

## Bethel Planning Survey – February 2010

**Total number of surveys returned = 447 of 1195 (37.4%)**

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Are you a Bethel resident? Yes **308 (68.9%)** No **78 (17.5%)** NR **61 (13.6%)**  
Are you a Bethel land owner? Yes **357 (79.8%)** No **33 (7.4%)** NR **57 (12.8%)**

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### 1. Should commercial development be focused:

#### a. in the Village center?

Yes **309 (69.1%)** No **70 (15.7%)** NR **68 (15.2%)**

#### b. along Route 12 toward Randolph?

Yes **207 (46.3%)** No **126 (28.2%)** NR **114 (25.5%)**

#### c. along Route 107 toward Rutland?

Yes **185 (41.4%)** No **129 (28.9%)** NR **133 (29.7%)**

#### d. other locations?

Yes **63 (14.1%)** No **11 (2.5%)** NR **373 (83.4%)**

Downtown needs to be revitalized with a focus on attracting specialty industry and business. **I believe people should be able to have businesses wherever they are- times are tough.** The center badly needs rehab. **Downtown needs revitalizing.** Depends on the businesses: what business, how big, etc. Keep the balance of small town and good jobs all round but I vote Randolph gets the Walmart. **Bethel desperately needs more businesses.** Should cluster with one/few access streets/roads to reduce curb cuts. **Keep development away from farmlands.** Along 107 toward So Royalton. **Where possible without ruining the small town atmosphere.** No big boxes! No housing developments! **North past high school.** Along Route 107 toward Rt. 89. **Anywhere the land can be used.** Along Route 107 toward I-89. **There are a number of buildings in the village that can be restored while keeping their historic character. Also, Route 107 toward I-89 is already partially developed, so limited further development can occur there.** Revitalize downtown as much as possible. May be good to pick-up cross-state and Killington traffic. Along Route 12 toward Randolph, although important to maintain agricultural use. On Route 107 toward Royalton: improve stretch of rentals, re-purpose CFM facility. **The area and town need the tax base as well as jobs.** There is no parking places in the village. **Christian Hill Quarry and towards I-89.** 107 towards S. Royalton. **We need to redevelop downtown Bethel before building anything new.** Wherever someone owns a property and wishes to put a business. The one thing I would hate to see happen is a strip mall. **Focused but not limited to [Route 12 toward Randolph and Route 107 toward Rutland].** Area where old Files & Rice plant was located. **Charlie Young already told us where you're going to put anything in the village!!** There are too many vacant buildings (in the village center). **Route 107 to I-89- draw more people into town if they see development between 89 & 107 turn off.** We have the Village Center on the -?-, we need to stay focused on that part of town first. **Along Route 107 toward Royalton.** Downtown must be revitalized! **Difficult to locate. Developable land is already in use; the Village Center is also very limited.** Towards Royalton. **Anywhere and everywhere.** Wherever suitable. Several undesirable buildings should come down- the district would benefit. Get a HUD grant. **Won't hurt the scenic beauty but will allow for much revenue.** Route 12 toward

So. Royalton. I'd like to know what you mean by 'commercial'? Bigger than a family-operated business? I'd like to see more 'small shops' in town (center). **Village Center is too cramped for any sort of development.** A combination of in the Village Center and along Route 12 toward Randolph. **Wherever we need to.** Wherever possible. **Route 107 toward Royalton.** 107 toward 89. **Commercial development should work out from the Village Center where they can access Town water and sewer.** [In Village Center] but there is no room. Float Zone issues. **Some of the buildings in the Village Center appear dilapidated. Can the owners be persuaded to refurbish or demolish them? The Richardson's Store for example.** Too many empty places in town. Cost of property and taxes drive many away because they can't afford their dreams or goals. **No to Routes 12 and 107 because it is dangerous to make turns and because it is more residential and we don't need unnecessary traffic.** [Yes in the Village Center] if this means getting new businesses in the downtown area. **All the above would be good. Not much parking in Village.** Set back out of sight from these routes. **Our downtown is vacant. Let's fill that before expanding.** Promote business with cell service. **Gilead Brook Road.** Wherever someone wants to and it is available- we need more businesses and jobs. **Route 107 in Royalton.** The Center should be fully revitalized and rented before further 'strip development' along 12 or 107. **We need more 'honey' business downtown to maintain it's charm- like a bakery, a sit-down coffee shop w/ more seating, but bigger stuff outside village so we can grow and have jobs and attract families to our school.** Anywhere someone wants it. **Anywhere they're compliant with laws.** [Along Route 12 and 107] in the current commercial zones (Valley Motors/Locust Creek). Along 107 in the Dandelion & McCullough's area even if it's Royalton, good for Bethel! **Along Rt 107 toward Royalton.** Route 107 towards Royalton. **If by commercial development you are talking about initiatives to bring small businesses into the town center along Main Street, I would say that is a good idea.** The center has a great deal of potential, but so far, it seems, has trouble keeping stores full and open. If you are talking about 'industrial park' type complexes, focusing on manufacturing, recycling, noise-producing entities etc then these need to be well off the beaten path, not viewable from any of the main thoroughfares, and nowhere near the town center. Wherever practical. **Toward Royalton. I think it's just as important to consider the form of development or the type. Commercial can fit in with the character of the area in most places if done right.** Preserve farmland- that should be a priority. Best use of resources is to confine development to the inner core of the town- fill the unused buildings first, i.e, Richardson's Store, the yellow building. **Bethel needs a more focused town center to help congeal the community.** Near State Police Barracks. **Anywhere there is interest, considerations and help should be offered- we need businesses in this town!** More restaurants. **Between Village and I-89.** We should keep the land free of industry. **Wherever it can be done.** Wherever possible. **Fill the vacant spots [in the Village Center] with businesses first.** 107 toward I-89. Perhaps long-range: demolish substandard housing on South Main and make commercial. **Route 107 toward Royalton.** Light development should be allowed in the Village Center. Development requiring larger buildings should be farther out of town. **Combination- pursue all opportunities. Keep an open mind- see where the interest is.** I'm not sure where the land makes sense: for soil type, wetland, drainage and most of all availability. It would be great to survey all this. **Along Rte 107 east to I-89 in partnership with Royalton.** Tax breaks for businesses. **Utilities and infrastructure are best available in the Village center. Development should also expand from the Village east along rte. 107 as far as Eaton's Sugar House. That**

