

West Pawlet Master Plan

Corner Store

Pot. Luck Meeting - February 9th, 2023



FEBRUARY 9TH, 2023

Welcome Everyone!

Thank you for joining us, and thank you to **West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department** for hosting us today!



Introduction

Michael Allen - Regrowth Planning

I am working with the Town of Pawlet to develop a Master Plan for West Pawlet Village, documenting a long-term vision for what the community would like to see here.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



Committee

Jessica Van Oort
 Mike Beecher
 Bruce Sirjane
 Rhonda Schlangen
 Frank Nelson



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Funded by a Municipal Planning Grant awarded by the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development.

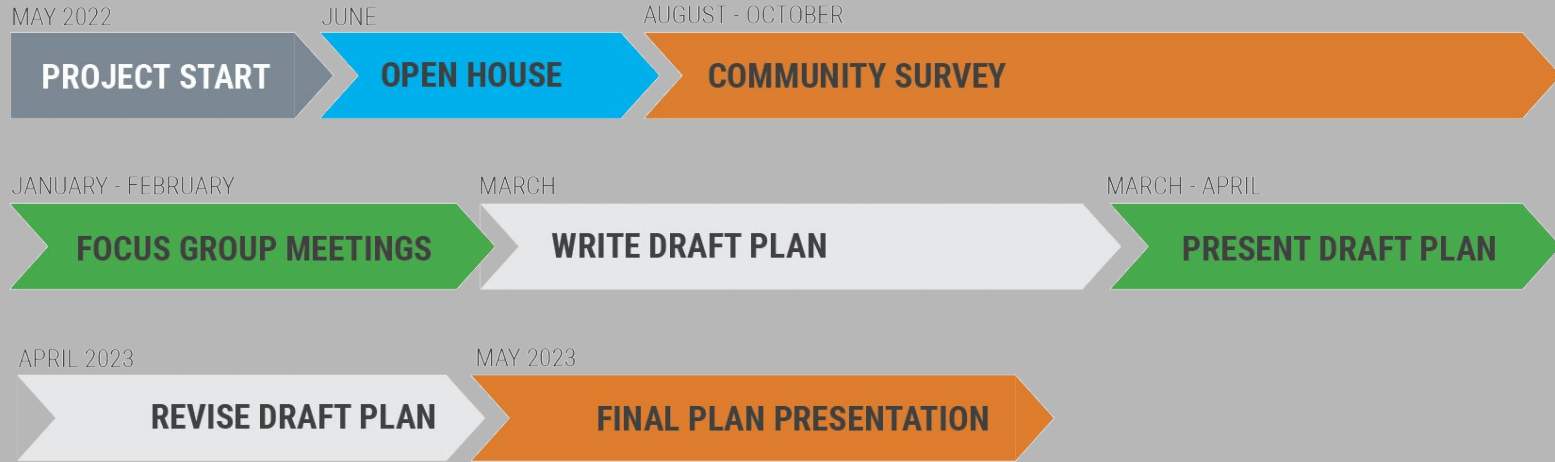


Purpose

My role is to help lead a community discussion about what you want, make suggestions, discuss alternatives, and document what the community decides.

The Master Plan will help identify needs and assist the town with getting grants for future projects.

SCHEDULE



WEST PAWLET VILLAGE MASTER PLAN POT LUCK DINNERS

The Town of Pawlet Municipal Planning Grant Committee is hosting a series of **Pot Luck Dinner Meetings** with West Pawlet residents to discuss selected topics for the Village Master Plan.

We invite you to join us at any one of our **four topic meetings** to enjoy some food, see the results of the recent Community Survey, and discuss topics identified in that survey as most important to local residents. We invite you to bring a dish of easy-to-eat finger foods, appetizers and other dishes to enjoy with your neighbors! Public input from these meetings will be used to craft recommendations for the Draft Plan, which will be presented in the Spring for review.

@ **West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Dept** 6pm-9pm
2806 Route 153, West Pawlet, VT Each Night

January 12th 6pm-9pm **Roadway Intersection & Safety Improvements**
Discuss desired improvements to the Route 153 / Egg St intersection, WWI monument and Rail Trail parking area and local streetscape.

January 26th 6pm-9pm **Village Revitalization & Cleanup**
Discuss ways we could revitalize the village, restore vacant buildings, attract new businesses, improve sidewalks and general cleanup.

February 9th 6pm-9pm **Corner Store**
Discuss ways the town can help to attract a new corner store in the village, where it might be located and what it should include.

February 23rd 6pm-9pm **The Firehouse & Community Events**
Discuss the long-term needs of the Firehouse, how their plans could advance other village goals, and ideas for new community events.



For more information, please visit:
www.regrowthplanning.com/pawlet



Pot Luck Dinner Meetings:

Jan 12th: Roadway & Safety Improvements

Jan 26th: Village Revitalization

Today: Corner Store

February 23rd: Firehouse & Community Events



www.pawlet.vt.gov

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Pawlet eNews December 31, 2022

Posted by Sean Ruck

West Pawlet Village Master Plan

The Town of Pawlet is in the process of developing a Master Plan to help guide the future of the West Pawlet Village. A Master Plan is a document—often with photos, drawings and maps—which outline the desired future vision and general goals of the community. This planning process seeks to invite local residents to provide input on what issues are most important to them and what they would like to see to help shape the plan.

Topics of discussion can include any variety of issues, including business needs, parking, streetscape improvements, housing, zoning, recreation, water and sewer services, tourism, industry, youth and senior activities, trail improvements, and many more. But we need your help—a Master Plan needs to be developed using the input of the community—we want to hear your ideas! Please join us at any of our various events and meetings, described below, to hear different ideas and share your own.

