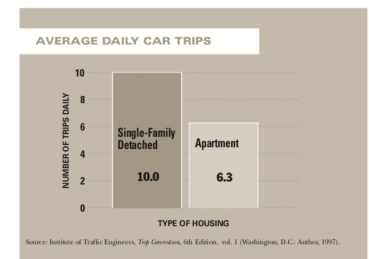


Richmond Village Planning Input

Background facts:

- Vermont, Chittenden County and Richmond are having a housing crisis – explicitly in rentals and affordable rentals. Vacancy rate is at 1.7% and industry standards are 5% for a health market for both individuals and businesses. The lack of housing causes affordability issues, loss in population, healthcare impacts, and economic impacts to community and individuals.
- The population is changing.
 - Household sizes are shrinking (increase in single person households, low birth rates, increase in divorce, aging population) so even if we didn't have any new residents we would need more homes to house current residents we have. This change in household structure requires a change in type of housing units and a wide variety of product.
 - Like most of Vermont, Richmond is getting older and harder to afford. There is a brain drain. We need to provide housing opportunities for the future whilst providing opportunities for the aging to stay in Richmond.
- Despite statewide and regional initiatives and funding, housing opportunities are not gaining on these trends. One key barrier and strategy by CCRPC is to 'Supporting communities that want to address the shortage of housing by offering assistance with zoning changes and other local tools.' Please see 'Better Homes Together – Data Charts – Oct 2018'
- Some historical views on residential density are false and needs to be challenged with data. See 'Higher Density_MythFacts' document.
 - **Myth:** Higher-density development creates more regional traffic congestion and parking problems than low-density development. **FACT** Higher-density development generates less traffic than low-density development per unit; it makes walking and public transit more feasible and creates opportunities for shared parking. (NOTE: this is supported by the Traffic Study we completed in 2016.)
 - **FACT :** Low-density development increases air and water pollution and destroys natural areas by paving and urbanizing greater swaths of land.
 - **MYTH** Higher-density housing is only for lower-income households. **FACT** People of all income groups choose higher-density housing.
 - **MYTH -** Higher-density development overburdens public schools and other public services and requires more infrastructure support systems. **FACT** The nature of who lives in higher-density housing—fewer families with children—puts less demand on schools and other public services than low-density housing. Moreover, the compact nature of higher-density development requires less extensive infrastructure to support it.



Town Plan Alignments to Jolina Court

HOUSING 'GOAL 1: Strive to have a diverse, resilient, affordable and quality housing options for residents and potential residents from all walks of life throughout the town.'

Diverse residents have different house needs.	<p>Require various types of 'dwelling' sizes, access, location and amenities. Small studios to enable younger people to affordable 1-2 bed apartments for single parents or for seniors. Each of these groups have different needs and access to transportation, parking, amenities etc.</p> <p>FACT: Household sizes are shrinking so even if we didn't have any new residents we would need more homes to house current residents we have.</p>
Affordable doesn't mean low income. It means affordable wherever you	<p>Providing a range of property sizes at a wide range of rental rates will enable individuals to make Richmond home no matter where on the income ladder a resident is. Our plan is to provide affordable units that</p>

are on the income ladder.	range from \$950 to - + \$2.5 per month based on size and spec of the unit.
Accessible for residents and for the community..	<p>In the heart of the village BUT in its on enclave, residents of Jolina Court will have easy access to village shops, town hall, library, parks, banks etc. It will enable those that are old or young or car-free to play a crucial role in the economic vitality and community of Richmond.</p> <p>Additionally, by providing a mixed use development and copious parking, future businesses will encourage non-residents to make use of the new offerings and strengthen the village overall.</p> <p>Accessible also means available. With less than 1.3% vacancy rate in Chittenden and only a handful of rentals in Richmond, a significant increase in supply of residential units is required and justified.</p>
Resilient for individuals and over generations	This is key. We are offering rental opportunities for people who want to make Richmond their home – for the long term. It provides the necessary welcome mat and / or bridge for making that goal a reality. Today, the lack of supply of rental property takes Richmond OFF the shopping list for many younger community members or potential residents. This is causing a brain drain and the aging population of Richmond is a key indicator.
Quality for property value and quality of living	<p>Not only have we removed the derelict buildings and brownfield of the creamery, we are committed to high quality, efficient development that will last a life time and improve both property value for the community at large and improve the quality of life for the residents. They will be safe, bright and convenient so that residents spend more time and money in the community.</p> <p>The quality or access to housing is also strongly linked to the health of residents and individuals. Providing quality homes reduces costs of healthcare and likely for ongoing health care risks (source: Champlain Housing Trust)</p>
Jolina Court is the <u>place</u> for Higher Density in Richmond.	<p>In 'Action #1: When updating zoning regulations, identify opportunities for development of a variety of housing types for example allowing mixed residential and commercial use, higher unit density, or unique accessory housing in certain areas that will be identifies during said update.'</p> <p>Jolina Court is a unique, protected enclave in Richmond that today doesn't have visible existing Single Family Home neighbors – unlike other areas. Jolina Court could easily handle large residential density without negatively impacting single family character that is rightfully valued but enable smart, planned growth and new population.</p> <p>Plus due to the location and accessibility, it would encourage car-free living and economic growth for village businesses.</p> <p>The current zoning caps is 46 dwelling units. As the community needs smaller dwelling units, this limits the volume of housing options we can provide to either existing or new residents.</p>