area has the best access from I-89, a must for growth. Keep development in town. 107 toward South Royalton. We need to preserve our farmland. **Let's not have a strip mall!!** Toward the thruway. **12/107 intersection.** Not along rivers and streams.

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## 2. Are wind power and scenic views compatible?

Yes **339 (75.8%)** No **85 (19.0%)** NR **23 (5.2%)**

I am for wind power but on non-prominent ridgelines. **Let's get with the program- no nukes, no coal-- use renewable energy- wind, solar.** You can mix the two and be compatible. The question I have is can you produce enough power with these windmills while being compatible with the scenic views. **Each case should be carefully considered. Necessity may override compatibility.** They could be! **Good wind power locations are on mountaintops. This is a lousy question. Compatible? No, not really. Do benefits outweigh the effect on views? Yes, probably.** Can be with planning. **I believe they are compatible just not economically feasible in this area- look at windmaps.** We all need to adopt alternative energy. **There is 'scenic' and there is 'scenic' – a portion of the less scenic could and should be utilized.** Somebody will always be affected more than the general public. But hopefully the town and townsfolk can commit to it to make it happen. **Definitely!** They can be put in with the natural scenery. Look at Europe. **This is totally dependent upon care taken by developers and town management- also state.** Depending on location. **There is a need to advance renewable energy. I'd rather see windmills than big box stores.** Wind towers are not eye pleasing but the need for power is growing and Yankee will be shutting down. Put towers on Mt. Olympus. That way I can look at them every day. **We need power as long as they want to shut down Vt Yankee.** Needs to be well-thought out. Solar? **Absolutely. Wind power will be an important part of our future.** Wind is sustainable and I think seeing windmills on ridges is neat! If nuclear plant closes we're going to need it—one town gets \$500,000 per year for windmills. **We may have to give up some of the views to produce power. In 20 to 40 years they will be gone and scenic views will return.** Why are we so concerned with an occasional wind or cell tower when CVPS and Fair Point have taken away every scenic view? **Wind power adds to scenery presently, it draws attention. Tourists bring in money.** We should all vigorously seek out all forms of alternate energy. **Vermont needs a new nuclear 'breeder reactor' plant before Yankee shuts down.** Better than nukes. **With Vermont Yankee closing we need to see windmills and solar panels or we will not be able to afford electricity.** From afar. **Turbines would be great for Bethel!** NIMBY. Balance is always needed between efficient power generation and livability. **Yes and No. Are power lines compatible with views? Depends on the trade off.** And so are cell towers and scenic views. But the question is whether wind power is feasible in our area. **How many ways are there to answer this question? I do not oppose wind power installations.** They can be. **Depends: Family-owned windmills are aesthetic; those big, industrial wind turbines are not. Won't they also kill birds? Sometimes. Bethel probably doesn't have high enough ridgelines to attract large wind projects. Small residential wind towers probably wouldn't hurt scenic views too much.** Let's get them ahead of everyone else! **Wind power can be kept just below the ridges.** No uglier than telephone lines. **Have to get used to views with turbines because wind power is necessary.** Location would be key. **Yes, but is Bethel best place? – Expansion of the small**