Pot Luck Dinner Meetings

We are hosting a series of four “Pot Luck Dinner Meetings” over the next few months to bring people together and discuss some of the topics which were identified as high priority in the Community Survey. Please join us at any one of our four topic meetings to enjoy some food, see the results of the recent Community Survey, and discuss topics identified in that survey as most important to local residents. We invite you to bring a dish of easy-to-eat finger foods, appetizers and other dishes to enjoy with your neighbors! All meetings will be held at the West Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department between 6pm and 9pm on the dates noted below.

Public comments collected from these meetings will be used to craft recommendations for the Draft Plan, which is expected to be completed in early 2023.

Search

Events

Tuesday, January 10

Tuesday, January 10
7:00pm Pawlet Select Board

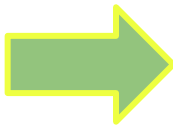
Monday, January 23
7:30pm Pawlet Planning Commi

[+ Google Calendar](#)

[See full calendar](#)

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Document Downloads



Document Downloads



West Pawlet Village Center Map



Community Survey Results



Open House Notes



Open House Display Boards



Pot Luck Dinner Presentation 1

January 12

Intersection & Streetscape



Pot Luck Meeting 1 - Notes

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the goal of this effort?

The goal of this effort is to develop a vision document which will help guide the Town of Pawlet on achieving both short and long-term priorities for improving the community. The document can be used by local town officials, community leaders and residents to enable an organized and focused approach to getting things done. It can also be used to help leverage future grant funding for specific projects which the community supports.

How is this work being paid for?

The Town of Pawlet Municipal Planning Grant Committee (MPGC) applied for—and was awarded—a grant from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development through the Rutland Regional Planning Commission. Regrowth Planning, a local planning consultant, has been hired to organize the public outreach and assist the MPGC with the writing of this plan.

How can I submit comments or suggestions?

West Pawlet residents are invited to attend the various meetings and events for this effort, including the Open House, Pot Luck Dinners and presentations scheduled over the year. You may also submit comments and questions through our online form, located here: [LINK TO COMMENT FORM](#)



COMMENT FORM

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Overview & Purpose

To help collect public input on issues important to the residents of West Pawlet, a brief survey was distributed within the village center and surrounding areas. The purpose of this survey was to help inform locals about the Master Plan process, identify priorities, collect input on known issues, and allow people to identify additional topics or concerns that were not previously discussed. The resulting feedback was informative to identify specific topics which should be discussed further in the later focus group meetings as well as note individual suggestions for the Master Plan.

Survey Design

The survey questions were developed using input from the Open House event as well as suggested topics collected from the Municipal Planning Grant Committee (the committee). Regrowth Planning developed a list of draft questions which were reviewed and discussed by the committee, which were then refined until the final text was agreed upon. The selected questions were then formatted to fit within four pages (two double-sided sheets) to keep it brief and for easy mailing.

The first question on the survey asked people to rank the relative importance of various general topics for the village so that the committee would have information on local priorities and identify future focus group meetings. The remaining questions asked for additional input or detail on these same subjects. The last question provided an open-ended response for people to write in about any topic they pleased. (See copy of survey in Appendix)

Survey Distribution

The survey was distributed in hardcopy via U.S. Postal Service and also made available online for people who did not receive a copy or for additional household members who wished to participate. Since the official "Village Designation" area for West Pawlet is quite small, it was decided that the survey should be mailed directly to all households which were served by the West Pawlet Wastewater Treatment facility. The mailing list for wastewater bills was used as a first step to identify recipients. This list was then reviewed and compared against local tax and property data to identify property owners who lived (or had mailing addresses) out of town, so that an additional copy of the survey could be mailed directly to current occupants of the local home. A total of 137 paper surveys were mailed out.

The survey was additionally advertised on Facebook through the local West Pawlet Neighbors group, as well as on the local Front Porch Forum website.

The paper survey was mailed out on August 23rd with responses collected at Town Hall on September 20th and the closing of the online version on the evening of October 2nd.

Survey Results

Surveys Mailed Out:	137 ¹
Paper survey responses:	19
Online survey responses:	24
Total survey responses:	43

