered. Generally, whoever captures the water is liable for any damages that activity may cause others. In most cases, the dam owner is usually responsible. A Policy should cite the location of the Dams. Dam classification, (low hazard or high hazard.) The known owners. The procedures in maintenance and safety inspections, frequency of inspections, by whom inspections done, and procedures to follow in emergencies. The State's role, if any, in promoting dam safety and inspection should be included. At the very least, the Trustees should develop a written emergency plan and set of procedures in the event we are faced with imminent flood conditions in the valley. It can be recalled that in the last week of June 1978, a potential disaster did exist in regard to the condition of the Paran Lake earth dam (Carrying the VT RR trackage.) and only emergency response prevented a "high potential danger" (quote from Louis Sarelas, Town Manager to Governor Richard Snelling).

North Bennington's Zoning Bylaws presently do not contain any references to the Flood Plain designated area. It is impractical to rezone the areas. However a specific reference to the flood plains and restrictions would be in order. The North Bennington Municipality is not included in the National Flood Insurance Program.

An up-to-date Municipal Survey Statement should be formulated if one does not already exist. The actual need to participate in the Federal Insurance Administration's National Flood Insurance Program should first be ascertained. In February 1975 and again in March of 1975, the Village was informed that the FIA had tentatively identified one or more areas having special flood hazards. It is not presently known how the Village responded. One area identified included a portion of the

Walloomsac River and several hundred feet of Paran Creek up from its egress into the Walloomsac. As noted earlier, the upper portion of Paran Valley is not included. Flood Insurance is generally not available from a commercial source. It can only be obtained from the FIA's subsidized Plan. The local property owner in turn buys his protection through his local insurance broker from the FIA, but the Municipality has been certified under the Flood Disaster Protection Act for local property owners to apply.

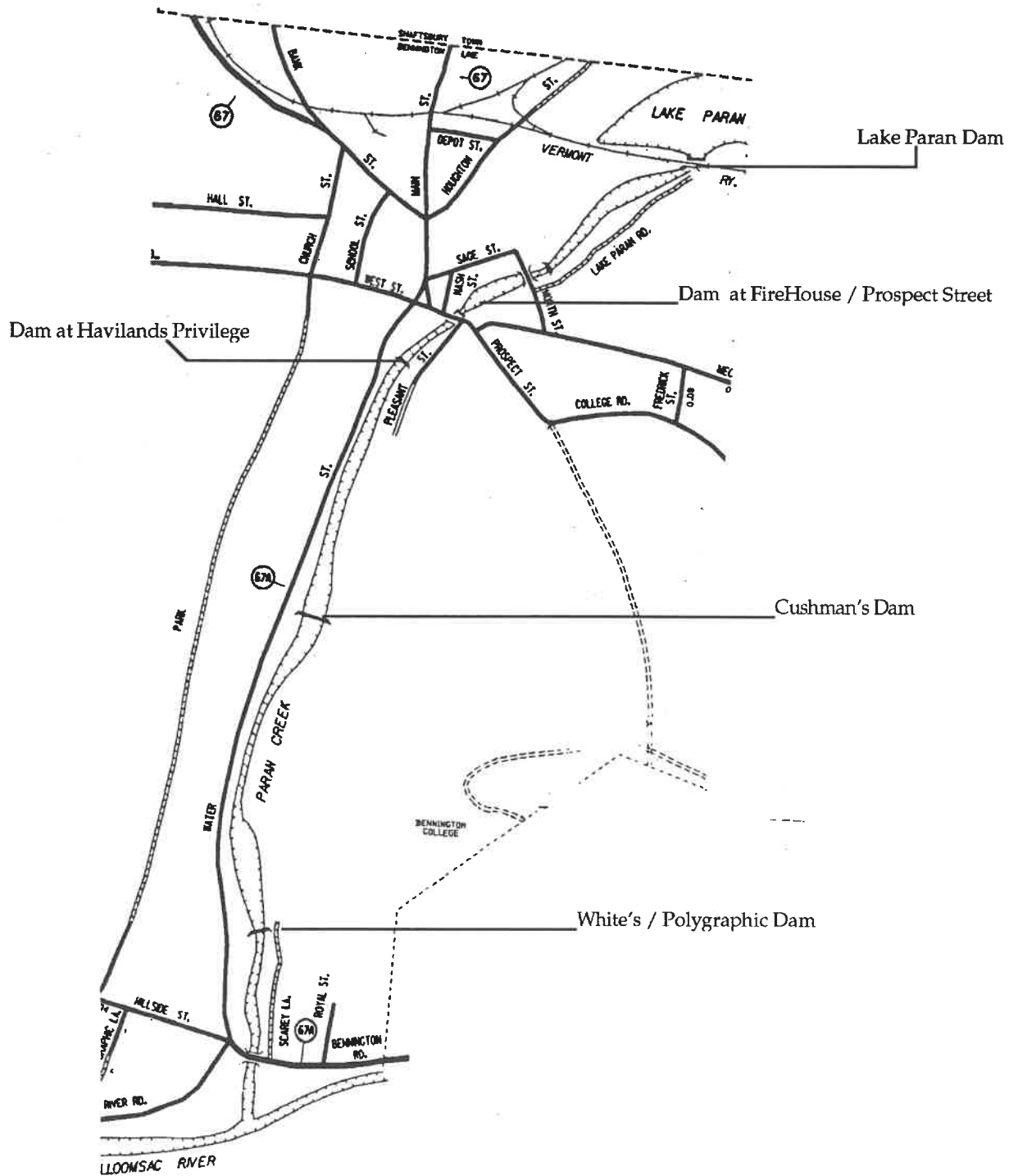
***POLICIES:***

1. In the "floodway", encourage open air uses (recreation, agriculture, etc.) versus structural uses, obstructions or fill, in order to maintain the capacity of the channel and adjacent land to carry the 100 year flood.
2. Permit uses as provide for in local zoning bylaws in the floodway fringe, but require appropriate flood proofing and/or elevation to minimize flood damage.
3. Restrict development and filling of wetlands along (the main) stream channels to protect their recharge and water storage benefits as they relate to flooding and to protect them as wildlife habitats.
4. Encourage appropriate setbacks from streams in areas where soil conditions might result in pollution, soil erosion, and sedimentation.
5. Encourage the protection of the natural state of streams except when there is a potential threat against life and property.
6. Encourage the maintenance of the river front in open space and, where appropriate, provide a river park, walkways, bicycle path, etc. for recreational enjoyment of the portion of the river within the Village.
7. Maintain at least a 50 foot wide vegetated strip along the Walloomsac's bank unless improvements are made relative to policies #5 and #6.

***RECOMMENDATION:***

Village Trustees should research and formulate a written Policy and set of Guidelines regarding the dams and ponds within the Village

# The Dams in Paran Creek. From Lake Paran to the Walloomsac River



#### 4.8 SHORELANDS

The Shoreland of Lake Paran are located in three planning jurisdictions: Town of Bennington, Town of Shaftsbury, and North Bennington. In 1976 with the assistance of the BCRC, the municipalities developed uniform standards to protect the shoreline of the lake. The Shoreland designation extends back 500 feet from the mean high water mark of Lake Paran. The purpose of this designation is to: (1) Prevent and control water pollution; (2) Preserve and protect wetlands and other terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat; (3) Conserve the scenic beauty of Shoreland; (4) Minimize shoreline erosion; and (5) Reserve public access to public waters.

##### *POLICIES:*

1. Allow those uses provided for in the underlying Village Residence Districts (VR-20) and (VR-40). References to solid waste and septic waste should be made to coincide with any upgraded water quality provisions of the State as well as Federal guidelines.
2. All buildings and subsurface sanitary facilities shall maintain a minimum setback of 200 feet from the mean high water mark.
3. Maintain as much as possible the natural setting of land within the 200 foot setback from the mean high water mark
4. Appropriate uses within the 200 foot setback are: open air uses such as recreation, picnic grounds and shelters, parks, swimming areas, wildlife and nature preserves, fishing and boating areas, agricultural, and similar uses.

##### *RECOMMENDATIONS:*

1. That a special zoning guidelines be established for the Lake Paran shore in public ownership
2. To acknowledge and establish, by reference, the importance of wetlands, marshes, and tributaries feeding Lake Paran.

#### 4.9 HISTORIC DISTRICT (*Overlay*)

A portion of the Village (Designated A Historic District) was entered into the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. The District has 178 buildings of architectural or historic significance. A detailed description of the buildings within the District is provided in Section 9.10. A overlay district is recommended to facilitate a general level of review to protect the integrity of the District, but not to dictate style. There are two levels of criteria to evaluate change: (1) General review criteria (broad change) , and (2) specific review criteria (style and type of structure). It is recommended that the former (broad standards), be used on an interim-experimental basis to test the applicability of such a review procedure in the Village. Broad standards may include: visual compatibility: height, proportion, perceived rhythm, shape, continuity, scale, and true historic significance.

##### *POLICIES:*

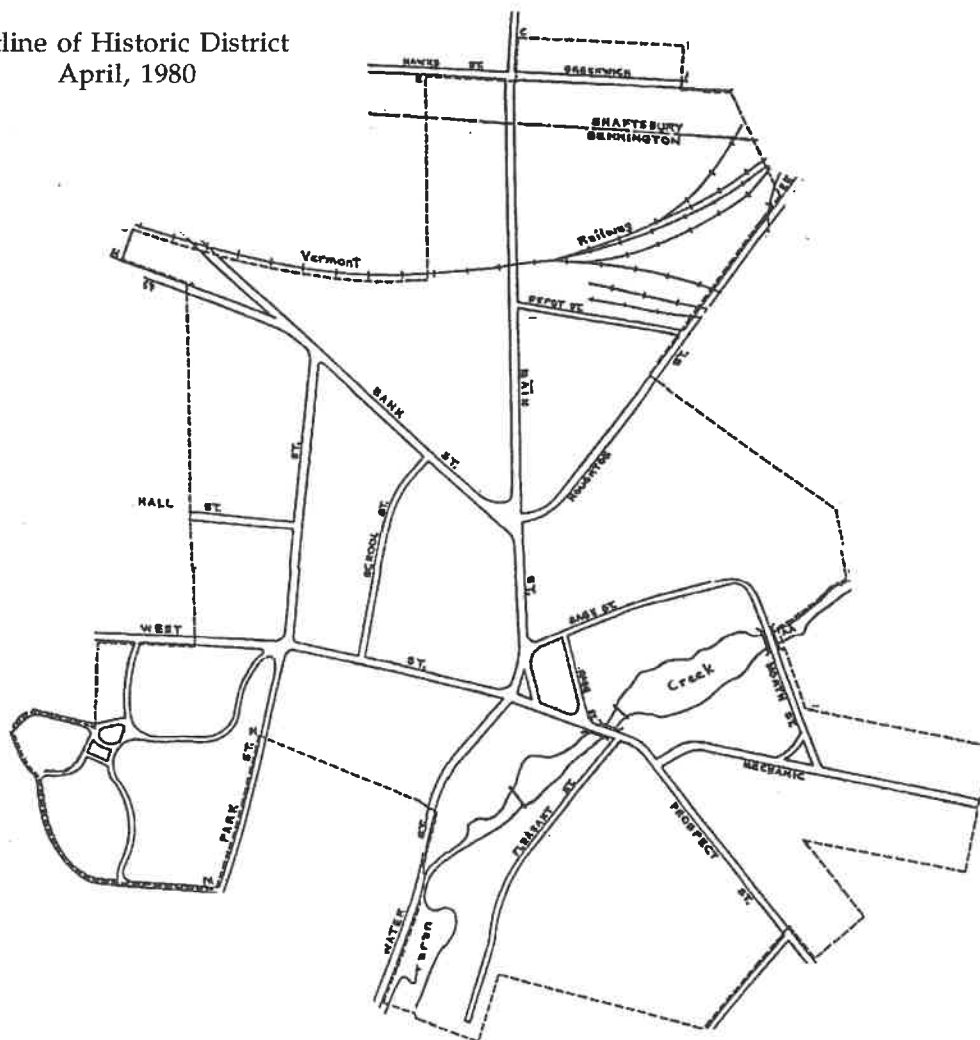
1. Provide review of developments or changes within the District to preserve its character. This is generally guided by the significance of the district and its buildings described in the documentation for the National Register.

2. Protect sites of historic/cultural merit from encroachment by incompatible uses, and assure to the best degree possible that surrounding development enhances such historic features.
3. Encourage renovation and reuse or adaptive use of historic structures which might otherwise be lost due to deterioration. Provide assistance to seek funds for maintaining such sites or structures.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Avoid demolitions of historic properties unless there is no reasonable alternative economic use.
2. If available, direct grants or low interest loans to maintain and improve historic properties, That encouragement for a study as to feasibility of utilization of historic buildings for conversion into suitable housing, and/or senior citizen housing bearing in mind the specific renovation needs of each group. Some sources of guidance and funds are: Private foundations, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The objectives of this recommendation in preservation of structures and addressing today's needs.