**scale hydro and solar hot-water; centralized heating.** Anything green should be part of our culture but be as unobtrusive as possible in looks- blends in- natural looking. **What impact do turbines have on the landscape in terms of access roads, site clearing? Just curious.** Wind power here is not feasible- period. **Need more renewable energy.** Depends. Replace wind power with oilrig. Does it sound compatible? **If done wisely and with residents' agreement.** It can be! It can be sited carefully to minimize impacts on the most important scenic area, but it can also be done poorly. **That depends on how carefully a site is considered.** They can be, Careful consideration needs to be given to lowest impact for wildlife as well as aesthetics. **Wind power would not be compatible with this area due to the mountains and hilly terrain.** The future of our planet requires that! **I don't think so.** Everybody understands that we need power. Besides, windmills are architecturally pleasant. **Quite acceptable in other countries.** Absolutely- we'd be absurd to not welcome it! **Could be.** Hydro-electric is a better answer, and it is already in place. **Trash on sides of back roads.** If it makes sense in terms of our topography, I would like for our town to be open to wind power. **They are, however, I do not necessarily think that wind turbines are the correct answer for Vermont.** Depends on location. **Possibly but sites have to be chosen carefully with much more than visual impact as a consideration. In fact, more important considerations should include proximity to established housing and consequent negative impacts of noise and other potential negative health impacts.** We need to do something to get away from fossil fuels. **Compatible: Hardly, but necessary: Yes. Every form of energy has drawbacks- wind, it seems to me, has fewer than most.** OK with me. **I would rather see the White River utilized for hydro-electric power production or bio-mass energy promoted over wind power.** [Yes] It brings down power costs. **Alternative energy is good, providing it means cheaper power for Bethel residents.** No. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the only place suitable for wind power is the very top edge of the Green Mountains. If one comes down off the top even a little the resource potential goes to marginal. Not only that, but there is also no infrastructure of roads or transmission lines, and it would be very expensive to build that. The truth is that New England just doesn't have enough wind or sun to make those alternative energies viable. **[No] BUT windmills at the top of a hill block views while windmills below horizon can limit the intrusion.** We can get used to wind power generation. **Would depend on placement and design.** You can't have it both ways. If you want 'green' power, you have to accept wind turbines on ridgelines! **We need wind power and there is nothing wrong with it's scenic view.** [No] If we're talking industrial wind power which we emphatically oppose.

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**3. Should Bethel's municipal infrastructure be extended? (water, sewer lines, sidewalks, etc.)**

**Yes 102 (22.8%) No 250 (55.9%) NR 95 (21.3%)**

Sidewalks up Church Street. **Work on maintaining and improving what we already have.** No need for rural areas. **We are not in the position at the moment to be extending out infrastructure. We should be looking at upgrading our existing infrastructure first.** As an area is developed, service should be provided. (Such as Sunset Drive, etc.) (Proposed development- Upper North Main Street). **Possibly.** Sidewalk up N. Main. **Peavine.** Focus should be on a viable downtown. **Only in**

**areas where it adds safety or satisfies growth needs.** Sidewalks to Fire Department. Fix sidewalks, raised sidewalks, proper road drainage, sidewalk maintenance in winter from Greenhurst Inn to Fire Station. **Only after present infrastructure is in good shape.** If there is a need, Yes. For the sake of spending money, No. **More sidewalks, and more extension if needed.** Just improve what's there- update present system. **Sewer to River Street. Sidewalks to Fire Station, up Hen Hollow, River Street, further up North Main... can't expect folks to walk if it isn't safe.** To the extent that commercial development can support that and then extend to residential. **Along 107, 12 north, upper Main.** Take better care/ maintenance of the infrastructure we already have- keep up with repairs on paved roads (especially thru center of town). **Sidewalks to Bethel U-Save and trailer park.** Upgrade existing infrastructure then lower taxes. **Fix/replace green bridge on 107 asap. Need more opportunities for physical activity- i.e. walking trails. Need to improve current sidewalks** We cannot afford the upkeep of what we have. **If it helps commercial development.** We should first look to improving the existing infrastructure. The water lines seem to need repair fairly often—perhaps they should be replaced. Roads must be better maintained. **Toward commercial areas.** Unless there are major problems with private septic/wells close to town center. **If development depends on it!** Wherever needed. Sidewalks around more of the Boulevard. **Along River Street.** As needed after we fix what we have. River street sidewalk all the way to the junction of Mills Drive. There are many children & elderly in that area and this is a narrow dangerous road. **Sidewalks all around downtown and along Routes 12 and 107.** River St bridge to North Road. Include when bridge replacement happens? **Highland Avenue- sewer line. North Main – sidewalk.** Towards developments. **Water pressure and quality improvement.** Where people have problems with sewerage near what already exists. **If it will bring in business and/or add to our Grand List.** Sidewalks need to be cleaned off better and faster after snowstorms. **Too expensive—they can't handle what they have!** 107, Graham and beyond. **107.** Peavine Boulevard road base. **The town can't afford to fix the roads let alone other issues.** Sidewalks. **Homes spread too far and wide.** Not without new and ongoing support from those who benefit. **With future development as needed.** Along Route 12 toward Randolph. **Starting from the Village Center and working outward.** If needed we have capacity. **To Town Offices, to Fire Department.** Along Route 107 to the Greenhurst Inn. **Only to serve new commercial investment. Much is in need of repair. Sidewalks would help.** Perhaps not at this time. **Sidewalks- No. Main Street and Sand Hill.** Sidewalks from all residential homes to school and VT Castings (all the way along 107/Rutland up right side of Sand Hill, even up the hill on No. Main St.). **Please extend the sewer lines into the Bicentennial Lane area since we're already on the town water and sewer.** But the ones we have (sidewalks) should be improved up to and past the school. Safe Routes to School grant! **Where needed to- want to promote job opportunities and private industry.** If required to promote industry and job growth. **Not yet.** To commercial buildings toward 89. **Use what we have efficiently before adding more.** Big wall: the wall is crumbling down and dangerous. Tracking -7 warnings have been given – 1 accident already occurred. **Property taxes already too high!** [Sidewalks] Along River Street. **Use some of the \$90K (salary and medical) paid out to waste water employee to reduce costs to payers.** Depends where... some sidewalks in town to the more important spots. **If needed.** Route 107 – River Street. **Sidewalk on 107 West and on Sand Hill Road.** River Street. Hen Hollow. **Does capacity exist to support this?** Depending on development it might be an idea in the future.