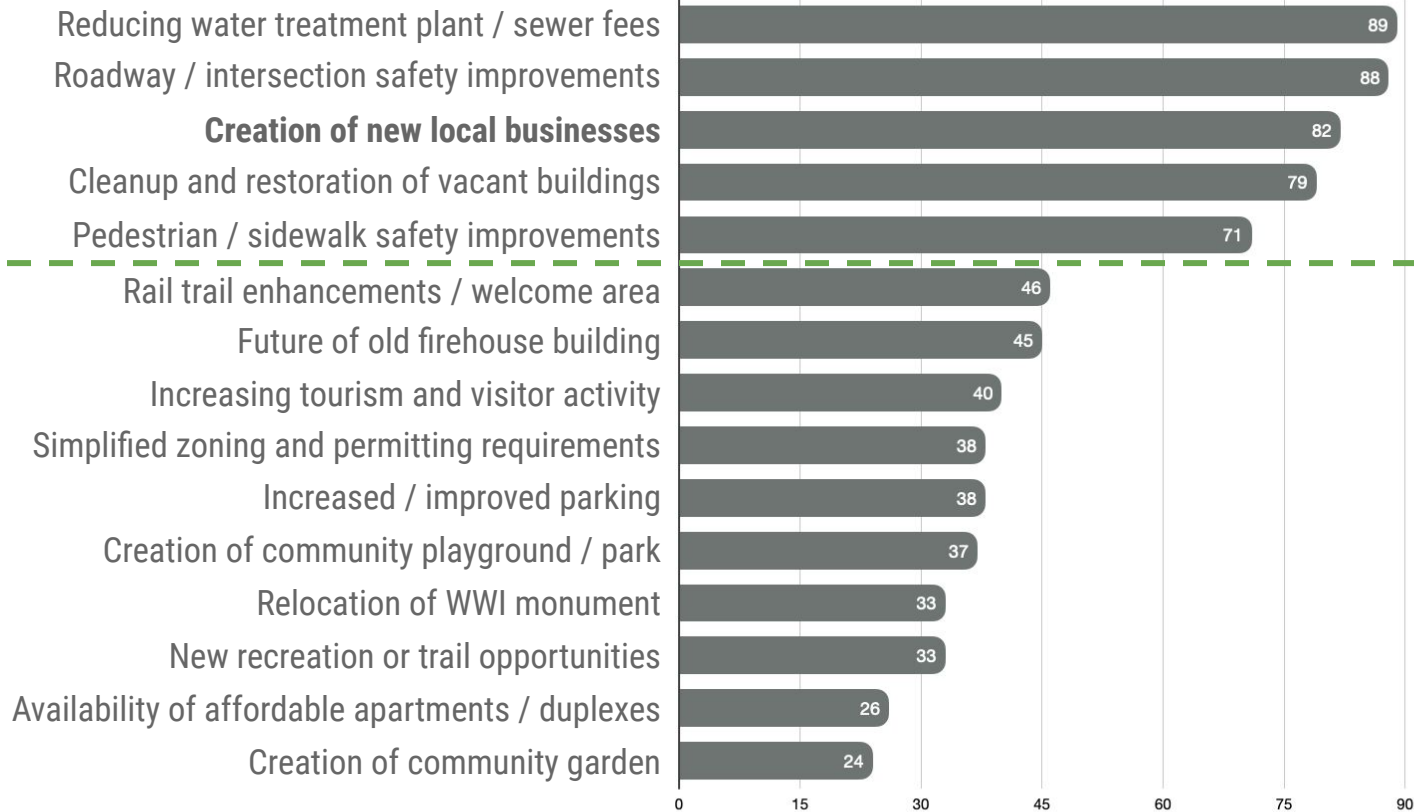
¹ 29 survey envelopes were returned by the postal service as undeliverable to the street home address.