Outline of Historic District  
April, 1980



#### 4.10 WELL HEAD PROTECTION AREA

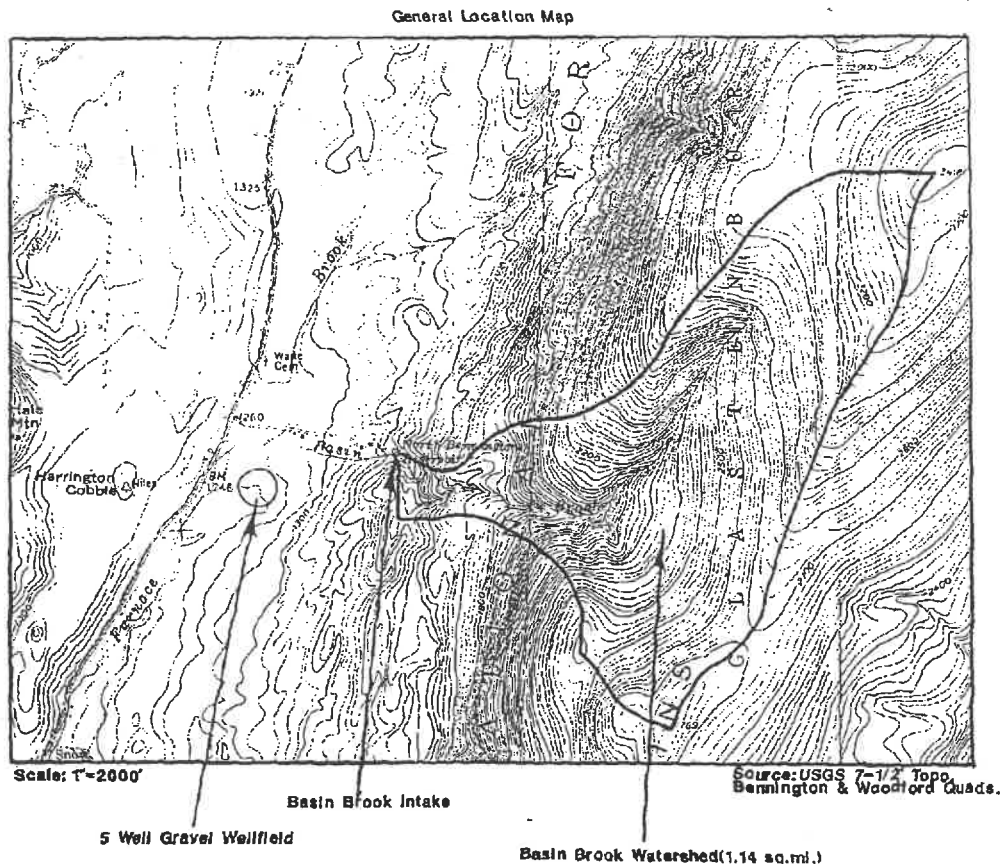
The water source of the North Bennington water supply is in the Town of Shaftsbury. The well head (including the watershed), protection area delineated by the Vermont Department of Health and the Agency of Natural Resources is in the Towns of Shaftsbury and Glastenbury. It is important that land use policies for this special designation emphasize protection of water quality in these areas. Similarly, the Village needs to coordinate its policies with Shaftsbury and Glastenbury. These communities have already taken steps to protect the aquifer. A detailed description is provided in Section 7.8 Water Supply.

##### *POLICIES:*

1. Discourage land development that would impair or endanger watersheds supplying public or private water supply systems or known aquifer recharge areas.
2. Encourage open air uses and conservation areas for lands within major watersheds. Presently almost all of the major watersheds identified fall into the conservation and resource area of the regional plan map, and most town plans classify these lands in forest and recreation.

##### *MAP:*

The North Bennington Watershed, auxiliary wells, reservoirs, and treatment plant are located in the Towns of Shaftsbury and Glastenbury are shown on their tax parcel maps.



#### 4.11 AGRICULTURAL LANDS

There are no lands under the current master plan that defines agricultural land. Land that was formerly actively utilized for agricultural purposes are now classified as VR-40. This includes lands on Mattison Road, the properties formerly known as the Hall Farm, the Hinsdill Farm, McCullough family and Carl Jolivet properties on West road. As property transfer records show, the former Hall Farm is gradually being dismembered. Under VR-40 regulation. To date, (1991), parcels are now in the ownership of Park McCullough Historical Foundation, Heirs of the McCullough family, The Nolans, Pembrokes, William Scott, the Kohlers, and Vermont Land Trusts. Other parcels of the farm are in the Town of Bennington. In the property sale deeds of the above lands within North Bennington, have restrictions limiting development and future subdivisions.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

All of the land is under VR-40 status. It is still considered prime agricultural soil, and is a topic for discussion and review under VR 40. However, since such lands are now considered residential under VR 40, additional protection is being proposed with the creation of an Agricultural Map Overlay. Future zoning bylaws should reflect decisions made in this area.

#### 4.12 HISTORIC WATERWAYS:

Just as the historic district represents a special historic resource in the Village, the historic waterways are also an integral feature deserving an overlay designation status. Paran Creek is an unusual series of dams, cascades, and mill ponds bounded by recreation, residential, commercial, and industrial uses. These 'waterways' form an unifying visual and inspirational feature of the village landscape. Although the 'waterways' are much appreciated and valued, some sections are in need of maintenance and improvement. Sections of the Creek from Lake Paran to the Walloomsac vary considerably, having both natural and man-made historic values. In addition to the general policies below, a more detailed analysis and site-specific analysis should be undertaken. This would include not only an assessment of existing and potential values for enjoyment and use, but conditions which jeopardize the overall resource such as filling-in of mill ponds, dam safety, etc.

#### **POLICIES:**

1. Mitigate existing conditions and avoid activities which can cause water pollution, siltation, and erosion.
2. Building and land modifications require careful planning to maintain the visual, natural, man-made, and open space-recreation values of the Creek.
3. Vegetation-Landscaping: The retention and selected removal of native vegetation should only be done in consultation with the County Forester, Soil Conservation Service, and Fish and Wildlife. Avoid cutting mature trees and vegetation which stabilize the stream banks. Dead trees and those that have a high potential for falling into the stream and blocking flood waters should be removed. In urban sections, give special attention to landscaping near parking areas, walkways, and more urban spaces adjacent to the stream.

4. Enhance and protect the recreational experience. As described under Recreation (7.1.3), expand the Paran Creek route as part of a broader park plan connection Lake Paran and the Walloomsac River. Encourage linkage of public ownership in appropriate sections along the Creek.
5. Preserve those areas which contribute to wildlife habitat and plant life.
6. Bring together land owners, business, and industry to improve the quality and access along Paran Creek.

#### *4.13 COUNTRYSIDE CULTURAL - NATURAL AREA:*

The land bounded by West Street (Knapp), River Road (Harrington), and Park Street is an unique resource for both the Village of North Bennington and the Town. The larger part is in the town, suggesting here the need to coordinate plan policies. Sixteen acres of the Scott's Woods and forty-five acres of the McCullough's Woods are permanently protected through the efforts of the owners and the Vermont Land Trust. The Park-McCullough House, Hall Farm, and the "night pasture" on Park Street are reserved open lands. This area 'Loop' contains a special variety of features: significant ridge-line, forest land, agricultural soil, wetlands, scenic areas, meadow lands, rock outcropping, scenic roads, trails, wildlife habitat (deer and turkey), wild flower habitat, historic interest, and recreational importance. The 'Loop' makes a natural hike-bike path and is much used by joggers, walkers, cyclists, school children-educational, and visiting tourists. Collectively this district possesses a natural-historic-cultural environment in a harmonious combination. The policies which follow are intended to protect these qualities.

#### *POLICIES:*

1. Preserve the natural, historic-cultural, agricultural, open space, and scenic values of the landscape.
2. In addition to low density uses provided in the underlying district, ensure that structures and physical improvements are integrated into the landscape in order to protect the values sought for protection.
3. For certain construction projects or subdivisions exceeding a threshold size, individually or in the aggregate in the district, conduct a broader environmental assessment to evaluate the impact on the values and methods of mitigating any such impacts.
4. Encourage the use of purchase of development rights, conservation restrictions through land trusts, etc. to provide long-term protection.
5. Encourage and reward projects which seek to maximize permanent open space protection.

#### *4.14 PUBLIC -- QUASI PUBLIC RECREATIONAL LANDS:*

This land classification includes those lands which are either publicly owned or owned and operated by a nonprofit corporation in accordance with their charter for public enjoyment. Each such area is designed (R) based on its existing and established use. As such these areas are for the exclusive uses as presently intended. Lands included in this designation include: Welling Field, Norshaft Little League Field, Norshaft Lions Playground, Grade School Playground, Lake Paran swimming area, Lake Paran fishing access, Memorial Park, Prospect Street Village Greenspots.

**POLICIES:**

1. Encourage various types of recreation facilities compatible in each area and which are either operated by a public entity or by a nonprofit corporation.
2. The facilities are intended for public use and generally include swimming, picnicking, fishing, skating, cross country skiing, hiking, nature reserves and trails, cycling-jogging-walking, education, historical tours, special events such as cultural-art-shows and musical events and similar activities. Resource management such as agricultural gardening and forestry are compatible uses.
3. Construction activities and facilities shall take into account the need to protect natural resources and scenery and sound environmental practices.
4. Avoid undue nuisance characteristics such as noise, glare, traffic, etc.

## **5.0 HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### **5.1 ROOTS AND SHORT HISTORY**

The Vermont Division of Historic Preservation prepared a detailed survey of historic structures and places and subsequently submitted the North Bennington Historic District for nomination to the National Record. In 1980, the District was officially entered. Section 4.9 of this Plan recognizes the importance of the District and identifies some Policies to protect historic values. The following are excerpts from the original survey work which describes characteristics of the District. Additionally, a complete list of each site is included in Section 9.10 of this Plan. Sections 4.9, and 5.1, are descriptive of architecture and history, one gets either a sense of admiration, or perplexity, for the people who designed, built, and lived here. In building their homes, stores, and places of business, attempts to create a sense of pleasure to the eye as well as comfort for the body are evident. The individuality of the builders is evident in the mixing of different periods and styles within buildings attests to this.

The North Bennington Historic District encompasses the principal commercial and residential areas of North Bennington comprising of 178 buildings of architectural or historical significance. Along its north edge, the settlement (and historic district) overlaps the village boundary into the adjoining township of Shaftsbury; buildings #1 - 10 of the historic district stand in the latter township but are considered unofficially part of North Bennington Village.

North Bennington retains nearly intact its nineteenth century architectural character. Vernacular interpretations of the Greek and Italianate Revival styles predominate, overlaid in some cases with decorative elements from later styles. A few examples of other styles are interspersed, including Federal, Gothic Revival, Second Empire, and Queen Anne. A small number of twentieth century buildings includes an example of Georgian Revival style.

Gable-roofed buildings of domestic scale constitute the characteristic building form in the village. Most are constructed of wood; a few are of brick (generally the larger institutional buildings), while only three stone structures (including a bridge) exist in the historic district. A majority of the buildings are painted white, generally with contrasting trim.

A distinctive ornamental device appears on many of the village's numerous slate-roofed buildings. An extraordinary high proportion of these roofs - both on principal buildings and barns or

sheds - display alternating bands of implicated shingles arranged in various patterns. The incidence of this ornamental device suggests that the same local craftsmen were responsible for slating many of the roofs in the Village.

The railroad that dominates the north section of North Bennington Village (now known as the Vermont Railway) traverses western Vermont. Presently, little used trackage, which can be upgraded, connects at the New York border about two miles west of the village with a line to the Hudson Valley. The little used Bennington branch line joins the main line in the small switching yard that surrounds the still-active freight house, a portion of which is now used as storage by a local feed company. The freight house stands to the east of the former North Bennington passenger depot; now converted to municipal and private offices.

North Bennington achieved the pinnacle both of its architectural development and its commercial and industrial expansion around 1880, the year also marked the construction of the second empire style Train depot. By then the historic district had been almost completely developed. Numerous mills and workshops concentrated at dam sites along Paran Creek employed hundreds of persons. Many stores and offices, two hotels, and various craftsmen's shops contributed to the activity along Main Street. Within the same decade, much of this same activity began to recede in 1894. When major fires destroyed the large shoe factory at the foot of Main Street (Lincoln Square) and much of the Main Street commercial center north of Houghton Street; half of the area was never rebuilt (now the Main Street corner park).

Successive fires, demolition, and economic changes have further depleted the village's nineteenth century commercial and industrial buildings, and some of the remaining ones have been converted to other uses. As a result, the village has become predominately a residential community. Detached single-family houses account for the majority; there are also a sprinkling of duplex and multiple apartment buildings reflecting the historical need for worker's housing. The latter is represented more archetypically by two surviving complexes of mill houses, "Brick Row" on Greenwich Street and the early nineteenth century group of wooden homes on Sage Street.

At the other end of residential spectrum stands the extravagant Park-McCullough mansion at the southwest corner of the village, now adapted to a historical and cultural center for the village.

Commercial buildings along Main Street share the Greek Revival or Italianate characteristics, materials, and scale of the predominate residential buildings. Only three brick commercial blocks exist in the historic district, and they represent three disparate fashions of commercial architecture spanning the latter seventy years of the nineteenth century. They range from circa 1833 Greek temple of commerce, now Power's Market; to the elaborate High Victorian Italianate style, Merchant's Bank built in 1864; to the plain commercial style Dwyer Block of 1903.

The few surviving industrial buildings in the historic district represent a variety of enterprises and building types, none remain in their original use. The stone-constructed mill complex at Lincoln Square and Prospect Streets was a grist mill, later converted by Stark to a paper mill, and now converted to a residential complex of seven units. It is the only surviving example of a early nineteenth century water-powered mill of the type that gave North Bennington its' industrial character; this mill was constructed in 1833 on the site of the first mill in the village (built circa 1770 by Joseph Haviland or Moses Sage). Situated next upstream on the Pleasant Street side, stands the Walbridge Red Mill now used for the manufacture of Hooked rugs and an architects office. Its original purpose being the

manufacture of stereoscopic items so popular in the latter part of the ninetieth century. The manufacture of stereoscopes was carried on in several of the early buildings of North Bennington as well as at the Red mill. A third mill site along Paran Creek was at corner of Sage and North Streets. A mill, constructed in 1850 may have been the first cotton mill in Vermont. It was destroyed by fire in 1913. The present three story brick factory was constructed in 1920. It was for years known as the Shea Mill. Shea was a pallet and furniture manufacturer. It is presently occupied by the Arlin Brown Engineering and Machine Company.

Mill water power dams remain in place at two site along Paran Creek. They no longer function as providers of power but provide ambience to the village scenery and the small ponds they hold. The uppermost dam stands north of the Prospect Street bridge and impounds the water as far north as the bridge at North Street. The second dam at the former Stark Paper Mill now know as Havilands Privilege, was rebuilt with concrete in 1913 and presently impounds a small pool.

Surviving buildings in the North Bennington Historic District appear to be well maintained and in surprisingly good condition. Several have been altered by removal of porches and ornamental details. A book "Those Were The Days." edited by Elizabeth Dwyer, was published in 1970, gives a pictorial view of the village and homes of an earlier era.

Some thoughts and a committee study should be devoted to extending the Village Historic District south as far as the Stone Church. The present day historical worth would have to be carefully studied. Much of this area is zoned industrial. It may not be desirable to further restrict what little industrial sites available with a historical overlay.

The History and Development of North Bennington Vermont, by Herbert S. Walbridge was published in 1937 and contains much early history of the Village.