**Not at this time. Maybe when more businesses find a home.** River Street. **If there is a need.** The green bridge at 107 and Route 12 intersection. **[Sidewalks] River Street.** I would like to see sewer lines and new sidewalks on River Street. There are several people a day I see walking from River Street into town, this is a very busy stretch of road and we need sidewalks to keep the pedestrians safe. **Out to and across from Greenhurst. Perhaps develop field across.** Maybe just extend water to help keep costs down for people- just maintain what we have for sewer and sidewalks. Add sidewalk past town offices up to Pains's needs work. **[Sidewalks]- Yes.** Route 107 toward Rutland. **People using these services can't pay for them now- repeated delinquencies- see Town Report- same people costing town money.** In the downtown area. **River Street and North Main. It would be nice if sidewalks on North Main and by Post Office could be cleaned!** I live in East Bethel- Any infrastructure improvements are only going to increase my taxes. **Yes if it is necessary.** River Street area. **North Main Street, Sand Hill.** Don't know enough about where it is now and where it is needed. It should be extended to large population centers, if it isn't already there and it's feasible. **Hard to answer- where does sewer/water go now? YES to sidewalks- fix the ones we have on Church St/Pleasant Street and North Main Street and River Street.** Not sure how far this infrastructure extends now... Sidewalks should be extended along Route 107. Maintenance of existing infrastructure is a priority. **More focus on maintaining existing infrastructure, i.e., sidewalks in town, etc.** Sidewalk and bridge Route 107W. Improve parking in town. **High speed internet should be put on more roads for better access.** Highland Avenue and Route 12. **Going up past Church Street toward the Town Garage.** [No] 'If it ain't broke- don't fix it...' **Only where requested/necessary/economically feasible.**

If there are serious septic issues those areas of town should be addressed if a soil test fails. **Let's just take care of the ones we already have. If we ever get out of this economic crisis, maybe we could consider it.** [No] Pave more residential streets- Krystal Drive: it's destroying vehicles and unsafe (a clearly a mud hole). **The residents are taxed too much now.** We need sidewalks everywhere! Especially within a 3 mile range of town. Kids should walk to school safely within 2 miles of school. **I would like to see them [sidewalks] extended up North Main. It's a lovely walk but pretty dangerous. I also think we need to improve our sidewalks.** Wherever required for development around Village Center. **There should be sidewalks and a crosswalk in front of the school for all of the children who cross over to the U-Save parking lot.** Preserve the land. **Not necessary.** I'd like to see a sidewalk on Gilead Brook Road but I have other priorities. **Sidewalks on River Street.** North on Route 12 by the school. **[No] You tell me why!** Depending on commercial expansion possibilities. **It should be considered as the interest in expansion presents itself. Maintain what we have- improve as development takes place.** If and when other development areas come into being. **Along existing corridors → extend.** Don't really understand the issues but probably 'Yes' if that means a cleaner river. **Sidewalks need some repair towards the Post Office.** Keep present infrastructure in good repair. **Probably but only in response to development—planned development not 'hoped for' development. Also, we need examine our existing infrastructure- capacity, condition, remaining useful life i.e. look at it like you would look at a start up manufacturing company.** If there is businesses moving to town- Route 12 / 107. **No. The existing municipal infrastructure is in need of some repair as is, and extending it would again be very expensive.** [Yes] Main street. Crosswalks on Main street are hard to see and should be painted white like all other crosswalks. **I don't**

live in town, so its hard for me to comment on where and if this is helpful, but I would support this infrastructure if towns people wanted it. Many people walk in the village, the sidewalks downtown are good but the roads leading to the village & school need good sidewalks. **Along Route 12 toward Randolph.** Where the need develops. **Not familiar with current infrastructure. We like sidewalks.** I think it's fine. **If there is a need.** New construction for businesses. **Sidewalks both sides of 107 to North Road for safety, side walks up both sides No Main from village to where road becomes unpaved.** Why make people pay for water and sewer they may already own.