Survey Feedback

PRIORITY ISSUES IN WEST PAWLET - weighted scores

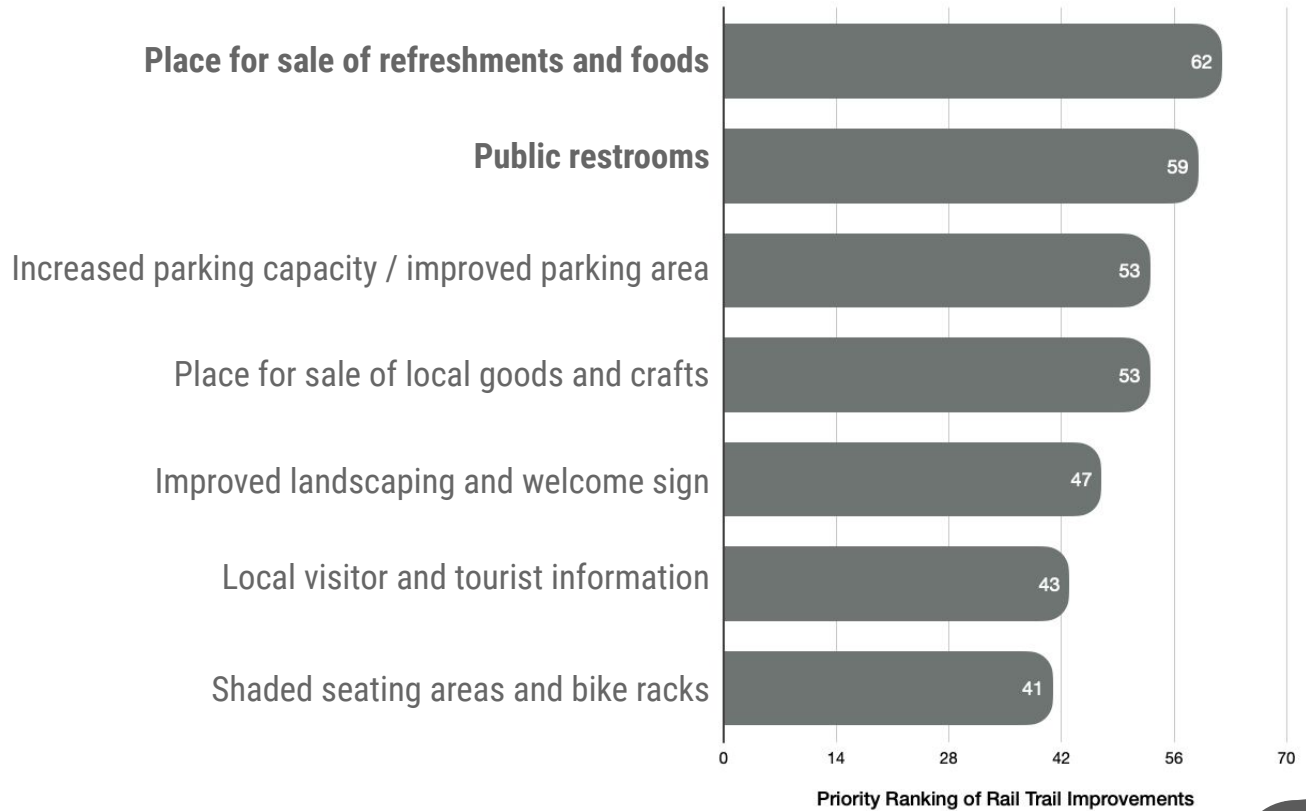


PRIORITY ISSUES IN WEST PAWLET - weighted scores

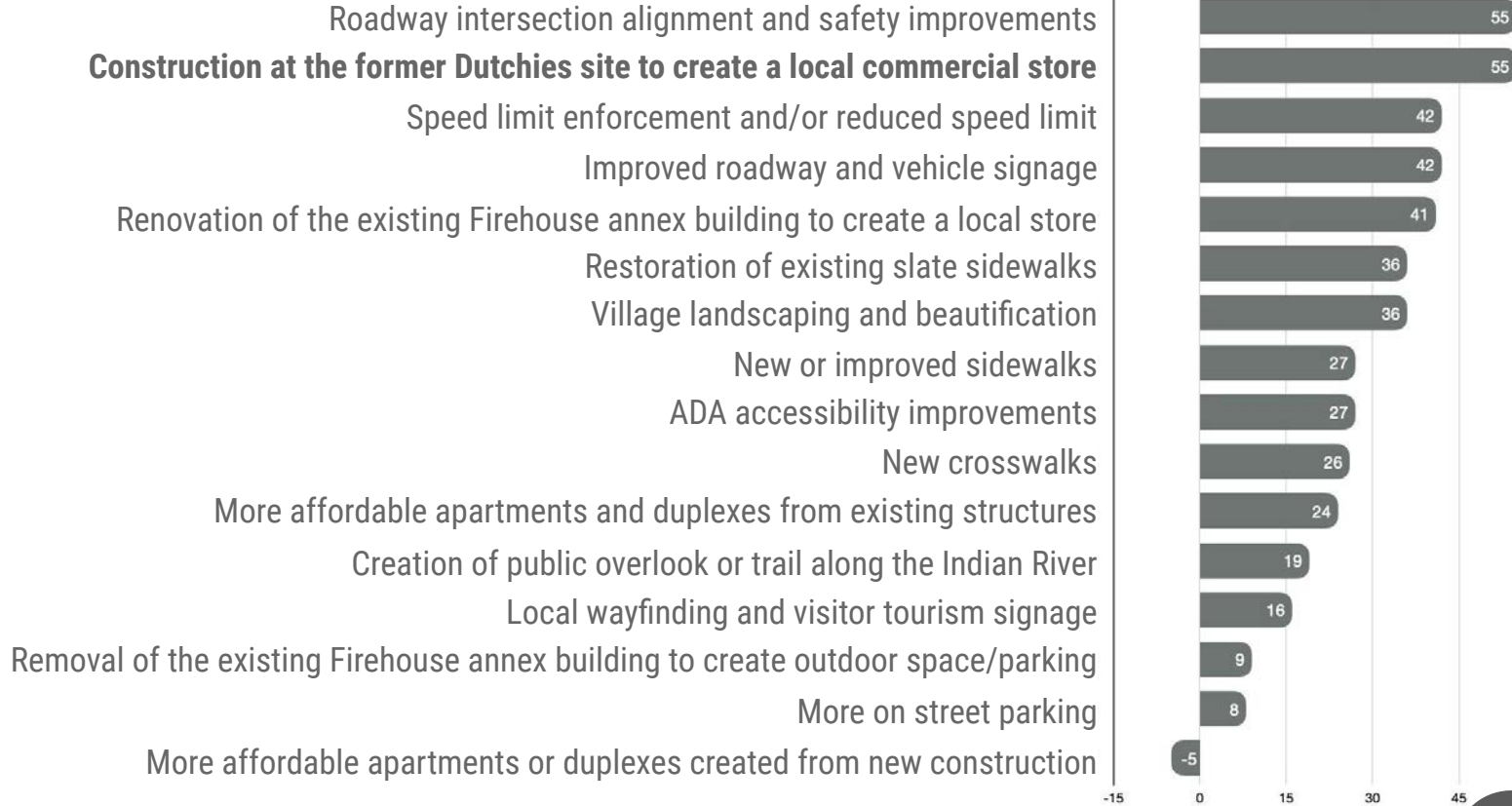


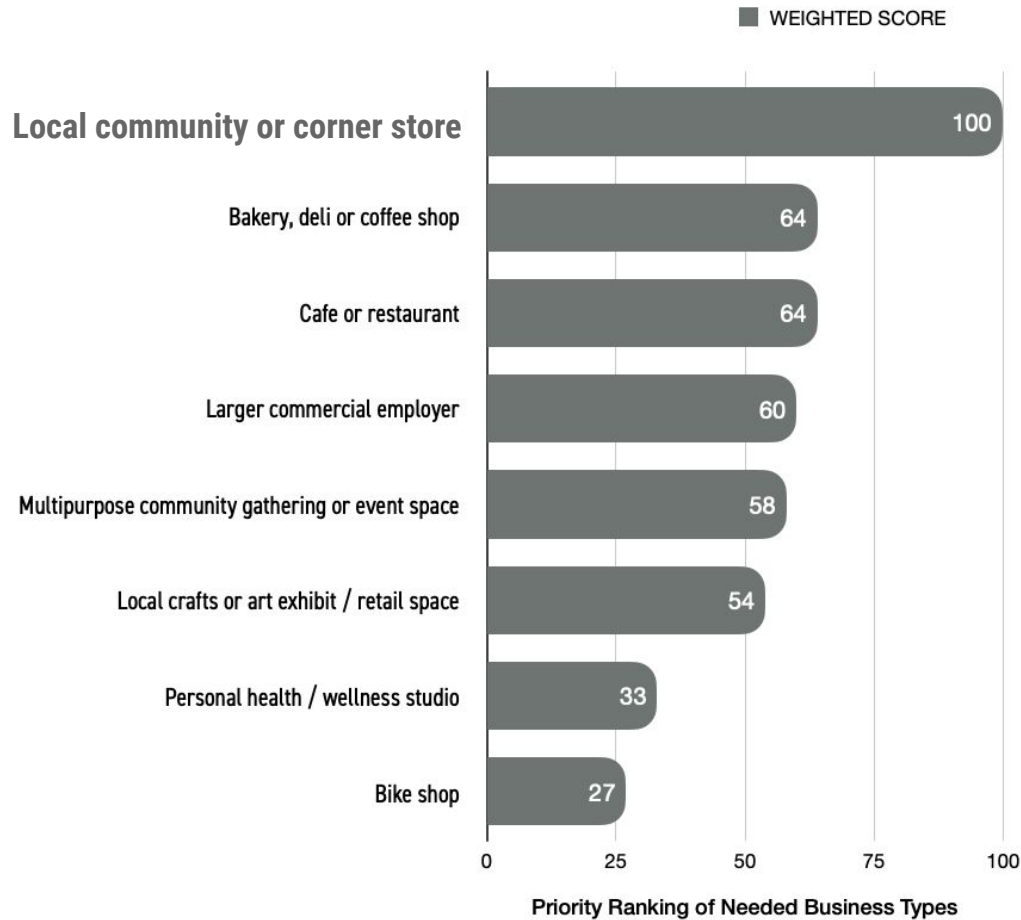
**HIGHEST
PRIORITIES**