Section 9.0 was not considered as part of the first eight sections submitted in August 1992 by the Trustees. The time frame for research and completion is too extensive. It will follow as a Addendum for probable official inclusion at a later date. The various segments of 9.0 are devoted to a broad range of historical matters of the Village's past.

What follows is an abbreviated listing to go with the map. A fuller description is given in Section 9.0

## *5.2 NUMBERED STRUCTURE IDENTIFICATION WITH THE HISTORIC DISTRICT MAP*

The North Bennington Historical District was surveyed and nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under the Federal Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Earlier representations of historic streets and structures existed from a survey done in 1974 by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. The present Historic District comprising approximately 112 acres, includes the Village core, a portion of the Town of Shaftsbury know as District 1. (District 1 is part of the North Bennington Graded School District.) The facts presented here and in the future SECTION 9.0, come from a variety of sources, none of which, by themselves were complete. Local residents and the Vermont State Division of Historic Preservation shared the work of compiling the list and fleshing out the individual structure histories. Unfortunately, no record exists of the local folks involved so credit can't be given where due. On the State's side, a Hugh H. Henry and Terry Winters under the supervision of Chester H. Liebs, appear to have done much of the legwork and photographic renderings

of the structures as they existed in 1974 –1980. The numbered items below merely indicate the name of the structure, date of construction in parentheses if known, and a very brief description. It is referenced to the Historic District Map. (Insert.)

### NORTH BENNINGTON'S HISTORIC DISTRICT

1. – 7. Brick Row Complex, Greenwich Street in Shaftsbury, (Circa 1867) .  
Built by North Bennington Boot & Shoe Company for their employees.
8. Reuben Green House, Greenwich Street in Shaftsbury, (post-1894)
9. Walsh House, Main Street, (post-1894)
10. Ciocca House, Main Street, (pre-1869)
11. Milo C. Huling House, 66 Main Street, (prior 1869), own by David and Jean Aldrich
- 11a. Huling Carriage Barn, one of the remaining elaborate kern barns left in the Village.
12. Shanahan House, 63 Main Street, (pre-1856)
- 12a. Shanahan Barn, clapboarded, gable roof, slated shingles.
13. Darling House, 59 Main Street, (pre-1856), 1-1/2 story, wood framed,  
clapboarded, east ell with south entrance.
14. Edward D. Wellings House, 58 Main Street, (post 1869), Italianate Revival style home
- 14a. E. D. Wellings Carriage Barn, design follows the home, #14
15. North Bennington Hotel, Main Street, (prior 1869), over the tracks from the station.  
Altered over the years for varied uses. Finally burned down in 1960's.  
Only a basement wall remains, used by Whitman's Feed Store for storage area.
16. Whitman's Feed Store, off Greenwich Street, (post-1869),  
originally constructed as a soap factory .
17. Rutland Railroad Freight House, off Houghton Street, (prior 1869), later renamed Vermont  
Railway when trackage bought by the State. Now used by Whitmans for storage.
18. Rutland RR / Vermont Railway Depot, Main Street at Depot Street, (1880) .  
Architecturally considered the finest Depot in Vermont. Had the first inside flush toilet  
in town. Now used as Municipal Offices and partially rented to a Architectural Firm.
19. U. S. Post Office, Main Street, (1957), undistinguished architecture, serviceable building,  
and does not contribute to the historical character.
20. Coal Shed, Depot Street, (post-1869), with tower on track side. From the era of the steam  
engine. Later used in Joe Nadeau's coal business. [*stands sad and depressed.*]
21. Stark Paper Company Storeroom, Depot Street, (post-1869)  
From 1930 through the 1960's used as a receiving station by the Polygraphic Corporation for  
printing papers. At one time Polygraphic was the largest operating Lithographic plant in  
Vermont. In its heyday , it ran five color sheet fed presses taking sheets 54" x 76".
22. Frank Green House, Depot Street, (post-1869)
23. ??? House, (post-1869), history unknown
24. ??? House, (post-1869), history unknown
25. Bake Shop House, 48 Main Street, (pre-1856)
26. ??? House, 48 Main Street, (post-1894), history unknown
27. W. Bernice Simmons House, 46 Main Street, (post-1894), similar to #26
28. ??? House, 45 Main Street, (post-1894)
29. Frederick Simmons House, 42-44 Main Street, (pre-1869), wood-frame, clapboarded, flat roof
30. H. Clayton Simmons House, 40 Main Street, (pre-1856) in the Greek Revival style
- 30a. H. Clayton Barn, detailed tie-in with house styling.
31. Dr. Edward Tobin House, Main Street, (pre-1856), similar to H. C. Simmons across the street.  
Greek Revival with ad additional Italianate detailing.
- 31a. Tobin Carriage Barn, complements residence.
32. Simmon's Boiler Shop (1900). Willis' Garage from about 1940 until he died.  
Now Redeemed Repair. A garage and used car lot.
- 32A. Former H. C. Simmons Foundry, off Main Street, (1914), 1-story concrete block
33. Dr. Newton House, (1848) ,also known as the Cobblestone House

- 33a. Newton Barn, 1-1/2 stories
34. Fannie Hinsdill House, (pre-1856)
35. Stone House, 28 Main Street (circa 1840). Only stone example within the Historic District.
36. Dwyer Block, Main Street, 3 stories, brick
37. Morris Block, Main Street, (post-1886). Most elaborately detailed example of a wood-frame flat-roofed commercial block
38. Panos Block, Main Street, (post-1886). Used as a ice cream and candy store. Now headquarters for Quality Plumbing and Heating.
39. Rich House, Houghton Street, (pre-1886)
40. Lowre House, Houghton Street, (pre-1894)
41. Mary Meagher House, Houghton Street, (pre-1856), now occupied by the David Shaughnessy family.
42. Austin House, Houghton Street, (circa 1930)
43. Young House, Houghton Street, (post-1894)
44. McGuire House, Houghton Street, (post 1894)
45. Stevens House, Houghton Street, (post 1894)
46. Coy House, Houghton Street, (pre-1856)
47. Roman Catholic Rectory, Houghton Street, (pre-1869), 2 stories, wood frame, metal siding
48. St. John The Baptist, Houghton Street, Roman Catholic Church (1928), brick
49. Houghton House, Houghton Street, (pre-1856). Also known as the Gingerbread House.
50. First National Bank, Bank Square, (1864). Became the Catamount Bank and presently known as The Merchants Bank of Burlington.
51. Whites Apartments, 9 Bank Street, first house built on then newly opened Bank Street.
52. Masonic Lodge, Bank Street, former carriage barn of #51. Converted to present use in 1917-18.
53. Edward Phillips House, Bank Street, (pre-1869)
53. A. Phillips Carriage Barn
54. Gaul House, 15 Bank Street, (pre-1869)
55. Myron Jones House, 17 Bank Street, (circa 1910)
56. Loveland House, 19 Bank Street, ( post -1894)
57. Hanrahan House, 21 Bank Street, (post- 1894)
58. Russell House, 23 Bank Street, (pre-1894)
59. Grocery Store, junction at Bank Street and VT Rte. 67, (circa-1920s), enlarged 1970, converted from gas station. Does not contribute to the character of the District.
60. Bennington and Hoosick Valley Trolley Car Barn, (1897). Housed varied businesses since then. Now Brian Toomey's Woodworking and Mill shop.
61. Sidney Colvin House, 24 Bank Street, (1855)
- 61A. Colvin Barn, stands west of the house
62. Krum House, 16 Bank Street, (pre-1869), 2-1/2 stories with 1-1/2 story south ell
63. Ralph Jones House, 14 Bank Street, (pre-1869).
64. Amy Surdam House, 12 Bank Street, (pre-1856). Built by A. Safford.
- 64A. Surdam Barn, clapboard, gabled roof
65. Herbert White House, 10 Bank Street, (pre-1856)
66. Congregational Church, Bank and School Streets (1873). Cost \$15,000 to build.
67. Congregational Parsonage, 6 Bank Street, (pre-1856). House has resemblance to the White Apartments across the street but a bit more conservative
68. Gas Station, Bank and Main Streets, (1960). built on site of former Hotel White.
69. Ross House, 1 Church Street, 1-1/2 stories
70. Toomey House, Church Street, Bungaloid style, 1-1/2 stories
71. Davis House, Church Street, (post 1894), 2 stories, clapboarded, hip roof
72. Dr. Woodhull House, Church Street, (post 1869), 2-1/2 stories, composition siding, gabled roof
73. Bazino House, 5 Church Street, (post-1869), 1-1/2 stories, clapboard gabled slate roof
74. Parker House, 5 Church Street (pre-1869), 2 stories, clapboarded, slate roof
75. McCarthy House, 7 Church Street, (pre-1869), clapboarded, hip roof, slate shingles
76. Welch House, 9-11 Church Street, (pre-1894), duplex, 2-1/2 stories, clapboard, gabled roof, slate shingles
77. Vetel House, 12 Church Street, (pre-1894), 1-1/2 stories, clapboarded,

- gable roof, slate shingles
- 77A. Vetal Shed, 1-story, novelty siding, gabled roof
- 78. Howe House, 13 Church Street, (pre-1869) 10-1/2 stories, 3 bay, clap boarded, gable roof with slate shingles
- 79. Baptist Church, Church Street, (1845). Moved to present site in 1865
- 80. Baptist Parsonage, Church Street (circa 1890)
- 80A. Parsonage Barn, 1-1/2 stories, clap boarded, gable roof, slate shingles.
- 81. Harrington House, West and Church Streets, (1847) 1-1/2 stories, brick, stone lintels, gable roof with slate shingles. Now occupied by Julia Randall.
- 81A. Garage, (1970), 1-1/2 stories.
- 82. Van Ben House, West Street, (pre-1856) Greek Revival, built by Nathaniel Hall.
- 83. The Lodge, formerly part of the Park-McCullough Estate across the road. (1856)
- 83A. Garage, 1-story concrete block. converted to residence.
- 84. Asheal Salmon House, School and West Streets (pre-1869)
- 85. Knapp House, 15-17 School Street, (post-1894)
- 86. North Bennington Graded School, School Street, (built in 1871), 2-story brick building
- 87. Briggs House, School Street (post-1894)
- 88. Ransom House, School Street (post-1894)
- 89. Major Holt House, School Street, (post-1894)
- 90. Sam Tessier House, 16 School Street, (pre-1894)
- 91. La Vigne House, School Street (post-1894)
- 92. ??? House, West and School Streets, (pre-1894)
- 93. Kenyon House, West Street, (pre-1856)
- 94. ??? House, West Street, (pre-1856)
- 95. ??? House, West Street, (post-1894)
- 96. ??? House, West Street, (post-1894)
- 97. Miles House, West Street, (pre-1869)
- 98. ??? House, West Street, (post-1894)
- 99. ??? House, West Street, (post-1894), identical to #98
- 100. Albert S. Hathaway House, West Street, (pre-1869)
- 100a. Carriage Barn to above #100.
- 101. ??? House, West Street, (circa 1940)
- 102. William J. Harrington House, West Street, (pre-1869)
- 103. Franklin Scott House, West Street, (pre-1894)
- 104. ??? House, 10 West Street, (circa 1940)
- 105. McCullough Library, Main and West Streets, most prominent 20th century Building in the Historic District. (1920-21)
- 106. Dr. J.B. Armstrong House, 8 Main Street (circa 1825), brick painted white.
- 107. Dr. David Gleason House, Main Street,
- 107a. Carriage Barn to #107.
- 108. Ranney House, Main Street, (post-1894)
- 109. Former Rosier Dry goods Store, 16 Main Street
- 110. Babson House, 18 Main Street, (pre-1856)
- 111. Meagher-Brundage House, 21 Main Street, (pre-1856)
- 112. George B. Welling House, Main and Sage Streets (circa 1826)
- 112a. Carriage Barn to #112
- 112b. Barn to #112
- 113. Power's Market, Main and Sage Streets (circa 1833), Greek Temple adaptation
- 114. ??? Storefront, Main Street, (circa 1955), presently Ronald Nadeau property
- 115. Former Union Store, Main Street (circa 1850)
- 116. Percy's Store, Main and Prospect Streets
- 117. Former Andrew J. Nash, Nash Street, blacksmith shop, (pre-1894), once used as Vocational shop for North Bennington School
- 118. Former Shanahans Livery Stable, Nash Street (post-1894)
- 119. North Bennington Fire House, Prospect Street, (1965) brick construction, replaced older wooden firehouse across the street.