Other Alignments:

Energy

GOAL 1: Decrease the amount of fossil fuels used for transportation by the town government, residents and businesses in Richmond through conservation and improved efficiency. Encourage walking and the use of bicycles and facilitating the substitution of electricity and renewable fuels for fossil fuels.

“Adopt and maintain a zoning ordinance based on “smart growth” principles, with most development concentrated in the village, neighborhoods, downtown, gateway mixed use areas to reduce vehicle miles travelled from housing to shopping and to public transit options.”

Both Economic Development and Community Development make reference to ‘affordable housing’ as a requirement for driving community engagement and economic growth and vitality. Key points are:

- ✓ Community Development Goal #1: Action#2: When updating zoning regulations, explore way to allow for non-traditional housing types, ways to encourage the creating of new business enterprise.
- ✓ Economic Development Goal #5: Action #2. Support efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in Richmond.

Economic Development section recaps the key focus for economic growth will be on 1) retail or service sector businesses; 2) small-scale, home based, or cottage industries and 3) food, farm and recreation enterprises. All these types of business rely on people to use their services or housing options to house the businesses. The concept of large factories and large commercial operations relocating in Richmond is unlikely and not included in the Town Plan. The best type of commercial development for the village relies on people... residents.

Jolina Court District Considerations and / or things to discuss and explore

1. Consider making Jolina Court a **high-density** residential area to allow an accessible, affordable living environment to existing and new residents for generations to come. High Density Residential in other towns is more than Interim Zoning and range significantly based community needs and existing infrastructure.
2. Structure zoning regulations to encourage growth that is possible based on current market conditions and enable flexibility over a planned phased approach. Current oversupply of commercial space in Chittenden and Richmond makes commercial space very hard to compete. For example, Blue Seal Building owner is struggling to find a tenant for his 2nd floor office space for over 8 months. The goal should be to attract residents to feed existing businesses and encourage future commercial development.
3. Review Dwelling Unit definition to enables variety of sizes to serve various types of residents. Current structure incentivizes large multi bedroom houses and that is not what is needed in Richmond. Should the definition be just bedroom #s with common living space? Adjust parking and other regulations to align with smaller household sizes. For example current zoning requires every dwelling unit – no matter of size - to provide 2 parking spaces and another one at 10 total units. This creates unnecessary requirements and barriers for unlikely needed spaces.
4. Discuss adjusting the building height requirements for Jolina Court beyond 38”. Historically, the only barrier was the lack of a extension fire truck in Richmond. But it was found that Williston Fire Department currently supports and partners with the volunteer Richmond Fire Dept. Based on discussions with the Williston Fire Department the time to arrive at any Richmond village location is the same amount of time or less than the volunteer Dept as they are 24 hour operation. If this is the only barrier to adjusting the height limit, we should investigate and discuss further. An easy way to achieve density without sprawl is vertical growth.
5. Traffic impact – As per discussion in Traffic Study, exploration of a through road in Jolina court via the town hall should be a consideration to ease bridge street traffic and extend the accessibility.
6. Parking – As per discussions in the Interim Zoning, it was agreed to enable an ‘overflow’ parking of 30% of total requirement. This is a common practice in other community to ensure that valuable land is not paved for parking without need or use. We identified that our overflow would be in the flood plains behind the Town Hall building.
7. If dwelling unit per acre is maintained as a zoning density requirement, then an adjustment to allow all acreage not just developable because parking is allowed in flood plains and developable land in village should be developed to enable smart growth.