HOW NEEDED ARE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING RAIL TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS?

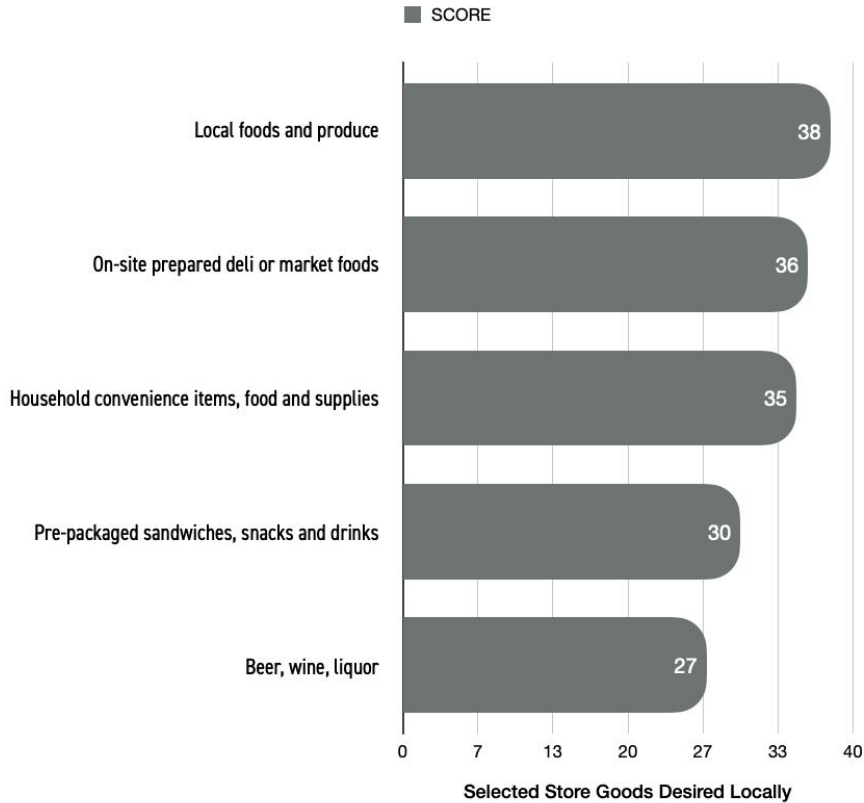


MOST DESIRED CHANGES IN WEST PAWLET - weighted scores

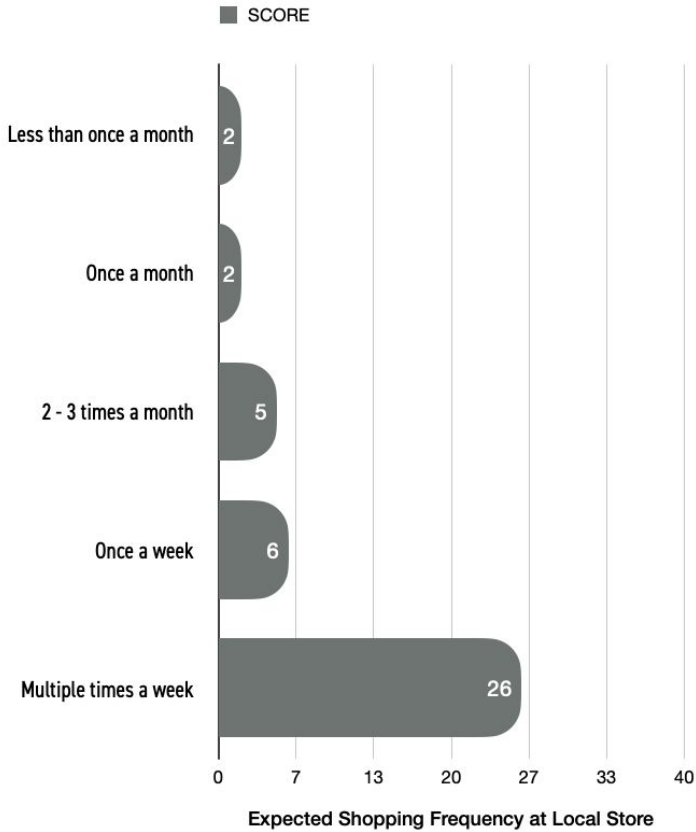




How needed are each of the following types of businesses in West Pawlet?