- 120. Bevis House, Water Street, (pre-1856)
- 121. Driscoll House, Water Street, (pre-1856)
- 122. Mackey House, Water Street (pre-1856)
- 123. "Baby Tom" Powers House, Water Street (pre-1856)
- 124. Former Stark Paper mill, off Water Street, (1833), now Haviland's Privilege Condos
- 124a. Pond House on Haviland Privilege land, rebuilt from old stock barn.
- 124b. Garage, (circa 1979) Modern improvement
- 125. Former James E. Powers Clothing Store, Prospect and Water Street, (circa 1890)  
now North Bennington Cafe
- 126. Lizzie Ryan House, Prospect Street, (circa 1890)
- 127. Former North Bennington Firehouse (prior 1856 as blacksmith shop)
- 128. Prospect Street bridge, one span stone arch bridge, (1879)
- 129. Walbridge Red Mill, Prospect and Pleasant Streets (prior 1856), still commercially used.
- 130. Frank Waters House, Pleasant Street,(post-1894)
- 131. G.D. Mattison House, Pleasant Street, (pre-1869)
- 132. James Morrissey House, Pleasant Street, (pre-1856)
- 133. Louis Lassoer House, Pleasant Street, (pre-1869)
- 67A. Barn to #133
- 134. Charles Corcoran House, Pleasant Street, (pre-1894)
- 135. James Powers House, Pleasant Street
- 136. ??? House, Prospect Street (pre-1856)
- 137. James McGovern House, Prospect Street, (pre-1856)
- 138. Hattie S.Welling House, Prospect Street, (prior 1856)
- 67A. Carriage barn to #138
- 139. Fred Welling House, Prospect Street, (prior 1856)
- 140. Ed Nash House, Prospect Street, (pre-1856)
- 67A. Barn to # 140
- 141. Ed Musher House, Prospect Street (pre-1894)
- 142. Richard and Elizabeth Dwyer House, Prospect Street, (post-1894)
- 143. Sol. J. H. Walbridge House, 34 Prospect Street, (original prior 1856)
- 67A. Barn to #143
- 144. Watson House, Prospect Street (circa 1930)
- 145. Herbert S. Walbridge House, Prospect Street, (pre-1894)
- 146. Andrew J. Nash House, 48 Prospect Street, (pre-1856)
- 67A. Barn to #146
- 147. George H. Elwell House, Prospect Street, (prior 1856)
- 67A. Carriage barn to #147
- 148. Catherine Elwell House, Prospect and Mechanic Streets, (post-1894)
- 149. ??? House Prospect and Mechanic Streets, (post-1894?)
- 150. ??? House, Mechanic Street, (post-1894)
- 151. ??? House, Mechanic Street, (post-1894)
- 152. ??? House, Mechanic Street, (post-1894)
- 153. C.W.White House, Mechanic and North Streets, (circa 1903)
- 67A. Garage to #153
- 154. ??? House, Mechanic Street, (post-1894)
- 155. Richard Corcoran House, Mechanic Street, (pre-1894)
- 156. ??? House off Mechanic Street, converted, former barn of #157
- 157. Mooney House, 19 Mechanic Street, (pre-1894)
- 158. Goodermote House, 23 Mechanic Street, (pre-1869)
- 158a. Barn to #158
- 159. Rufus Towsely House, 25 Mechanic Street, (pre-1869)
- 160. Burton Bromley House, Mechanic Street, (pre-1894)
- 67A. Barn for #160
- 161. Arthur Sheppard House, 26 Mechanic Street, (circa 1856)
- 67A. Barn for #161
- 162. ??? House, North and Mechanic Street, (pre-1894), now Thomas Paquin residence

- 163. North Street Bridge, Pony Truss, no longer exists
- 164. Former Payne's Shop, North and Sage Streets, (1919-20: Brick factory)
- 165-176. Mill Houses, Sage Street (formerly Factory Lane) (circa 1811 thru 1850)
- 177-177c. Park-McCullough House and assorted buildings
- 178. Governor Highland Hall Farmhouse, off Park Street, part of the Park-McCullough complex  
Luther Park House on Park Street going west from the Big House. Stood on the site of the Bennington Free Library. Moved to the Hall Farm in 1914. Not included within the Historical District, but historically significant.

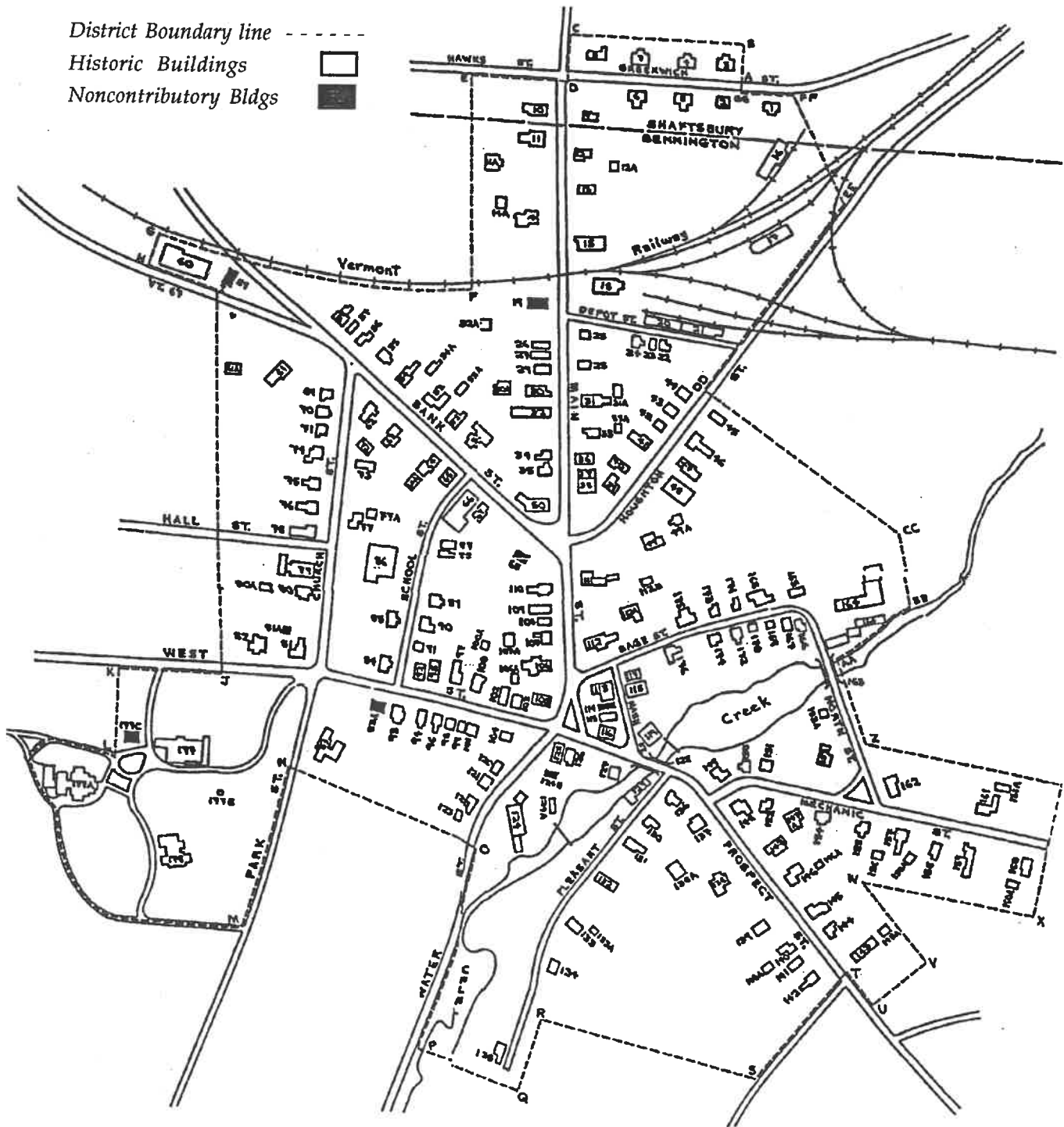
Hinsdill House, on right side of Harrington Road going northwest past the Bennington Waste Water Treatment Facility. Not within the District but considered an outstanding example of a Georgian House within Bennington County.

Henry House, west side of the Buck Henry Covered bridge, (1769). A straight forward five bay Georgian style structure. Once a Inn on the old Albany Post Road.

E. M. Henry House, east side of the Buck Henry Bridge at junction of Harrington and River Roads. Later George Mattison's residence. In 1932 bought by the McCullough/Scott families. Now the residence of the Wamsleys. Outside the Historic District but interesting.

Old Stone Church, at junction of River Road, Hillside and Water Streets. Unusual for its stone design and construction. Stone probably quarried close by, but not of the best quality. Had a checkered career as a Church.

North Bennington Historic District  
Based on a April 1980 Map



## **6.0 TRANSPORTATION**

Public transportation is limited within the region. Freight goods can be moved and removed from North Bennington by rail and truck. There is no rail passenger service. Smaller package deliveries are handled by the Postal Service, United Parcel, Federal Express and several air freight concerns. Taxi livery is available. People moving is accomplished by personal vehicles, bikes, or walking. Limited air services are available at the Bennington State Airport. The nearest major airport is located in Albany, NY, 50 minutes away.

Main highways leading to the Village are: from the west, New York's Route 67; from the south, (Bennington) Route pa (North side Drive) to state Route 67a. From Shaftsbury, going south on State Route 67.

The Village roads are a community resource. They provide the ease of transportation so necessary in our daily activities. The Village Highway Department under the direction of the Trustees maintain our system of roads. Minor repairs are undertaken by the highway department. Major work such as widening and resurfacing is undertaken by outside contracting by the Village.

Of increasing concern is the visible and aesthetic appearances as one approaches the Village Center from the South. Water Street does not present the best in a scenic sense. Collectively the Village in partnership with the property owners along this stretch of road, should discuss how best to improve our Village approach. A revitalization of roadside tree plantings could be one of the considerations. While Water Street has been singled out as a pressing example, the other streets of the Village should not be ignored when considering landscape improvements.

Public transportation is limited within the Region. Freight goods can be moved and removed from North Bennington by rail and truck. There is no rail passenger service. Smaller package deliveries are handled by the Postal Service, United Parcel, Federal Express, and several air freight concerns. Taxi delivery is available on call. From Bennington, Vermont Transit supplies scheduled bus service North and South along Vt. State Routes 7 and pa. Limited bus service East to Brattleboro, also Northwest to Hoosick Falls, New York is available. Vermont Transit in conjunction with Greyhound lines, supplies service to the Albany, New York area including a stop at the Albany Amtrak station. Greyhound services generally service New York City and the rest of the Nation. Limited air services are available at the Bennington State Airport. The nearest major airport is located in Albany, New York, 50 minutes away.

On a local basis, people moving is mostly accomplished by personal vehicles, bikes, or walking. While residents don't consciously think of Main Street as a major highway, Water Street, Main Street, Route 67, and Route 67a are major thorough-fares to point West, South, and North. Some thought should be given to the dilemma of noise and vibration and its effect on our roads and homes by heavy vehicular travel.

The street system within the Village core is well established. Due to the close density of structures on both sides of the streets, it is unlikely roadway widening is a practical undertaking. Parking in such areas often constricts the flow of traffic. Short of creating a one-way street system, we find it necessary to live with it. Off street parking and proximity of properly designed and maintained public parking appear to be the most reasonable solution. However in any future road widening projects, consideration to at least on one-side curb parking should be considered.

A break out of statistics relating to roads of North Bennington from the 1990 and 1991 Reports of Bennington Town follows:

**North Bennington Village Roads, by class — 1989/90, 1990/91**

	Class <u>1</u>	Class <u>2</u>	Class <u>3</u>	Class <u>4</u>	State Highway	TOTAL MILES
Road Mileage 1989/90	1.881	.080	7.280	.000	.271	9.512
Road Mileage 1990/91	1.667	.080	7.280	.000	.485	9.512

**Vermont State Aid Received on a Per-Mile Basis**

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991*</u>
Class 1 Roads	\$9,180.86	\$9,226.77
Class 2 Roads	3,532.31	3,541.77
Class 3 Roads	1,172.57	1,184.17

Total received for 1990: \$26,088.33

Total received for 1991: \$24,285.09 (from 7/1/91 to 7/1/92)

(Monies paid in quarterly installments)

(\*From 7/1/91)

While the dollars figures for per mile, aid were up in 1991 over 1990, the Class 1 Road mileage dropped to 1.667 miles, 0.214 miles being transferred to State Control - North Bennington Road - Vt. 67A at the southern end of the Village.

**CLASS I ROADS**

Bank Street  
Bennington Road, (67a-The Flats)  
Main Street  
Water Street

**CLASS II ROADS:**

Bank Street Extension  
(Shaftsbury line to Route 67 intersection).

**CLASS III ROADS:**

Church Street	Hall Street	Lake Paran Road	Overlea Road	River Road
College Road	Harlan Road	Matteson Road	Park Street	Royal Street
Depot Street	Hillside Street	Mechanic Street	Pleasant Street	Sage Street
Frederick Street	Houghton Street	Nash Street	Polygraphic Lane	School Street
George Street	Knapp Road	North Street	Prospect Street	West Street

**BRIDGES WITHIN THE VILLAGE:**

- B-71 Prospect Street at Pleasant Street
- B-72 North Street at Sage Street
- B-73 Bennington Road (Rte 67a) near ChemFab Corporation and Scarey Lane

Since we have our own highway department we are responsible for the maintenance of all bridges within the Municipality. Of the three bridges listed above, only B-71 and B-72 are of concern to us now. In June of 1990 B-73, the bridge over Paran Creek came under State control.

*B-71 Bridge, Prospect Street at Pleasant Street:*

Levi Gould constructed this one-span stone arch bridge in 1876 to carry Prospect Street over Paran Creek. During the middle twentieth century, the bridge was completely encased in concrete, thereby concealing its original appearance. Five-bar railings supported by cruciform iron posts remain in place to protect its road and walkways. Bowing to age and modern times, in 1990, a guardrail system was installed to protect the old iron. This bridge is listed as #128 on the Historic Register.

*B-72 Bridge. North and Sage Streets:*

Carrying North Street over Paran Creek. In 1983 the old pony truss bridge was closed due to it weakened condition. Replaced, and reopened in 1984, it was rebuilt with new iron underbeams, a concrete deck, and guardrails. Only the stream side stone abutments underneath remain and are used to carry the new structure. Their historical value is presently dubious. The old bridge, listed on the Historic Register as # 163, was a one-span pony truss possessing double outside walkways. It was one of the last examples of its type in Vermont. Its date of construction is not recorded. However, traffic on Sage and North Streets is noted in 1857-58. Records do not exist for any prior bridges at this site. Section 9.10 gives a description of the Pony truss bridge as it existed.

In the advance planning for a new bridge over the Walloomsac, bringing connecting road from Murphy Road at the base of Austin Hill Road to a juncture with Route 67A at the foot of Royal Street, the State took over responsibility for an additional 0.214 mile (1,130 feet) westward to include the present old bridge over Paran Creek. The exchange in Road Class mileage is reflected in the above chart. In 1990 a caution light was installed on the east side of the Paran Creek bridge as a safety factor for Chemfab pedestrians walking over to their parking lot. A new bridge over the Creek is in the planning and design stage.

*Unofficial Roads:*

There are several Lanes within the Village that came into being as Rights of Way to various properties among them are: Kendall Rich Heights Lane (off Hillside Street), Scarey Lane (off Bennington Road paralleling Paran Creek North), and Sweet Road/Lever Road Circle (off Water Street).

The Village supplies courtesies such as snow plowing. However not being legal streets and considered as rights-of-way, the Village is not legally obligated to provide full road services.

Roads, as part of any subdivision proposals, require coordinated efforts of the Trustees, Planning Commission and State Highway Department to insure proper placement, egress, and construction, to meet all requirements as to drainage, road widths, walkways, sub base and top surfacing, reliability and ease of maintenance. This should be a prerequisite before such roads can to be considered for acceptance as part of the Village system.