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**4. Should more development that current zoning permits be granted on a piece of property if soils and slopes allow?**

**Yes 225 (50.3%) No 161 (36.0%) NR 61 (13.7%)**

Don't know for sure- I'd say it depends on where and what sort of development. **With proper review.** As long as it is not harmful to environment. **Moderate growth should not be painful but beneficial to town finances.** Not without proper review. **Zoning along Class 3 roads should be 2 acres not 10 or 20.** It depends on the location. Scenic areas, i.e. along Route 107 toward Rutland, where it follows the river, should not be developed. **As long as it is aesthetically pleasing.** Only on a case-by-case basis. **We should work with what we have for now—if a variance is needed it should be looked at individually.** In reality- hard to say without specifics. **Road frontage is an issue.** What are current zoning regs. I really believe in no zoning and no building regs except those imposed by the State. **[No] Except for PUD provisions with off-setting open space.** Zoning needs to be thought out carefully. **The character of the neighborhood should dictate the zoning- variances where appropriate.** Type of development should be taken into account. If truly benefits Bethel's community then Yes. **I think so, though it might have to be a case-by-case -?-. Should be allowed to build more than one house on your land especially if you own 20 acres or more. The limit should be 5 – 8 acres per dwelling. Any location considered should be re-discussed.** None of my business. Keep big business on the outskirts and small business in town center. Residential-only where there are houses. Small business from home OK. **If it helps development.** Where needed to want to promote job opportunities and private industry. **What the Planning Commission should not do is spot zone, like they did for a developer on MacIntosh Hill Road. All zoning districts in town should be looked at to see if acreage limits and boundaries still make sense.** Within reason! Don't over develop. **Revise the Ordinance.** Not as a general rule, but by exception. **I guess we need to know more about the zoning.** Only in the suburban areas- not on the back roads. **Probably, but I am not current with the zoning permits that already exist.** [Yes] But a variance can be applied for, no? **This is why South Royalton is growing and we are not!!! Let people grow and change here!** Only to develop more village growth. **Bethel needs to grow!** Development should be concentrated in areas not suitable for farming and should be multi-use. **The person who owns the land should be able to do what they want with it!** As long as they're compliant. **[No] or, YES if the development is deemed beneficial and done in a way that doesn't detract from the town's character.** It would certainly depend on sort of development it was. **Current zoning regulations adequately cover significant issues regarding growth, so should not be made more expansive. The town plan should not recommend**

modification of these regs in order to increase flexibility for use of already-zoned lands. I believe that zoning regs should, in fact, be more restrictive, banning unsightly and unwelcome structures, especially as potentially viewed from the main traffic lanes. The criteria as to what is and is not unsightly should be determined by town vote. Commercial- YES. Residential- NO. **It depends! At some sites, maybe- especially in areas like downtown where denser development would be helpful. Transfer of development rights would be worth considering.** I've noticed many logging sites around and one along our property line. So much logging needed? **[Yes] Under very close review!** [Yes] I believe that this town has very tight zoning laws compared to the other surrounding towns. **Maybe- only if there is a sound plan that will not overburden the land and the surrounding area.** Depends on what kind of development. **Keep the land undisturbed.** That's what DRV is for. **[Yes] Although I don't see any great influx of people to Bethel.** Generally 'No', unless the community gains a benefit as in affordable or senior housing or open space. **As long as it can be done aesthetically and not crowding or eye sores.** Change zoning... **Not for residential, at least.** Possibly but needs to be determined on a site-specific basis. **Too vague- what property and where. But I can think of situations where this might be good.** That's spot zoning and often results in expensive law suits – which is why Bethel has had a policy against spot zoning for decades. **[Yes] But: only in the Town Center as 'infill'. We need to find ways to enhance our downtown to attract businesses/offices.** Depends on situation. **Yes. This will help Bethel to grow on available and suitable land.** I don't understand this question. Are you proposing a change of use? **If it increases employment within the Central VT area.** If feasible.

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##### 5. Should we continue to grow without further limits?

Yes **138 (30.9%)** No **251 (56.1%)** NR **58 (13.0%)**

To certain extent. **Reasonable limits must be set.** We need to carefully examine the type of growth to determine what type of limitation are needed. **Town should develop a master plan for 2020- How the town should look in 10 or 20 years.** Depends on growth where. **Bethel has the potential to develop and should utilize all possibilities.** Stay within spending needs! Don't be spending other people's for personal gains. **Without growth we are stagnant.** Helps to have limits. **No- grow within our limits unless—as stated above.** Limits of aesthetics should be established and maintained. **Look around- that is not a concern. When it is, let's address it. Stop trying to stop everything!** What are current zoning regs. I really believe in no zoning and no building regs except those imposed by the State. **What are the limits? We need to remember that Bethel's population has been much higher and the number of businesses was larger 100 years ago!** Slow and easy. **Got a long way to go –or- grow.** We need to grow but still maintain small town qualities. **Sometimes small businesses are also resident dwellings.** I don't know how appropriate current limits are. The good of the Town must be a consideration along with cost burdens. **Develop what is in town first.** Growth and limits go together. **Growth is not the answer; improvement of what already exists.** Truth be told, are we really growing that fast and are people really trying to overdevelop areas and exploit current regulation? **Could we? Better to ask should we continue to die off?** Limits are needed but often they are extreme and only hurt the area they are meant to protect so it's not a yes or no answer for me. **Using sound judgment we should**