If a local community store could be established in West Pawlet, what goods would you like it to sell?



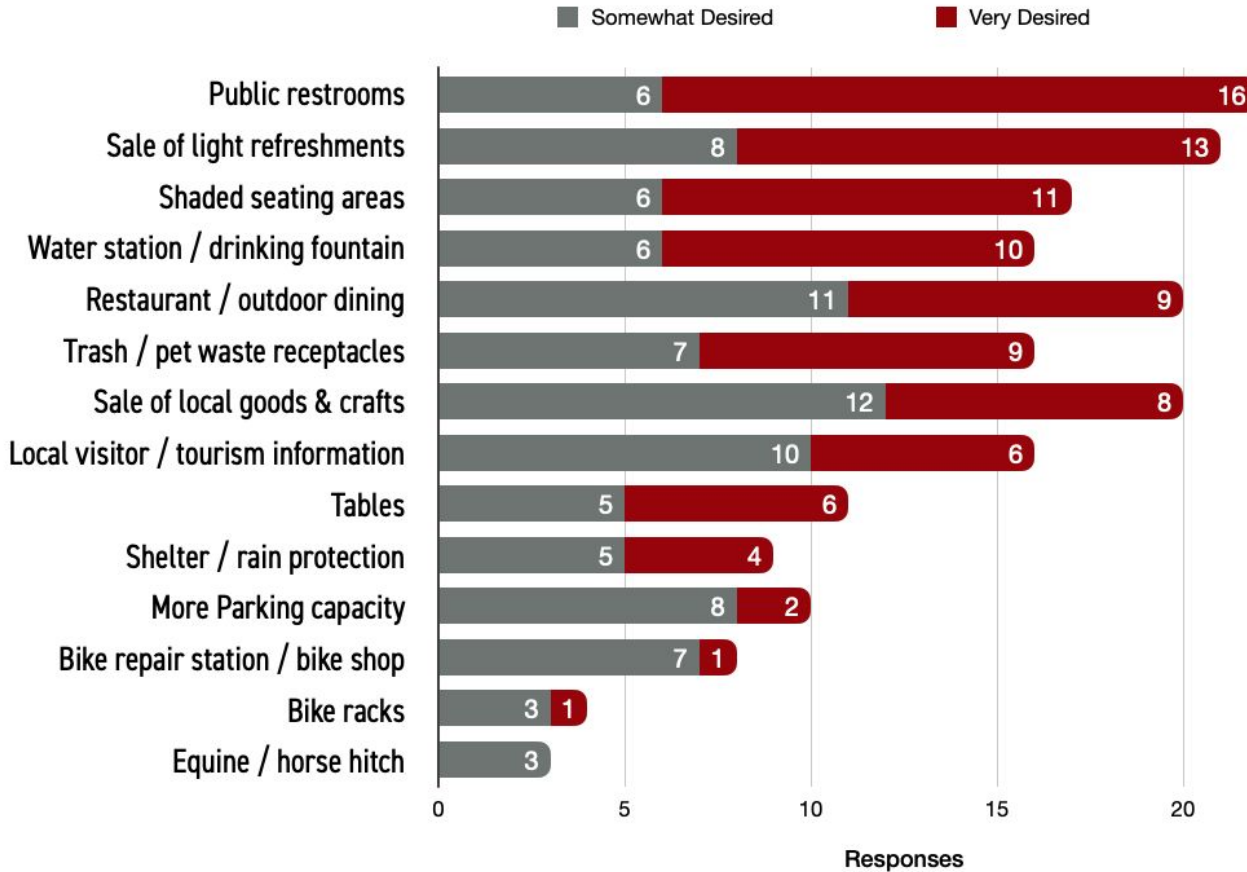
If a local community store could be established which carried the items you selected above, how often do you think you would shop there?



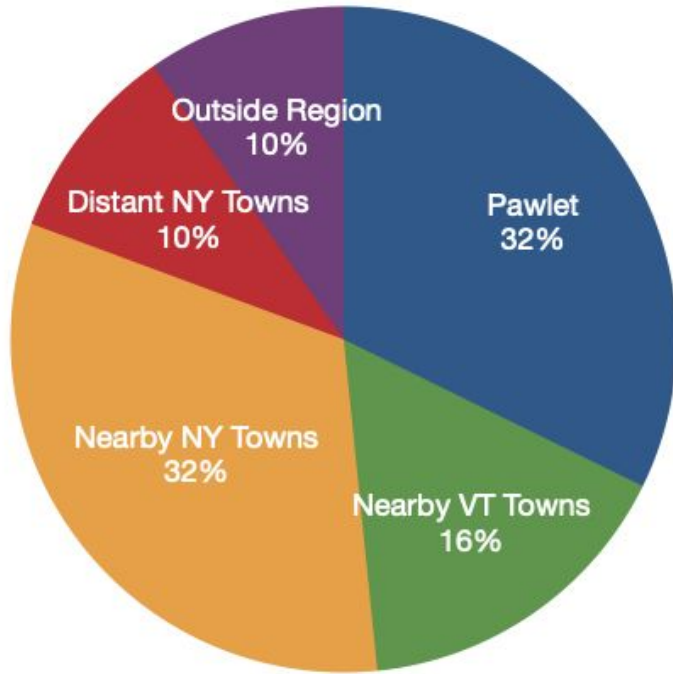
Rail Trail Survey

DID YOU STOP AND PAUSE IN WEST PAWLET FOR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?