The Village of North Bennington roads are either macadam or surface treated (oiled) gravel. The only exceptions are .24 miles of Lake Paran Road and 1.02 miles of Park Street. These are dirt graded. In addition, Park Street is designated as a scenic road to be preserved with it's dirt surface as a historical reminder of what Vermont roads once were.

Observations of the Class 3 Roads within the Village (7.280 miles) indicate some needs not

adequately addressed. Village roads, particularly in outlying areas are in need of renewed crowning and resurfacing. Park Street, while designated a scenic road has its own unique problem. Yearly road grading leaves a less than ideal solution for this road. After grading, the roadbed surface often contains much loose surface stone, some of fair size, the danger to vehicles and pedestrians is much the same as with the pot-holed stretches that grading temporarily smooths out. The same problem keeps reoccurring.

In discussing the Village transportation network, roads should not be the only consideration. Storm drainage, and stone curbing are factors. While the Village has some sidewalks, the walking surfaces are neither consistent nor of a uniform quality. The Village needs a sidewalk improvement plan that include uniform standards of construction within the Village as well as the outlying streets. proper basework as well as quality surfacing will provide a safe, durable walk with easier maintenance.

Presently North Bennington has no influence on the variability and maintenance of the railroad trackage within it's borders. It is within the realm of probability that we will once again have rail passenger service brought about by future energy costs of transportation. We should at least make the effort when necessary, to forestall attempts to abandon trackage.

The Planning Commission should encourage the sponsorship of a study on the feasibility of a Greenway Trail System within the Village. It is hoped a Planning Grant can be obtained for this Survey and study. This can be considered as a pathway of low tech transportation as well as for the pleasure in a recreational use.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. A formal written Highway and sidewalk improvement plan within a three to five year timeframe along with yearly progressions and estimated costs should become a part of the Village's Annual Report. It is one thing to suggest improvements versus the reality that the Village taxpayers face each year. At the Annual Meeting, residents should have the opportunity to consider the scope and cost of that year's Plan segment. Segments should be so designed so that they can be deferred or substituted with another segment.
2. With no alternate arterial highway offering, consideration to posting lower truck speeds within the Village. With strict enforcement, some alleviation some of the noise and vibrations may be accomplished. To attempt a reduction in axle weight appears impractical due to its tie to State and Federal funding guidelines.
3. Recently several situations have arisen in Planning and Zoning considerations regarding legal road widths and where Village ownership ends and where actual private property line exists for purposes of determining set backs for structures, signs and such things as fences. It is recommended that every legally accepted road within the Village be defined as to actual right-of-way in feet, point in road where measurement is to start from. That an official roads map be made available with the proper notations. It would be helpful if a fact sheet with all pertinent information be assembled for inclusion with the Zoning Bylaws. In order to accomplish this, it will be necessary to research land maps and Deeds as to when the roads were first accepted by the Village.

4. In 1973 a Urban Area Transportation Plan was prepared by the Bennington County Regional Commission. That Plan included recommendations for improvements to major roads and streets within North Bennington. However, to see if it still is pertinent to the Nineties, would require a review by residents and Trustees. Our roads are part of the persona of the Village. Each street acts as a reflection of its homes and inhabitants. Residents on each street should continue to be consulted on road improvements in their neighborhood. This reflection should be incorporated into Recommendation # 1.
5. In the past, roadside beauty was a hallmark of our Village. An on-going Program of tree planting on public and private lands would help bring back that serenity to our homes and streets. An equitable sharing of costs and care should be easily attainable. Federal Grant money funneled through the Vermont Department of Economic Development (which supplies matching funds) and passed on to the Town of Bennington, should be pursued by the Village Trustees.
6. The Annual Village Report while stating the current financial status of the village, should also be viewed as another chapter in the ongoing history of the Village. A current year's log of comments by Department Commissioners including the Highway Department, on projects undertaken, completed and projected in the near term.
7. Parking, the perennial problem. Our Zoning By-law references no longer adequately address the Village today. Public Parking areas on Village property should be professionally developed and publicized. The allotment of curbside parking to various business establishments presently exists as an overlapping of granted Zoning Variances. A poor practice indicating changes are in order. Perhaps within our Village, there lives an individual versed in the study of traffic patterns, flow and innovative parking ideas, who will step forward, make a study, and offer timely suggestions. Our main concern is from Lower Main Street at Lincoln Square and traveling northward to Upper Main ending at Depot Street. At the southern end, completion of the parking lot next to the firehouse, a redesign of Lincoln Square, restricting the entrance to Prospect Street and increasing the parking availability and landscaped buffer zone, would add parking convenience and atmospheric ambiance to that Village entrance. At the North end, Depot Parking appears adequate at the present. A future resurfacing and space marking as well as extending the landscaping (including trees) along Depot Street should be including in future Village Infrastructure planning. For that section from Bank Square to the Post Office, a satisfactory solution is yet to be offered.

## **7.0 VILLAGE FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### **7.1 VILLAGE GOVERNMENT**

North Bennington is an Incorporated Village. It was incorporated May 11, 1866. (Also acts of 1904 and 1921) General Assembly Act 238, State of Vermont sets out the original Charter. It was amended in 1979 to enable the Village to set its own highway tax rate. By Village-wide vote on March 20, 1990, the Charter was again amended to pass control of the Water department to the Trustees.

North Bennington is governed by a board of five Trustees who are elected annually on a staggered basis and who elect their own Chairman each year. Other elected officials are: Moderator,

Village Treasurer, Board Clerk and 3 Auditors. The Tax Collector in recent years has been appointed in conjunction with the North Bennington Graded School District, to serve both units

North Bennington owns and operates it's own water system which is non-political and, prior to 1990, was administered by a self-perpetuating board of five water Commissioners. Charter changes now allow Village Trustees to influence appointment of Board members and fix their term of office

Water is supplied within the Village with extensions into adjacent areas of Bennington Rural and the Town of Shaftsbury. Also the South Shaftsbury Fire and Light District distributes water purchased from North Bennington. North Bennington residents receive a discount on their town taxes because of having their own water supply.

The Village has it's own Village Plan and Zoning Ordinances which are administered by a Planning Commission, a Zoning Board of Adjustment and a Zoning Administrator. Currently each board, (Total separation into two distinct boards with different memberships took place in early 1990.) The Planning Commission and, the Zoning Board of Adjustment have five members each and, are appointed for four year terms by the Village Trustees. The Zoning Administrator is appointed by the Planning Commission with the advice and final consent of the Village Trustees. He is currently is paid out of fees collected for his work.

The Village through its elected officers, performs the following:. Collects general and highway taxes. The tax rates are set based upon the Grand List which is prepared and furnished by the Bennington Town Listers. The highway rate has to be the same as set by the town.

Operates its own highway Department, which maintains all the Village streets, sidewalks, parks, etc. both in summer and winter.

Operates a volunteer Fire Department which covers the Village confines and also answers mutual aid calls from it's own fire house. Under the Bennington Consolidation Act, the Town contributes to the expenses of this department.

Has it's own street lighting contract with CVPS.

Takes care of its own signing,(streets, traffic, posted speeds, parking, etc. Police protection is currently supplied by the Town.

Can and does make ordinances concerning traffic, stop & yield areas, speed control, one way streets, parking and general welfare of the Village

Administers its own Revenue Sharing Funds (When available.) Provides the Community with services and attentions that come by having friends and neighbors as officials.

## **7.2 EDUCATION**

In discussion of education, the North Bennington Graded School comes first to mind. However, there are alternate private schools within the municipality serving various age groups. (See below.)

The majority of the area's youngsters attend the North Bennington Graded School. The grades include kindergarten thru sixth. Grades seven thru twelve are bused to a Union High School overseen by the Southwest Supervisory Union. The makeup of the graded school district is unique. North Bennington, while a individual municipality, is located in the Town of Bennington. A special District One, located in the Town of Shaftsbury, is officially a part of this graded school district. The school building is located in North Bennington, Town of Bennington.

Regarding Shaftsbury District One, its beginnings, are further elaborated in Section 9.2, with a more complete explanation on the formation of this School District.

School student records for 1991, indicate that 42% of the students reside in District One, Shaftsbury. The majority (58%) come from within the Village boundaries proper.

The U.S. Census demographics, for North Bennington, in a preliminary report, on 1990 population, housing, and group quarters, show losses from the 1980 census in all three areas. This appears at odds with local knowledge. As more 1990 information become available, future committees will have better specifics to work with.

The present graded school is staffed with excellent teachers and a principal, who are guided by a School Board of elected citizens from North Bennington and District One of Shaftsbury. These citizens have taken upon themselves the responsibility of providing the best educational opportunities that the tax base can support.

The High School Grades, are taught at Mount Anthony Union High School. A Junior High building serves grades seven and eight. A Senior High Building serves the ninth thru twelfth grades. This Union School District serves the surrounding towns as well as North Bennington. The buildings are physically located in Bennington. Students are bused to and from these school complexes.

The Southwest Supervisory Union, in addition to its' general responsibilities of correlating the educational programs of the various elementary school districts that feed to Junior and Senior high schools, supply specialized service to the elementary schools as needed. In the instance of North Bennington, we use the Central Office for bookkeeping, the Resource Center for teacher materials, Special Education programs and related services, curriculum development, and a host of statistical chores.

The only alternate school within the Village Boundaries (in 1992), addressing the preschool and/or elementary grades is: The Southshire Community School and, Bennington College's Early Childhood Center.

The Southshire Community School, is presently located in the Masonic Temple building on Bank Street. The Southshire Community School is a family oriented elementary school in the tradition of the one-room school house, serving children in grades K through 6. Of the average yearly enrollment, approximately 33% come from within the Village and Shaftsbury District One. Potential impact on future public school class size at any grade level appears minimal.

In 1992 the Hiland House School situated on Rte 9A, opened its doors to enrollments. Its teaching staff is composed of former Prospect School (of North Bennington) administrators/teachers. It is a private alternate school. It is accredited by the Vermont Department of Education to carry 1st grade through 8th grade. (In 1992, United Counseling of Bennington acquired the former Prospect School property at Park and West Streets for expansion into various Head Start Programs.)

Further afield, The Pine Cobble School of WilliamsTown, Ma., Has a nursery through ninth grade curriculum. The student body in early 1991 was roughly 150 students. Of this 3 (2%) might come from North Bennington in any given year. Indications are, that students going to Pine Cobble, continue their education at the next level of private institutions.

Another parental choice is St Marys' Parochial School, located in Hoosick Falls, NY. Sources indicate, that the year to year average is five students from North Bennington. The grades taught include prekindergarten thru eighth grade. Usually students who start at St Marys, remain thru their

eighth grade. The five students indicated in the above yearly average, are disbursed within the education ladder pre-K through 8th grade. Privately run schools receive no public funds and are supported by parents, endowments, donations and involved advocates.

Student impact from private schools on North Bennington's public school elementary classroom space is minimal. North Bennington's School Board is kept abreast on the total numbers attending public elementary schools elsewhere so as not to be completely surprised by a unanticipated enrollment increase such as from a school closing. The impact if any usually comes at the high school ninth grade level. This would effect the overall total educational budget. The unforeseen element is usually with families moving in and about the various school districts within the Southwest Supervisory Union.

Within the Municipal boundaries of the Village, is the campus of Bennington College, a Liberal Arts college. In addition to its adult offerings, the College has its own early childhood program for area youngsters, run adjacently, with one of the College's on-campus course/programs. Bennington's Early Childhood Program contains classes for preschoolers and a State certified kindergarten. The average yearly enrollment is between 12 to 18 children. A fair approximation is that 20% come from North Bennington. A impact of three to five youngsters would be ready to enter first grade each year. These figures would have to added to the public kindergarten classes in determining first grade enrollments.

Bennington College students, in the past, with the approval of the North Bennington School Board and School Principal, have helped teachers on special projects such as drama, dance, math and science. These educational encounters, if prudently monitored should benefit all participants.

A awareness of the increasing importance of good day care facilities within the community is a sign of changing times. One facility is: the Country Corner Day-care Center for infant and preschoolers. A day-care facility, located on River Road in the southern end of the Village. Country Corner also has a after school program at the North Bennington Graded School. Also available, at least as of early 1991, are several smaller "neighborhood" preschool centers. These have the additional appeal of being very close to the child's home. They are: Bonnie Ware, (Hall Street), Barbara Barbagallo, (Harvest Hills). To Those who find it more convenient, there is also Sunrise Family Center in Bennington.

There are other educational opportunities within the geographical region worthy of note. They are: Southern Vermont College. Vermont Community College. SWVMC School for Licensed Practical Nursing. Antioch/New England Graduate School maintains a office but no local campus in Bennington. Further south, about 25 miles, in WilliamsTown, MA., is located Williams College.

Several religious groups offer their own sites and program offerings for specific age groups, for those so attuned. The Mount Anthony Union High School and its' Vocational Center offer courses for economic improvement as well as cultural enrichment and is open to all age groups.

Supplemental educational opportunities for adults and teenagers are also offered by the Bennington Tutorial Center.

One area which is often overlooked in the discussion of Educational facilities are libraries. Students gain much of their information and education by research in libraries. Class research goes on within the school building's own library. Our Village children are fortunate that the public McCullough Library is located within easy walking distance of most homes as well as the school. For those able to garner transportation, The Bennington Free Library can be a further source of intellectual wealth.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

In any discussions regarding education, The Town of Shaftsbury should be a party. District One's contribution of students and tax revenue vary from year to year. In 1990/1991 42% of the student body resided in District One.

The opportunities for children to obtain a basic, well founded education, in their formative years of development is vital regardless of the periodic economic turns of Community fortune. The economic, and social trends of the early 1990's and perhaps beyond, suggest that we have to begin considering alternatives for delivering that education to our children.

The Community Public Education system, thru its teachers, Board, and local residents, should seek out ways to draw upon the talents of the people of Bennington College, perhaps in some form of "Gifted and Talented." program for the elementary grades. As noted earlier, Bennington College students have been in our schools. Do past experiences prove encouraging enough for further exploration?

The changing times of the 1990's suggest several areas of constructive study by the school board and area residents. This may be best accomplished by a independent committee formed with the approval of the School Board, whose encouragement, and willingness to be used as a reference source for materials, statistics and facts, for the committees is a logical starting point.