**continue to grow/ need to be less restrictive.** If limits become necessary later add them. **We need limits.** We should clean up and protect what we have to keep what we have. **Everything needs limits – moderation.** There should always be some limits and standards so growth can occur without too much undue harm to the rest of us. **Supports growth in tax base.** We need to have some limits so there is not sprawl and undue impact on land and nature and human peace of mind. **Taxes seem to grow now – growth should be self-supporting.** Need to control growth. **I think we should embrace growth on all levels but I don't know what limits we should go without.** We should grow with reasonable limits but be more flexible- but current zoning is control-freakish- allow individuality and we can grow and people will want to stay here and bring families to our schools! **Reasonably, Yes. Without limits, No.** As long as it doesn't impede social or environmental concerns or well-being. **If people that own land want to build- they should be able to do so!** Limits are good. **Reduce zoning limits on acreage to build on.** Bethel does not have a unique 'feel' or 'vibe' to it. This is something we need to work on. For a plan to work, for a town to thrive, there needs to be a sense of pride in the place. For pride, there needs to be a definable, principled future and full-spectrum community engagement to see it through. Bethel should not focus on rapidly increasing growth to plus up the tax base. Rather it needs to adopt sensible and sustained 'Smart Growth' policies and continue to engage the community as initiatives are adopted and actualized. This, combined with an aggressive, incentivized beautification initiative would be wise. Recommend planners review the materials found here: <http://www.smartgrowth.org/Default.asp?res=1280> **What does this mean? Zoning is valuable to minimize one negative impact on another's land.** [No] Example: local restaurants good, Dollar Stores bad. **If we grow without limits, we lose the small town, quaint feeling.** This is a vague question, but environmental limits should always be considered. **The town should expand and invest into entertainment.** Only grow as long as it maintains the character of the town. **Development always needs very careful oversight.** We should have a plan – a view to the future – and grow as needed. There is nothing that says 'failure' more than empty buildings in a town. **Why not- if we don't do something soon, there will be nothing left here to encourage our future generations to stay or come back.** Not if it destroys farmland or environment. **We need some limits within reason.** The countryside is a beautiful part of Bethel that should not be disturbed. **We need to expand our tax base but growth without limits is an invitation to disaster.** Not without limits (reasonable ones). **If environmentally sound.** A town is like a tree. When it stops growing it dies. **One (town) should know its limits.** Limits must be maintained to keep the 'rural' character of Bethel. **Be more business friendly. Taxes too high.** We need to balance growth with regulations. **Small town is good.** I would like the Town Center to remain and not to encourage sprawl. **You need to have a balance.** Maybe businesses would move here and create tax dollars. Pretty simple!

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**6a. Are you satisfied with the current structure of Bethel Elementary/ Whitcomb Jr-Sr High School?**

**Yes 124 (27.7%) No 226 (50.6%) NR 97 (21.7%)**

**6b. Should Bethel consider:**

**Tuition out K-12? Yes 39 (8.7%) No 78 (17.5%) NR 330 (73.8%)**

**Tuition out grades 7 thru 12? Yes 80 (17.9%) No 52 (11.6%) NR 315 (70.5%)**

**Tuition out grades 9 thru 12? Yes 86 (19.2%) No 29 (6.5%) NR 332 (74.3%)**

**Consolidation? Yes 170 (38.0%) No 28 (6.3%) NR 249 (55.7%)**  
**Privatization? Yes 65 (14.5%) No 65 (14.5%) NR 317 (71.0%)**  
**Other Options? Yes 9 (2.0%) No 0 NR 438 (98.0%)**

The school should consolidate from grades 7-12. More importantly the Supervisory Union should consolidate as well. **Time will force some changes.** Faculty and teachers need to embrace cost savings or run the risk of losing their jobs. **If we start doing the questions answered 1 – 5 above then I believe that we will attract more people to the area and in return it should increase enrollment at the school.** 275 students simply does not allow for a K – 12 school. **Tuition out 7 – 12 a.s.a.p. See how that goes. Consider tuitioning out K – 6. Support parents giving kids sports opportunities. Develop community- creating/gathering activities that are not just school-based.** Get rid of Windsor NW Supervisory Union. **Send students to the other districts.** The greatest hope for Bethel's children is a regional high school (Randolph). **School tax is taxing people out of their homes and out of the area. What makes sense financially for residents.** Consolidation of Supervisory Unions before school consolidation should also be state-wide effort. **At least to begin with give students choice.** Union school with Rochester. **School choice. Vouchers for homeschoolers.** We have GOT to do something that reduces cost. Were we paying average cost per pupil, our school budget shouldn't be more than 2.5 million. **Keep Elementary- K-6 of K-9. Possibly tuition high school. Possibility- please explain this option [Privatization].** Tuition out students who live on outlying fringes of Bethel to the schools they live closer to. Trade them off for students who live closer to Bethel schools than schools in their towns. Why send three buses to the same stop? **If the school does not have a program or class a student wants/needs, student should be able to do it even if the parent has to pay for it.** Education is the future. Always needs good education. **Consolidation would be my first option but any step in closing the school is good.** I'm not satisfied with the cost of our Supervisory Union as it affects our school budget. **Get the Union office into proper running order.** All of these options should be explored for best possible outcomes. **Student/teacher ratio. [Tuition out 7 or 9 thru 12] if there are too few students to make a class feasible—ex: one year French LL class has 3 students.** K-6 should stay in Bethel. **Poor leadership and vision at the Board level over the past 15 years has put us in a very dire state.** Consolidation only if tuition out is not accepted. **Completely overhaul curriculum, administrative structure, etc. to provide a unique education experience that might draw in tuitioned students from beyond Bethel. Tear down current unsafe, dilapidated building!!!** Union school with other towns. **School's too expensive, as is. Consolidation would at least save on several salaries- principal, secretaries, etc.** [Satisfied with current structure] But do something about too many teachers and special ed people. **Consolidate with Rochester.** Keep local elementary- consolidate 7 – 12. **I am appalled by the great number of Supervisory Districts and believe they should be consolidated by county.** The ideal situation would offer a variety of Charter Schools and vouchers for all students in VT. **Need to do something and soon!!** Younger children are not benefited by the longer school day caused by transportation time. **Got to get town population (and school population) up again.** Bethel school should have shut down years ago. **We have to consolidate. Taxes too high. Should consolidate with Randolph.** Our enrollment is decreasing, our schools are aging, our taxes are burdening an older population. **Consolidate with Randolph and Royalton.** This economic situation is critical. Every effort to reduce costs should be made. Administrative costs need to be curtailed. **What**