What amenities or services would you LIKE TO find here in West Pawlet?



Rail Trail Visitors - By Hometown

Where do you live?



Discussion Topics:

Local Store Outreach

New Construction vs Existing Space

Case Studies

What Do We Actually Want/Need?

Potential Properties

Local Outreach



Outreach to Local Stores

- None are interested in taking on any expansion / satellite operations – too busy already.

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- Deli / foodservice / chef is often critical to profitability.
- Some skepticism that there is enough thru-traffic and population to make it sustainable.
- Finding staff (and keeping them) is very difficult

New Construction vs Existing Space

New Construction

Advantages

- Town already owns property
- High visibility location
- Could design what we want



New Construction

Advantages

- Town already owns property
- High visibility location
- Could design what we want

Disadvantages

- Very high upfront cost
- Not really any grant funding
- Higher risk
- May not be able to attract financing / developer

New Construction

“Shovel Ready” Option

- Develop a “shovel-ready” design and site plan, with all of the necessary approvals and permits already taken care of.
- Shop this pre-approved plan to potential developers via an RFP process.
- Negotiate with selected developer on terms

New Construction

“Shovel Ready” Option - Developer’s Perspective

- Unclear if this site is enticing enough to attract investment interest.

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- Recommended that design include 2-3 dwelling units to help subsidize store operation, make the investment less risky.

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- Relatively high risk for them.
- Recommended that design include 2-3 dwelling units to help subsidize store operation, make the investment less risky.
- May require other incentives such as tax deferment, PILOT, TIF, or phased contract.

New Construction

Community Funded

- Establish non-profit entity for community fundraising to construct new space.
- Organization would own space, and lease it to an operator.
- Would require significant fundraising, but some of it could be through donated materials and labor.
- Community Supported Enterprise model

Community Supported Enterprise

- Very popular in revitalizing local stores that otherwise wouldn't survive in today's commercial environment.
- 501(c)3 group is formed to fundraise, purchase and renovate building.
- Leases space to an operator at low cost.
- If operator leaves, space is still there to find a replacement.

Renovate Existing Space

Advantages

- Much lower upfront cost
- Revitalize vacant building
- Many grant programs available for this, especially for historic buildings

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Disadvantages

- Will require community effort and fundraising
- Need a few local community members to step up and lead this effort

Case Studies



Hancock General Store - Hancock, VT



- Village Center Designation
- Tax credits to support renovations



Barnard General Store - Barnard, VT



Barnard General Store - Barnard, VT



Preservation Trust
of Vermont

- Closed in 2012 (first time since 1832)
- Local community established Barnard Community Trust
- Raised over \$650,000 to buy building and repair
- Volunteers ran store part time in exchange for donations to make improvements and get store running again
- Trust leases building to new operators, re-opened in 2013

W.E. Pierce Store - *North Shrewsbury, VT*



W.E. Pierce Store - *North Shrewsbury, VT*



Preservation Trust
of Vermont

- Closed in 1992
- Was gifted to Preservation Trust of Vermont
- Trust oversaw \$350,000 in renovations and helped provide funding with the Freeman Foundation
- Operated by Shrewsbury Cooperative
- Trust leases to the Cooperative rent free

Albany General Store - Albany, VT



Albany General Store - Albany, VT



Preservation Trust
of Vermont

- Albany Community Trust - 501(c)3 non-profit
- Partnered with Preservation Trust of Vermont
- Purchased building after fire in 2013
- Raised over \$200,000 in donations
- Awarded over \$400,000 in grants
- Re-opened in 2021

Cafe & Community Space - *Rupert, VT*

(Aka "Sheldon General Store")