### *Several areas to consider for study are:*

1. The perceived inequity of taxation bases between Shaftsbury's District One and North Bennington proper regarding school taxes. This crops up every few years. Perhaps with the presentation of the annual school report, the treasurer be request to supply, as percent of the total, the school taxes collected from each District. This in turn can be compared with the percentage of students from each District.
2. If the school population from North Bennington remains static relative to the continued increase of school age children from District One. How does this affect the size and location of the school building? Consider also, there is ongoing maintenance of a graceful, but aging structure. There is the potential of a problem with physical expansion of the facility and increased travel distance of students.
3. Can expansion of present school buildings in both Shaftsbury and North Bennington be alleviated by the building of a middle school to house the sixth through eight grades of both school districts?
4. Would a mutual exchange or rearrangement of housing class grades in buildings in both North Bennington and Shaftsbury solve overcrowding or reduce cost? Would expanded busing enter the cost picture? Any mention of busing will bring up discussion on sidewalks, their development and repair. This is more properly discussed under Village capital improvements. It should be noted that generally those streets which North Bennington is responsible for, do have walks. The problem arises with those roads within the Town of Shaftsbury.
5. Can the encouragement and construction of a private academy similar to Manchester's Burr and Burton be considered a alternative? Would tuition costs be better or worse versus a School District's cost

of current expense plus building Bonding and maintenance?

6. Should the Graded School District consider a voucher system for use within a locally defined geographical area as a alternative choice for parents?
7. The School Board, Planning Commission, Village Trustees and Zoning Board of Adjustment, along with a committee of interested residents, should search for a potential site to be reserved for a new or expanded Village public school and explore the possibility of zoning as a EC zone to preserve for future use (Welling Field area??).
8. Discussion of tax raising/alternative options available to the Communities involved.

#### POLICIES:

Continue to maintain and adapt where and when necessary the public educational programs in light of the future needs and requirements of the economic and social world of our children. Financial constraints on the Community's ability, thru taxation, to support the ever spiraling needs for new knowledge should be the strong catalyst to seek innovative and alternative ways the meet educational goals of future generations.

Day Care Centers for children may not be considered appropriate by some to come under the heading of Education. However, they have in their care, children in that age bracket where minds are easily initiated with social graces, curiosity, and self confidence. These very important traits are carried into their adult world. Addressing the needs of continued availability of good day care, public or private, should not be overlooked.

The Planning Commission, and Bennington College, should be encouraged to mutually undertake a study of the advantages of creating a new zoning classification of Educational Campus (EC) - Bennington College. This is further elaborated under Section 4.5. Eventually, the Town of Bennington will be involved as a portion of College lands fall within their jurisdiction

The College Corporation does not contribute taxes on its campus property. It does however, contribute a unspecified sum in lieu of taxes to the Village. It does pay taxes on any residential properties it owns within the Village. College campus property is presently zoned as VR40 Village Residential. The Trustees exercise control as the municipal governing body. The College is also affected by the Zoning Bylaws of the Village on that portion, (425 acres) within the Municipality.

It should be noted that in the spring of 1991, the School Board had undertaken the formation of a "Needs Study." Committee with appropriate sub-committees formed of interested parties. In matters that they studied, it is more appropriate that recommendations come from them.

### 7.3 RECREATION:

The Village of North Bennington is rich in recreational resources. These include two baseball fields, two playgrounds, Lake Paran and surrounding area, a historic house and grounds, several green parks near the village center, a stretch of scenic designated dirt road popular with joggers and walkers. Spaces for public gatherings or programs are also located in the village. These resources contribute to the sense that village residents are indeed members of a community -- one that is distinct and independent from the surrounding districts. Depending on the time of the year, villagers can hear a string quartet or other small music ensemble at the McCullough Library, on a weekend, a full symphonic

concert in the graded school gym, or a weekday evening volleyball game in the very same gym, dance through a summer evening at the Lake Paran pavilion or settle in for a quiet morning of fishing along the lakeshore. The recreational opportunities within this village of roughly 1900 are varied and important to the character of the community.

The southern portion of the village has no park or recreation areas. Only in the past few years has some semblance of a sidewalk been installed to add a safer pedestrian link to the village core. A programmed effort to clean up the ponds, lower Paran creek and its banks, the laying out and eventual green trailway from the Walloomsac River north along Paran creek on permissible private and public lands eventually connecting to the Greenway from Paran dam to the foot of Pleasant St. Earlier Master Plans called for development of a park area near the Henry Bridge on the east bank of the Walloomsac River. At present, it is doubtful resident utilization would not be enough to justify the cost and upkeep.

Lake Paran (35 acres surface area), is unique as it is one of the two man-made lakes in the southwestern corner of Vermont. Its original purpose of being, was to supply water power to North Bennington's early industry. The other, Lake Shaftsbury, is a state park in the Town of Shaftsbury. Portions of the shores of Lake Paran are located in the Towns of Shaftsbury and Bennington as well in the municipality of North Bennington, a facility geared to multiple enjoyment. Swimmers, fishermen, boaters (non-motorized), bird and wildlife watchers, skaters and walkers use the lake and its periphery year-round. Fishermen and boaters have easy access and ample parking at a public boat ramp. Swimmers, from the village and surrounding towns, use the beach across the lake. Walkers, bird and wildlife watchers make use of the lakeshore along the dam and railroad track.

#### *Purpose of Recreation -- Land and Water:*

To enhance the recreational resources of this Community. Lake Paran is a village jewel, the area surrounding the Lake has, for the most part, not been developed commercially or residentially (although houses are visible on the Shaftsbury side). It is a quiet and lovely spot, notable for the views from the hills above the shoreline. The billfolds are for those sports requiring a safe and convenient place to play. The playgrounds are for the younger set to use their imagination and their elders to sit and converse. The few small in-village greenways (3) should be inviting places to pause between here and there.

#### *POLICIES:*

1. Continued improvements and consistent maintenance.
2. Promote neighborly co-operation with surrounding Districts.

#### *RECOMMENDATIONS:*

1. An important and limited natural resource, the village should work to increase, and resist, decreases in protection and public ownership and access to Lake Paran's shores.
2. To encourage and work with those landowners holding shore lands in preserving the environment, its small wildlife and fauna.
3. To encourage consistent and mutual supporting zoning regulations with the Towns of Shaftsbury and Bennington.
4. Work with and encourage the State of Vermont, along with interested private organizations,

in developing strategies to combat Eurasian Milfoil infestation in the most environmentally practical manner.

5. Presently 100% of all park and recreation facilities are centered in the Core of the Village. Considerations should be undertaken to better serve the equally worthy residents of areas such as Hinsdillville and Irish Corners. Formulate a park plan for the Walloomsac. Determine a Paran creek route and sound out the land owners effected.
6. The continued encouragement of civic groups such as the Norshaft Lion Bennington Rotary Clubs, Parent-Teacher Group and of course the welcome generosity of private individuals. Trustees

*List of Locations and Places of Interest:*

*Public Recreation Areas*

Welling Field  
Norshaft Little league field  
Norshaft Lions playground  
Grade School playground  
Lake Paran swimming area  
Park-McCullough House & Grounds  
Memorial Park  
Prospect St. Village greenspots  
Burt Henry Covered Bridge (fishing)

*Public Gathering Areas*

McCullough Library  
McCullough House &  
Carriage Barn  
Firehouse  
Paran Recreation Pavilion  
Village Depot offices  
St. John The Baptist Church  
Graded School gymnasium  
Memorial Park

*Scenic Road. Walker's and Jogger's Loop.*

This is a four mile jaunt around the property boundary of land locally known as the Hall-Park Farm. It comprises several named roads, Park St. to River Road/Harrington Road to West Road/Knapp Road, up the hill to the usual starting point at the driveway entrance to the Park-McCullough house. Only that segment in North Bennington is designated a "Scenic Highway." under VT law (10 V.S.A. Sec.425) It is meant to be kept as a dirt road where feasible and maintained in a balanced manner consistent with being scenic and safe.

*Privately-Owned/Limited Access Resources*

McCullough Woods (Nature Conservancy)  
Bennington College grounds  
Vermont Railway track right-of-way along the shore of Lake Paran

## *7.4 FIRE, POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES*

*Police Protection:*

According to Walbridge's history, North Bennington did nicely with no formal law enforcement the first hundred years. However, in the early 1870s, the Trustees decided that owing to the lawless

character of its citizens, a jail was a necessity, so they built one on the grounds of what is now known as Haviland's Priviledge, it was never considered a choice overnight accommodation. About 1875, another more imposing structure was built on School Street. The residents tore that one down a few years later. However, things have improved somewhat since then and the need for a local jail no longer exists. Police protection within the Village is presently furnished by the Town of Bennington. In cases of further need, the Bennington County Sheriff's Department and the Vermont State Police are available.

#### *Fire Department:*

In 1991, and prior years, North Bennington's Fire Department has been volunteer. They have given freely of their time and abilities for the continual protection of this Community. To small towns and villages, a volunteer fire department is a source of local pride, demonstrating a settlement's stability and the resolve of its citizens to collectively guard against the one catastrophe most likely to devastate individuals and businesses within the community.

North Bennington has one firehouse. It is located on Prospect Street just east of Lincoln Square. The present firehouse is a two story brick structure. It replaces the wooden structure on the opposite side of the street, now a private dwelling. The fire fighting equipment is appropriate for Village requirements and is of recent vintage and well maintained by the volunteers. The Village maintains and contributes to a Sinking Fund to buy and replace equipment as needed.

The Village fire department consists of a group of dedicated, and trained volunteers who maintain the fire protection of our community. While the Village through taxes, pays for building maintenance, equipment and training costs, it is the people who make up the volunteers that make it work so well.

With the passage of time between the Master Plan of the early 1980s and the writing of the present Plan (1991), give indications of changing patterns in the live's and lifestyle of village residents. Village Trustees, the firemen themselves, and village residents at large, should reexamine our volunteer system to see how well it is working. Are we still capable of fielding volunteers and equipment 24 hours a day, seven days a week? Many of the volunteers have given many years of dedicated service and are at that age where for health reasons and age have to reconsider their commitment of volunteer service. Are there enough younger volunteers in the community to carry on? How many of the present volunteers work close enough to respond to calls during the work week? Can we still sustain a volunteer system? What are the alternatives? Are we able replace or upgrade for safety and efficiency for the mutual benefit to fireman and residents?

A history and chronological account of North Bennington's Fire Department remains to be written and published.

#### *Emergency Services:*

The first reference regarding emergency services considers the Bennington Rescue Squad. Their headquarters is located in Bennington proper. for services supplied and area covered, they should be contacted to answer your questions. Support comes from a yearly town-wide drive. The Bennington Town Police, County Sheriffs Department, and Vermont State Police are available if circumstance are warranted. Area phone books carry the current phone listing or call Police 911.

In times of natural and manmade disaster, the Green Mountain Chapter of the American Red Cross provides emergency services including: food, shelter and the meeting of immediate human needs. Other Chapter services include: the VOLTRAN PROGRAM (Volunteer Transportation), which provides handicapped, medical, recreational and specialized transit to the area's transportation disadvantaged population. A variety of health related educational programs are provided, blood is collected for use in hospitals. Further, through the ARC there is a system for emergency communications between families and loved ones stationed worldwide in the military and there is a variety of unique volunteer opportunities offered. The Red Cross maintained a 24 hour emergency phone. (802)-442-9458.

The various departments of Municipal governments have emergency responses built into their operations. Regarding breakdowns in commercially supplied public utilities, Central Vermont Public Service, New England Telephone, the propane gas companies, and Adelphia Cable Service all tend their specialized areas.

#### *POLICIES:*

Continue to support Fire Department's people in ways to encourage and enhance their professional pride and Community spirit. To continue to furnish the equipment and tools necessary to safely perform their duties.

Other services mentioned are broad community based resources and are worthy of Village and individual support as appropriate.

#### *RECOMMENDATIONS:*

To study if North Bennington can realistically continue under a all Volunteer system. If not, what are the alternatives.

To review if we are receiving the appropriate level of police services for our tax dollar.

### *7.5 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES*

The municipality of North Bennington does not contain any general health or social services or Agencies. With the many nearby resources available, residents rely on the Towns of Shaftsbury and Bennington. North Bennington does have a small residency and nursing home complex.

Shaftsbury contains the Shaftsbury Medical Associates. A group practice in General Medicine. Also located there is a full service Dental Clinic.

Bennington contains a variety of general practitioners and medical specialty practices. In Bennington is also located the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center, a regional style hospital complex. Emergency ambulance service is handled by the Bennington Rescue Squad, funded by private community support. The Red Cross is also available for specific cause. Call to them for particulars.

Bennington Town Center has several high rated residence and nursing homes for the sick and aged. There are several funeral establishments located in Bennington.

Bennington houses the Vermont Superior Court, District Court, as well as the, Probate Court, Family Court and Town Records Office. Vermont State has a state office complex that houses various social service agencies under the Vermont Agency for Human Resources. The Vermont State Employment

Office maintains a branch here.

There are several community specific organizations which are in part funded by private, municipal, and United Way of Bennington.

## **7.6 SOLID WASTE**

There is no municipal solid waste collection system. The removal of trash and garbage from homes and businesses is carried out by private contractors. Bennington has filled and closed its municipal landfill. Non recyclable items are trucked to a transfer station maintained by a private contractor and hauled elsewhere for a fee. For durable hard goods, there are various categories of fees for disposal. No other dumping or private dumps are allowed by law. To reduce the solid waste stream, recycling of glass, paper, magazines, tin cans, and certain types of plastics is mandated. The State of Vermont has a returnable container deposit law on soda, and beer containers as well as liqueur bottles. The disposal of toxic wastes is controlled by State and Local laws. As part of the State Clear Air Act, regulations forbid open barrel burning of trash, Catalyst filters are required on all new wood burning stoves.

### **POLICY:**

Improve ways of recycling waste materials for reuse. and encourage participation by the Village residents.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Recycling stations be established at strategic locations within the Village and a collection and delivery method to the Center be worked out. The types and condition of recycleables to be clearly defined.

## **7.7 WASTE WATER FACILITIES AND SYSTEM**

The original Bennington (Town) Waste water Treatment Facility located along the Walloomsac River near the New York border, was constructed on the present 10 acre site in 1962 and provided primary treatment. In 1984 additional construction at a cost of approximately \$7 million, upgraded the plant to include advanced secondary treatment of affluent. A sludge management plan, consisting of trucking and dispersal on selected field sites also proposed at this time was not implemented due to community resistance. Further studies were conducted and composting was chosen as the most satisfactory long term disposal method.