are you trying to do? **Get rid of a nice place to go to school- No one will live/shop here if you close it. We'll move to a nice town with a small school.** Rochester and Randolph should be strongly considered. We must get over our desire for independence (school-wise) for the greater financial good. **Make the high school more attractive by pursuing innovative changes to delivery of education or close it.** Randolph? Move offices to school. Make building an incubator for businesses. **Merging school districts would lessen tax burden on all and increase curriculum for all students.** Consider --?—of elementary schooling. **Lower school taxes.** Close school, restructure and re-open as a private school with own rules and no union and revamp of teachers, volunteers for many things to save costs with community/parent involvement. **Consolidation would be the best answer.** I believe before a decision is made, all cost and education issues should be reviewed completely to see best route to take. **I would love to see Bethel keep their school, but economically it seems impossible. We need a miracle.** Commute to another larger high school for more kids and options. **Increase the number of students in classrooms and remove teacher aids. Remove special ed to students that will not be able to provide for their self support.** Improve quality of education. Follow the money. I'm not sure of the implications of tuitioning- out classes. **Any school that doesn't know how finances work is bad!** Not familiar with the current structure and what these changes would bring but I would hate to see Bethel without a school of some sort. **I don't know why South Royalton's school is so awesome now, but whatever they are doing, we should do the same!!! Consolidate school boards w/ others in our district to stop wasting money at top supervisory levels. Add more culture and sports and activities so families will want their kids to go here!!!** Make a Bethel Academy like Sharon has with high standards to bring more students to it. **Perhaps a Charter School would be best. We could avoid outside corruption that way.** Too expensive!!! **Someone needs to step up and do something!** Keep school as is but fund it!!!! **Any option that would save money.** Should be open to considering these options if the school board recommends. **K-6 should stay in Bethel.** Consolidation or tuitioning 7-12 seem like good ideas. **[Yes] Currently this seems to make sense. Consolidation or tuitioning out may make sense is student population declines.** Improve better management; a thorough overhaul of the system. Programs must be created to entice not only the parents, but especially the children that are attending and/or planning to attend Whitcomb School. **I think tuitioned schools yield a better economic base for better teaching and supplies.** Now! **[Yes] But maybe close the high school and give school choice for the high school.** Elementary is OK, high school is failing horribly. **I think that our 7-12 school is too small to be viable. Towns like Tunbridge with no 9-12 are popular towns because of school choice. I think it is cost-effective and gives students more choices.** Tuition out 9-12 with parents choice of the school (school choice). Concentrate on having a superior elementary school. **Reinvent the school.** Emphasize spelling. **Erase and start over- fire everyone including the current school committee and the superintendent. I have a rental property- six families turned it down because of the school system. It's a mess. And the current administration is incompetent to fix it.** Given prohibitive rising costs/pupil and the flaws in the current state funding formulas, would consider consolidation, possible charter school status, as potential alternatives. **We should have school choice beginning in either 9<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Encourage a private school to open locally and benefit from a true education, not socialization education.** Maintaining the status quo is unacceptable. This town must act in recognition of reality: Bethel cannot continue to support a \$4.6 million school budget

with future tax increases. **I am very upset at present financial situation and firing superintendent and lack of information. I no longer have kids in school. Any consolidation would mean lots of bussing.** Close school, each resident child would get statewide average cost per student. Parents would send where they want child to go. **I think the burden of school taxes should be on all residents- not just landowners. Just a thought.** Curriculum review is needed. **Charter school. Magnet school concept (wilderness/outdoors).** No. We have a perfectly decent 'plant', if you want to call it that, for the children. The problem has been with the Supervisory Union and government rules and regulations. **BETHEL'S SHARE OF THE SUPERVISORY UNION, INCLUDING SPECIAL ED AND EEE, IS 29% OF OUR TOTAL BUDGET!** The total Supervisory Union budget is a whopping **THREE MILLION, FIVE HUNDRED THIRTY-EIGHT THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR DOLLARS!** That's **CRAZY!!!** Not only that, but the Board has gotten really bad advice about their accounting, the soft ware used for payroll, and the so called business manager and superintendent have been terrible. If we fixed those problems we would have plenty of money to educate our children. This proves that government is the poorest allocator of resources, and this supervisory union structure is just a boondoggle. There are no statistics this year on the number of children in Special Ed, but I know in past years it has been a ridiculous number, and the Federal guidelines need to be reinterpreted. We also need to just sub out services like accounting, payroll, etc. There are companies that specialize in those services and it will save us money and produce a better product. **The townspeople simply cannot afford the current system. We are taxed to the max.** We need to have a town-wide meeting about the future of Bethel's school. **Consider regional schools.** Unauthorized by tax-payers – line of credit is unacceptable. Too much 'Special Ed'! **[No] I do not want my children sent elsewhere. Consider a model like Sharon Academy – we could do it!**