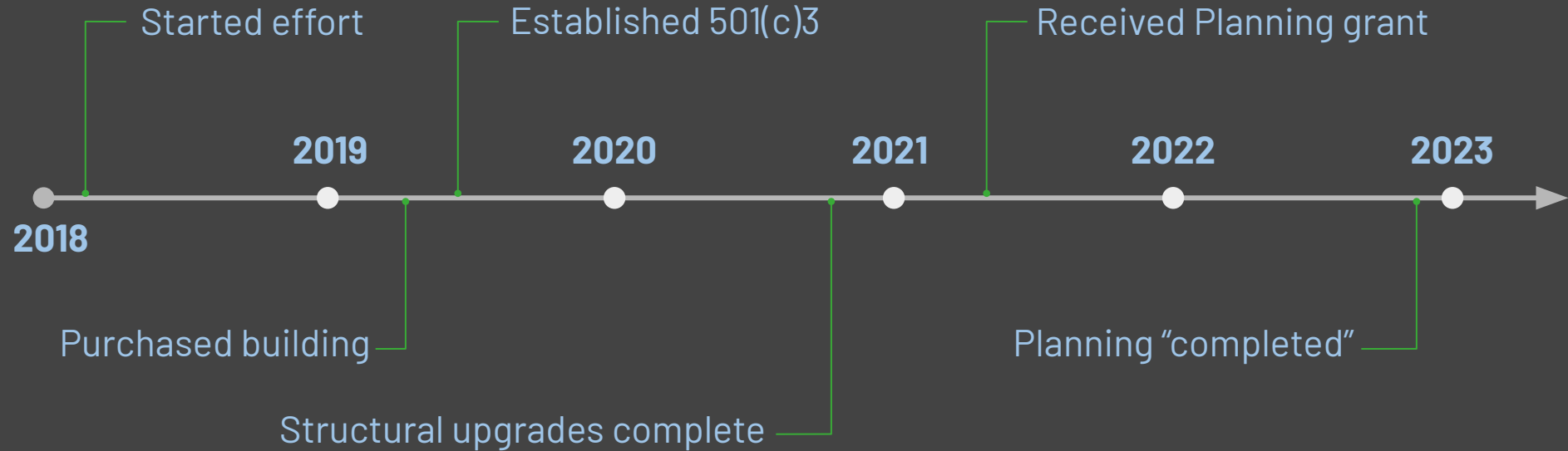
Cafe & Community Space - *Rupert, VT*



Preservation Trust
of Vermont

- Rupert Village Trust - 501(c)3 non-profit
- Partnered with Preservation Trust of Vermont
- Not trying to be a “store”, developing a cafe and community event space instead
- Have raised so far:
 - \$490,000 - Grants
 - \$145,000 - Community fundraising and donations

Rupert Cafe & Community Space





WEST PAWLET VILLAGE MASTER PLAN





Rupert Cafe & Community Space

- People bring their own food & beverage to various gatherings:
 - Friday night “game nights”
 - Saturday morning coffee
 - Monday Yoga, other small community events
- Can't sell food (yet) - Working toward a commercial kitchen
- Planning two menus: “Economical” & “Fancier”
- Planning future addition with fire stairs & elevator

Other Success Stories

- Putney General Store
- Castleton Village Store
- Guilford Country Store
- Maple Corner Community Store
- Curriers Market in Glover
- JJ Hapgood Store





Preservation Trust of Vermont

- Workshops – “Fundraising 101”
- Field Services / Community Visits
- Retreats
- Funding and technical assistance through all stages of the process

2021

Acquiring Options

With support from PTV through the Daniel K. Thome Foundation, the ECT acquires an Option Agreement to purchase the store.

Fundraising Success!

PTV awards the ECT a \$100,000 Bruhn Revitalization Grant for renovations. The property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a preservation easement will protect the building in years to come.



Making it Real

501(c)(3) non-profit status is granted to the ECT by the IRS.

Success and A New Beginning!

The ECT completes their campaign to raise \$400,000 to purchase the store. New operators take over management. The operators for the past 38 years retire.

Engineering Support

PTV awards a fourth seed grant to hire an engineer to do a site plan.

New Operator Search

PTV assists the ECT in their search for new operators by providing examples of operator and lease agreements.

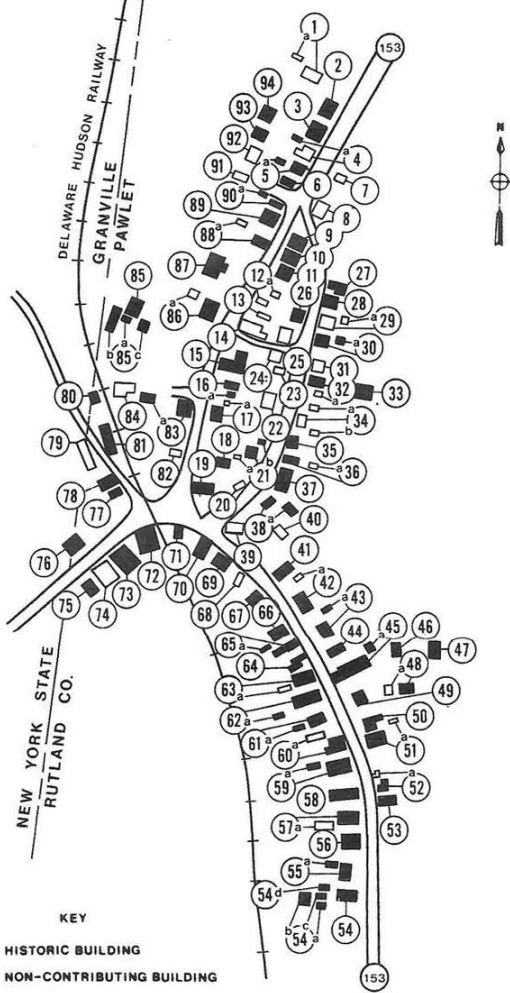
Tax Incentives

The ECT receives a Vermont Village Center Tax Credit for electrical, plumbing, fire prevention work, and more to bring the building up to code.



Considerations

- Working to restore an existing, historic property can offer many advantages over new construction.
- Work within Village Designated area
- More funding available
- Historic property is likely to attract more grant support.
- Want high visibility.



WEST PAWLET VILLAGE MASTER PLAN











Rail Freight Shed

- Relocate shed
- Renovate to include small store and event space
- Parking next to wastewater plant
- Corner becomes outdoor dining & green space

So, what do we really want?

What do we want?

- It's not about "just a store", it's a community hub.
 - Event space for small community events, socializing
 - Outdoor space for eating, relaxing
 - Also caters to Rail Trail visitors
 - Public bathrooms
 - Game station?
 - What other features would we want?

Information on project webpage:

www.regrowthplanning.com/pawlet

You can submit additional comments and suggestions via our online form.