In 1991, with permits in hand, plans ready, and construction bids to be opened in July 1991. The building of four composting bays within a 13,300 square foot building and a adjacent 5600 square foot in-ground gravel biofilter for odor control will begin. It is expected the compost will be a marketable product bringing some return on operating expenses. In 1990/1991 the sludge dry weight produced daily was estimated at 4800lbs, increasing to 7700lbs by year 2007. This is based on no increase in present plant capacity.

Plant capacity is 5.1 mgd. Theoretically the plant is large enough to meet the needs of the

community for the next 20 years. The municipality of North Bennington is within the defined community. However no reference is noted as to the total number of fully developed square miles implied in that community. Average daily flows are now 3.5 mgd. No major additions to the treatment process are foreseen over the next 20 years. This system is designed to remove 97% of the pollutants from the waste stream effectively raising the quality of the Walloomsac River below the discharge point.

That portion of the collection system that concerns us also includes a small portion of Shaftsbury. The system overall is very old and at some future point in time, the Town Sewer Authority has to give consideration to replacement or rehabilitation to the lines.

Municipal sanitary sewer hookup is available within North Bennington, within the areas zoned as: VR-3, VR-8, VR-10, and some areas within VR-20. VR-40 districts are not presently required to be attached to a municipal sewer system, and homeowners have individual septic systems.

The Homestead Mews, a senior housing complex is served by it's own private Community holding tank which is periodically drained and carted to the Treatment Plant.

There does not exist a extensive storm sewer system within the Village. At most, dependency is relied upon roadside ditching, gravity and natural drainage courses along side roads with the insertion of under road culverts at strategic locations. The drainage pattern due to the lay of the land, is generally in the direction of Paran Creek or the Walloomsac River.

## *POLICIES*

Generally, operating policy is determined by the Town of Bennington Waste Water Department. Policies numerated are basic to site plan reviews.

- 1 Promote the interaction of town, and North Bennington's development concerns to insure that new commercial/industrial users are low water usage, clean, and efficient businesses, to minimize impact on existing and future municipal systems.
2. Continued monitoring of the Village's sewer demands and capacities so as to accommodate existing and minimal future needs through maintenance and upgrading of the existing system.
3. In future development, whether commercial or residential, consideration to the addition of impact fees to accommodate hookups to the present mainlines. This study should be undertaken in conjunction as to capacity requirements relating to a Project's acceptance.

## *RECOMMENDATION:*

In the event that a Project comes forward that raises concerns on sewer hookup, the Trustees, Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of adjustment are well advised to review a Department of Environmental Conservation model ordinance dated July 20, 1989 or a later revised version of same, titled: "Waste water Capacity Allocation". While Bennington Town controls and allocates sewer services, prior knowledge by our local Boards will be helpful in site reviews. As of August 1992, the Town of Bennington still has under review a bylaw (or ordinance) as to allocation of use potential of different areas of the Town served.

## *7.8 POTABLE WATER SUPPLY*

### *Water Supply:*

The present water supply comes from the Basin Brook. A small impoundment dam is located here. It is located on the WNW slope of Glastenbury Mt in the Town of Shaftsbury. The entrance is located off East Road. The present watershed area is approximately 1.2 square miles, known as the Basin Brook area. There is the potential of increasing the watershed an additional 4.7 square miles using parts of the northern slope of Glastenbury Mountain known as Buck's Cobble. In 1967, 74 test holes were drilled to determine the existence a usable subsurface water supply. It was determined that a backup supply could be obtained from a coarse gravel aquifer on property already owned by the Water Department. In 1970 five shallow gravel wells, approximately 22 feet deep, and a pump station were constructed. These wells do not have the capacity to supply the entire system without the Basin Brook and are considered for use only during drought or unusual peaks. All five of the wells are in standby use now.

### *System Capacity:*

It is two miles from Basin Brook to a 12 acre site located off Buck Hill Road, in the Town of Shaftsbury. It is here that the two open reservoirs are located. The upper impoundment, built in 1923 as part of the original Jennings project, contains 0.67 acres in surface area, holds two million gallons, the lower one, added in 1933, is 1.40 acres in surface area, holds about five million gallons. In 1990 daily average usage was 415,000 gpd. The water is by gravity feed from watershed to the plant site.

In earlier times, the only treatment to the water was a check for murkiness, a periodic coliform test, and the addition of softening chemicals to slow down pipe clogging. In 1953 chlorination was added to the treatment chain.

Beginning in 1990, stricter enforcement of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and increased concern about water borne diseases and air pollution contaminating the surface ponds gave impetus to a immediate start on system improvements. In 1991 work was begun on constructing a 3,250 square foot enclosed water filtration building and a 840,000 gallon water storage tank. Improved equipment and processes will insure a safer grade of potable water with little or no change in taste. The new filtration system went on line in the spring of 1992.

### *Water Transmission:*

The original transmission and distribution system is still in use. The transmission mains are of cast iron, and 69 years old, (in 1992!). Its condition should be reassessed in the not too distant future. Other than the addition and relocation of piping within the upgraded facility site, no new water mains are included in the present plans or contemplated.

Water is sold on a metered basis to the fire district of South Shaftsbury. There is a legal agreement that no further hookups to the present line will be allowed. (In force since about 1979).

Water is distributed within the core environs of the Village. Additional lines run into portions of Shaftsbury District One area. Water is also sold to Bennington College on a metered basis.

The purchase and installation of meters for each dwelling unit, and commercial establishments not already equipped with meters has been approved along with the filtration plant construction. Meters are in place as of 1992. First Billing in April 1992 will include \$100 to cover Bond payments. Water use will now be billed according to meter readings on gallons used. Initial rate is \$ .75 per 1,000

gallons.

Based on a daily water flow of 415,000gpd, the following is a reasonable breakdown of daily water use.

Shaftsbury Fire District (Metered)	103,750gpd
Bennington College (Metered)	50,550gpd
Commercial and Business Users (Metered)	29,050gpd
Residences and businesses (Metered)	211,650gpd

North Bennington's Master Plan references to Policies and Recommendations for the Water Board are intended as an overview. The intention is to inform residents of a basic service provided by the Village. Water service is administered and operated by its' own Board and employees. That Board is ultimately responsible to the Village Trustees.

#### **POLICIES:**

That a periodical check on all meters to insure they are in good working order and accurate in meter flow rate.

That all mains be monitored on a regular basis and that all leaks be promptly repairs.

That on request from the Planning Commission or Zoning Board of Adjustment, a determination be made for any site plan or improvement project that requires a water hookup or change in gallonage use, be made and forwarded to the requesting Board as part of the Planning Process.

#### **RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY:**

Using the above use projection for the Village, and that a average family daily use is 260 gallons, the 211,650gpd supports at the most 814 dwelling hookups. The figure 750 is being used as the current number of dwellings on the system. The present improvement project calls for the purchase and installation of 600 plus meters. The 1991 Improvement project does not anticipate any increase in the water supply nor make allowance for future treatment plant expansion. It appears that placing additional dwellings on line is very limited.

The installation of water meters should encourage conservation. It remains to be seen if the daily average rate of water use is reduced, and is sustainable enough to consider a increase in the number of hookups.

As yet undetermined is the draw down necessary to maintain the fire hydrant system. Presently the fire mains are directly connected to the main lines serving the residential districts.

No encouragement should be given developments in the VR8 through VR20 Districts until metering and conservation experience is gained.

A further In-Depth Study of the water needs of the North Bennington municipal confines into the next century. It should consider the maximum residential saturation of all VR Districts. Also the full commercial use potential in the Village's limited VC and VI districts.

In extending public water service to new subdivisions if they meet approval, and if they are within reach of existing water mains, these extensions, along with the necessary water meters and their installation, should be provided by the developers as part of the cost of necessary subdivision

improvements.

The Water Dept should maintain a accurate, up-to-date map showing all existing mains as well as proposed future routes. The maps should also provide the pipe diameters, flow volume and maintainable pressure expected. Such a map or maps, or copies thereof, should be readily accessible for public inspection. Such mapping should be consistent with Vermont GIS standards and scales.

There are reoccurring occasions when residents are bombarded with TV exposure or press reports on water quality and problems elsewhere. It would be good public relations to issue reassurances on the then current quality of our water. The Water Board and its' professional employees are well aware of the tests and procedural additions necessary to a well run water system. Public awareness and concern can focus on: chlorination, coliform count, the testing for Protozoa organisms such as amebiasis, giardiasis, and other intestinal parasites from dead mammals that may enter the water supply chain.

Modern water systems include the introduction in controlled amounts of such chemicals as: sodium hypochlorite, sodium hydroxide, alum, and specific cationic polymers. A public awareness is necessary if there is a possibility of human allergic reaction to these chemicals and such individuals can seek out their personal alternative responses.

EPA standards for lead content in water have been frequently upgraded. Early on, 50 parts per billion gallons was set. In June 1988, the standard was revised to 20 ppb gallons. In June 1991, it was further upgraded to 15 ppb gallons. Testing may well be conducted from time to time, at several different points in the overall system to pinpoint whether from the supply source or emissions from water carrying pipes or connections may become a cause of concern.

Another potential hazard is resurfacing. Concerns relative to accumulative effects of mercury. It appears this metal is becoming more prevalent in water bodies. It would be prudent to monitor suspect metals such as mercury when feasible, and practical to do so. It is also prudent to guard against possibilities for heavy metal introduction or conditions leading to leaching into the watershed areas.

Pertinent to a Regional study on watersheds, it should be noted that The Town of Bennington's watershed, (Presently serving the Village of Bennington, Old Bennington and, parts of the rural town areas.), is located on the eastern slope of Glastenbury Mountain. It comprises an area of 17.5 square miles with an adjacent potential for an additional 19 square miles.

## **7.9 NORTH BENNINGTON VILLAGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT**

In a comparison with the Master Plan of 1978 and its near-verbatim re-adoptions in 1983 and 1988. There are 19 projects listed and carried since 1978. All the original projects saw efforts to implement them to a degree, but not with the continuity originally intended. The one project not given consideration was the Park along the Walloomsac River bank. The park's practicality, location, projected maintenance expense could not be justified. The Master Plan of 1992 utilizes the prior Plan as a base to build on. Its purpose is to emphasize our past values and to project a forward view of what we are, where we want to go, and how can we best get there.

Village "ambience" is a term frequently referred to. It is our inner feeling and approach as we perceive the physical village we live in. Past Master Plans have referred to projects such as village road approaches, parks, benches, trees, landscaping and most recently, a Green trails from the Shaftsbury line to a point meeting any proposed Town of Bennington point. These are all worthwhile community approach projects. However economic reality dictates undertakings along these lines may be

more successfully accomplished by individual initiative, Grants, and/or private organizational donations.

March, 1992 saw the completion of a large capital improvement project to insure the future quality of our present water supply. Not included is any search for future watershed additions nor improvement or extension of the distribution system. The local share to be paid out of future water rents is \$1,500,000 plus interest. It is anticipated this will be repaid over a 30 year period starting in 1992. The above stated figure is for plant construction and equipping, plus the cost of approximately 750 residential water meters. Additional necessary everyday running expenses of the department are added and would be included in our water bills.

The Village of North Bennington's current Tax Bill (1991), indicates three tax categories, a Highway, a Village, and School tax. Breaking down a total tax rate of \$ 2.35, 78.3% utilized to cover education. Highways 15.3%. The balance, 6.4% covers the multitude of Village expenses necessary to the life of village government and its ongoing functioning. This ratio of expenses will probably continue with minor fluctuation between categories when the water works bond and any proposed school building improvements are added to the yearly base of Village expenses.

To most home owners, water bills and waste water bills, (from the Town of Bennington), and local taxes are considered together as a cost to maintain our residences and businesses. They figure in our personal assessment as to the burden we bear in maintaining our homes or businesses regardless as to whether such costs are tax deductible or not.

Another future concern is the discussion of a proposed addition to the North Bennington Elementary School. As this is written, (late 1991), no firm proposal as to size, construction, estimated cost, or manner of financing is publicly available. In fairness to those residents, who have worked and studied our school needs, our using the term "resident", would include the people of Shaftsbury District One in discussions regarding education. A referral to Section 7.2 further elaborates the Master Plan Committee's deferral approach on educational matters to the school committee.

Our Village government is obligated to maintain, repair and upgrade where practical existing Village infrastructure. This includes highways, streets, sidewalks, parks, fire department, street lighting, storm sewers, governing expenses and, compensation for Village employees.

Act 200 requires all State Agencies to have their own Five year Policy Plans and that such Policy Plans are to reflect needs as outlined in the States' Regional Commissions and local Master Plans. North Bennington's largest perennial expense is its' road network. We depend a great deal on the Vermont Agency of Transportation for its' professional expertise, funding and special Grants. To insure that the Vermont Transportation Policy Plan and North Bennington's Master Plan reflect a working relationship, The following capital improvement projects are recommended to the Trustees.

1. Resurfacing and repair of Main and Bank Streets as necessary.
2. New sub bases, recrowning and resurfacing as need indicates of residential streets,
3. Continuation of public parking improvements including lot paving and space marking and including suitable safety lighting. (At the Fire House and at the Village Depot.)
4. Landscaping and tree planting in keeping with Area.
5. GIS style maps with overlays as determined to be useful to the Village for decision making.  
(See further Recommendations.)

6. Promote a Green Trails network within the Village as a alternate method of people point to point movement.

#### ***FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:***

In 1991 the Village, with Planning Commission funds, commissioned a survey for the layout of a parking lot at the village firehouse. The surfacing and space marking of the parking area should be completed. This should be a welcome addition to relieve some of the scarcity for business use and off-street parking for residents.

Village Zoning By-laws should be amended or proposed, with proper safeguards in preserving the ambient atmosphere of the village, that will explore and encourage residential building proposals or possible other projects that increase our tax base while providing mutual benefits to all parties.

In reference to the GIS Mapping System, it would be prudent for the Village to include several "Build Out" Analysis scenarios as to probable development patterns within the Village. Each analysis can be extrapolated on specific time spread and will in turn project the level of municipal services needed to sustain the Village at that point in time. It would be a realistic tool in planning for the future.

Explore for legal means to separate water works improvement bonding from the normal maintenance activity of the Water Department and transfer such costs to tax deductible status.

As knowledge becomes available during the five year cycle of this Plan, it may be advantageous to consider Amendment(s) to The Plan indicating a specific municipal project.

#### ***7.10 ENERGY ELEMENT***

Energy is a scarce resource that should be considered in any comprehensive planning process . With the heating season that generally lasts for at least seven months, it is evident that home and business energy consumption is a significant issue for everyone residing in this area. Fossil fuel prices have been erratic, electric heat is notoriously inefficient and expensive, and wood, while widely available in this area, has recently been cited as a pollution factor, mainly for the release of heavy metals into the atmosphere. These concerns, combined with the local, regional, and global environmental problems caused by fuel extraction, processing, and combustion, suggest strongly that energy conservation measures should be emphasized now more than ever . Subdivisions and buildings should be designed with energy conservation in mind (orientation for solar access, siting buildings in protected rather than exposed locations, etc.), and thermal integrity standards for buildings, such as those specified in the Bennington Regional Energy Plan, should be adhered to. Owners of existing buildings should consider retrofitting, where necessary, to conserve energy; financial assistance may be available to some home owners through state programs and organizations such as the Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council (B-ROC).

It is well established that effective land use planning can promote energy conservation. The plan provides for more intensive residential and commercial growth in the designated village areas. The plan also discourages capital expenditures on roads or other infrastructure that would tend to lead to scattered development. Compact development patterns will encourage non-motorized modes of transportation, while reducing the number and length of automobile trips, truck deliveries, and the

like.

Future public and private investments should be mindful of energy conservation. Facilities that encourage pedestrian and bicycle transportation (e.g., centrally located parking facilities and sidewalks in village areas, and bicycle paths and lanes) should be pursued

NOTE: A more detailed assessment of the regional energy needs and issues is presented in The Regional Energy Plan, BCRC, 1992, and the Energy Chapter VIII of the Bennington County Regional Plan, 1992.

#### **POLICIES:**

1. All practical energy conservation measures should be considered during the siting, design, and construction or reconstruction of buildings; insulation standards recommended by the Department of Public Service should be adhered to. Building designs that incorporate solar space and water heating systems and other innovative efficiency technologies should be encouraged.
2. Commercial and industrial uses should include energy efficiency and conservation in their business plans and operating procedures. More efficient utilizations and conservation is good business sense.
3. Village and school buildings should include energy efficiency and conservation in their plans and day-to-day operations.
4. Efforts to promote energy conservation in the transportation sector should be supported; effective land use planning, employer-employee organized ride sharing programs and investment in pedestrian and bicycle trails (Green Trails Network) and facilities can all encourage energy conservation.
5. Electricity should be conserved as a high quality form of energy, and its use promoted where it functions most efficiently. (e.g. electricity is appropriate for lighting and motor operation. Research also indicates it can become a prime mover in automotive equipment.
6. If small head hydroelectric facilities are considered at existing dam sites, a cost benefit analysis (and environmental assessment) should be prepared prior to construction.

### **8.0 MAPS**

8.1 VILLAGE PLANNING AND ZONING DISTRICTS MAP - Official Map of the Village .

#### **8.2 ADDITIONAL MAPS**

Several single purpose maps are dispersed throughout the Plan.

#### **8.3 GIS GENERATED MAPS — SCALE OF 1:5000'**

Several maps were prepared with a \$7,500 Grant received in 1992 from the State of Vermont, Department of Housing and Community Affairs. The Grant produced one base map from which seven specific maps were produced. With the basic digitalized map information available at the BCRC office in Arlington and in the master files of Vermont Agency on Housing and Community Affairs, further mapping projects are possible as North Bennington's needs arise.

Seven current (1993) GIS scaled maps included as foldouts are:

Land Use Map -- Official Planning and Zoning Districts Map

Water Distribution System

Parcel Tax Map

Transportation Roads Map

Natural Areas within the Village confines

Public Facilities presently available.

Waste water lines within the Village

Note:

36" x 48" size maps are available at the Village Clerk's Office. These maps conform to GIS standards as to size and scale.

Also available are the 1992 version of aerial Ortho photo Maps of the area of North Bennington. These give a birds eye view of terrain, roads and buildings. The four photos carry the identification of: 088044, 088048, 092044, and 092048. These photo maps are obtained from the Vermont Department of Taxation.

Credits:

Front Cover: From a old Beer's Insurance map in Bennington Free Library's Collection.

Back Cover: Village of North Bennington's official seal. From a hand-held embossing punch.

Various in-text maps from Village Planning Commission files.

Final printer's draft set in the Palentino typeface family on a Apple© Macintosh ci computer.

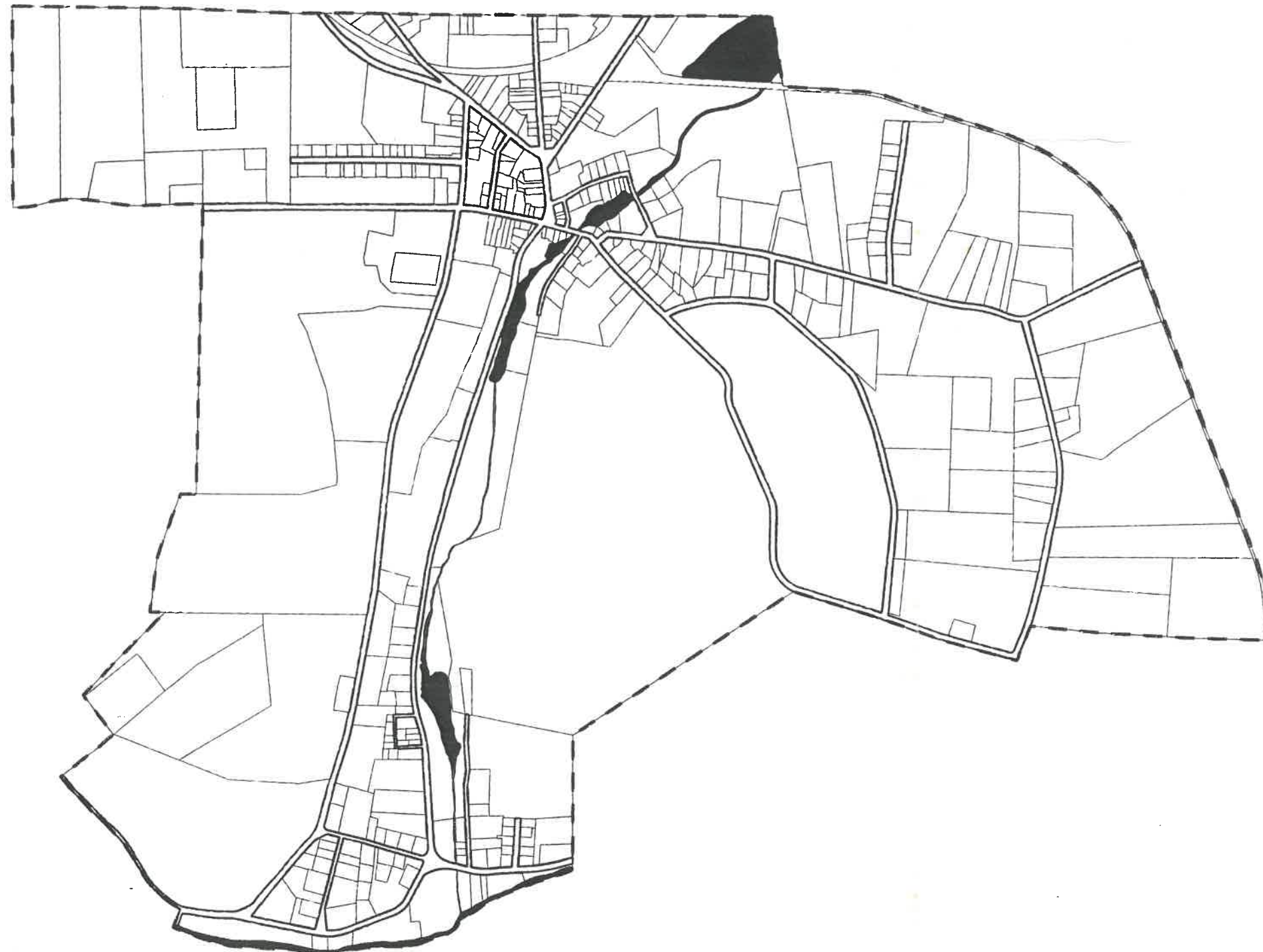
Scanning done on a Apple© One Scanner. Page drafts printed on a Apple© Laser NTR printer.

Typing and assembly by the BCRC and Planning Commission staffs.

Maps by James K. Henderson, BCRC GIS Information Coordinator.

The Plan went through twelve preliminary drafts before final acceptance. The work and thoughts of many good people of the Village and Shaftsbury's District One.

To those others who helped, but whom we may have forgotten to thank. Thank you.



NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

PARCEL MAP

~ Parcel Lines  
~ Road Right of Way












**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE



MAP PRODUCED 7/29/93 BY BCRC

# NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

-  Village Recreation/Parks
-  Private Recreation/Parks
-  Head Start School
-  Public School
-  Private School
-  Village Offices
-  Post Office
-  Library
-  Fire Station
-  Town Garage
-  Cemetery

**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE



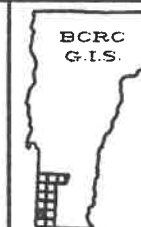
MAP PRODUCED 7/29/93 BY BCRC

# NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

## LAND USE PLAN

- I
- VC
- VR-3
- VR-8
- VR-10
- VR-20
- VBR-40
- Shoreland Protection Overlay

**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE



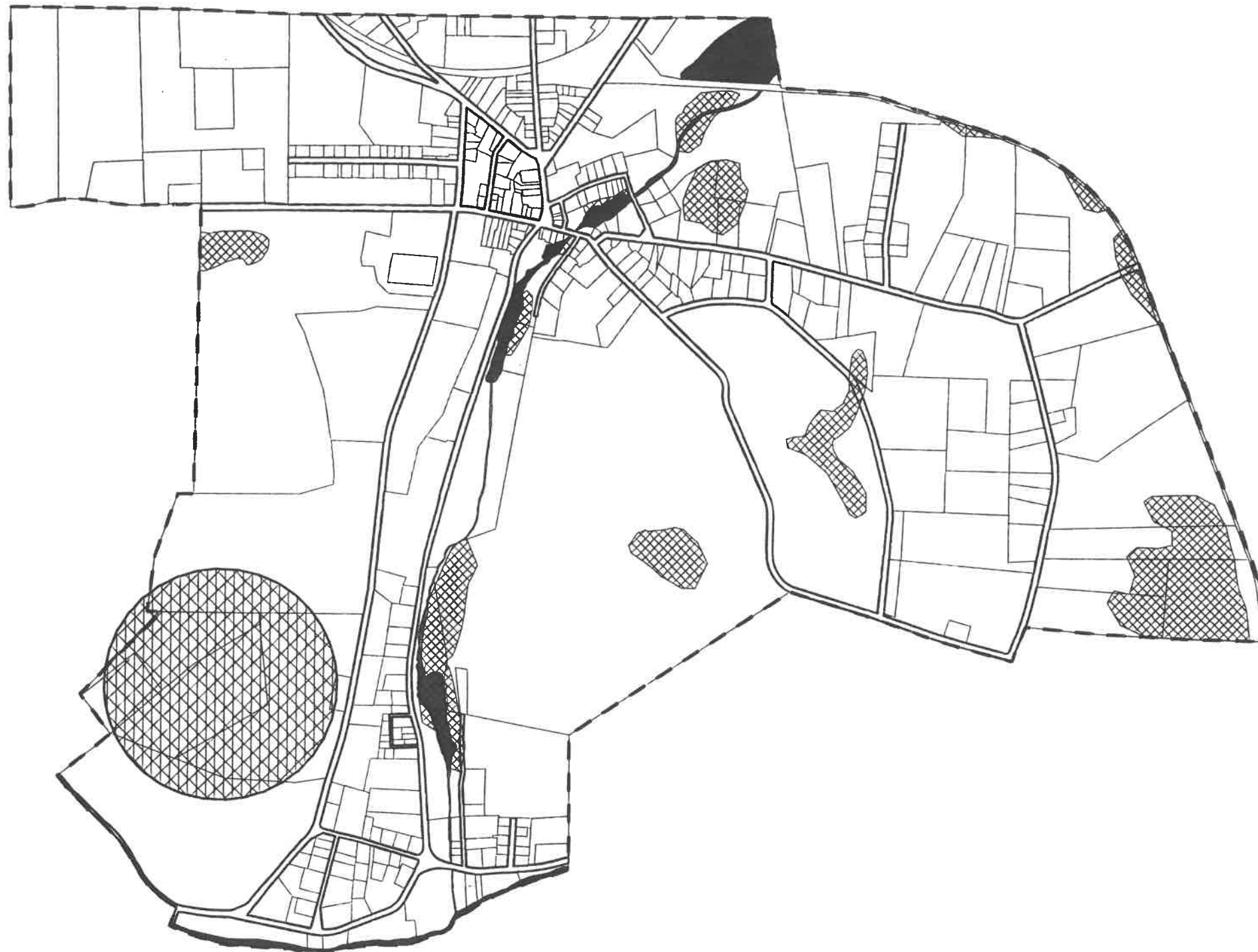
MAP PRODUCED 7/29/93 BY BCRC

NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

NATURAL AREAS

Significant  
Natural  
Community

Wetlands








**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE



MAP PRODUCED 7/29/93 BY BCRC

NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

-  Class 1 Town Highway
-  Class 2 Town Highway
-  Class 3 Town Highway
-  State Highway
-  Private Road

**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE



MAP PRODUCED 7/29/93 BY BCRC

NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

SEWER SYSTEM

- ☐ 8" Line
- ☐ 12" Line
- ☐ 18 - 30" Line


**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE




MAP PRODUCED 3/12/93 BY BCRC

NORTH BENNINGTON, VT.

WATER SYSTEM

 Water Mains

 Hydrants



**GIS**  
VERMONT GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM  
HELPING VERMONTERS VISUALIZE CHOICE



MAP PRODUCED 3/12/93 BY BCRC