A second tally was done on question #6 of those respondents who identified themselves as residents of Bethel (total = 308) with the following results:

**6a. Are you satisfied with the current structure of Bethel Elementary/Whitcomb Jr-Sr High School?**

**Yes 80 (26%) No 185 (60%) NR 43 (14%)**

**6b. If NO: Should Bethel consider:**

**Tuition out K – grade 12? Yes 31 (16.8%) No 53 (28.6%)**

**Tuition out grades 7 through 12? Yes 65 (35.1%) No 29 (15.7%)**

**Tuition out grades 9 through 12? Yes 67 (36.2%) No 18 (9.7%)**

**Consolidation? Yes 124 (67%) No 15 (8.1%)**

**Privatization? Yes 46 (24.9%) No 43 (23.2%)**

Some Bethel residents who indicated they are satisfied with the current structure of Bethel Elementary/Whitcomb Jr/Sr High School also checked off that Bethel should consider:

- tuition out K – grade 12..... 1
- tuition out grades 7 – 12..... 3
- tuition out grades 9 – 12..... 5
- consolidation..... 6
- privatization..... 2

Likewise, some Bethel residents that did not indicate their satisfaction with the current structure of Bethel schools nonetheless checked off that Bethel should consider:

- tuition out K – 12..... 2
- tuition out 7 – 12..... 4
- tuition out 9 – 12..... 7
- consolidation..... 8
- privatization..... 1

**7. Are there areas in Bethel where growth should not occur?**

**Yes 215 (48.1%) No 136 (30.4%) NR 96 (21.5%)**

I think there is enough room currently. It just needs to be reworked. **Some farm land, some forest, and near the White River and other rivers and streams.** Time will force changes. **River Road area.** Farms. **Parks, recreation, river frontage, wooded areas, wildlife habitats.** Agricultural, forest and woods, critical wildlife habitat. Conserving these areas will eventually pay off in bringing more folks to Bethel and increasing our Grand List. Let's make use of the strengths we have. **Crop and hay land. We'll need it in future to grow food. Also critical wildlife habitat and woods/forests. Have as few roads/trails as possible in/on and to these areas.** Steep hills make lousy lawns. **Along Peavine river and park.** Farm property. Rural timberland. **Farmland.** Farmlands and along side of the White River. **Prime farm land.** Parks. Town forests. Watersheds. River frontage. **I would like to have more development in the open, rural areas of Bethel.** Agricultural land, along Route 12 corridor between Bethel and Randolph. **Main Street.** Cluster on edges of open fields. Cluster in wooded areas to preserve wildlife 'movement'/trails. **Open pasture land.** Farmland. **In the flood plains of the river.** Rural, scenic. **Outside the village limits, except for any necessary wind or solar installations.** Animal habitat- hills, wetland, prime farmland. Keep large chunks of land and concentrate development and new houses. **Possible park areas.** Open land, along White River- keep access to river—preserve habitat for wildlife. Encourage agricultural use but protect against large agri-industries. **Should be considered case-by-case.** Farmland, open fields and woodlands. Route 12 and Route 14. **Peavine Park area. Farms! Larger farm tracts (50 acres or more). All 20 acre zones (conservation land zones).** Scenic views. **Hillsides above 200' above roadways.** Agricultural/tillable. Once tillable acreage is developed, future options are gone. **It's all part of the White River watershed.** I think each variance should be looked at individually. **Forest land.** Forests. **Parks and farmland.** Recreation- snowshoe and cross-country trails, two-wheel off-road vehicles, easy walks and hikes. **Wildlife conservation.** If you want to conserve it, have the Town buy it with taxpayer funds and take off the Grand List. Stop taking away landowner rights. **Parks.** Wetlands. Anywhere it will negatively impact residential property. **Density in downtown area high enough. A certain percentage of residential, agriculture, commercial, industrial- for balanced mix.** Farmland. **Off North Road.** Forests, land along rivers, wherever development could negatively impact the environment. **Folks who want to see more land conserved should buy those properties and leave them idle. It's always easy to tell someone else what to do with their land and money.** Agricultural land. Open fields. **Mountaintop housing development is not acceptable. Wind turbines are.** Forest. **Ridgelines/**

**mountains.** Bethel Mountain. **Protect neighborhoods – focus growth along State roads.** East side of Main Street. **Buffer zone along the White River.** Farm land, wooded land, fields. **Focus growth on downtown.** Farm land. Forest land. **The land near the river should be as public as possible.** Top of Bethel/Rochester Mountain Road. River land across from the Fire Station. **Probably.** Farmlands and forest. **I would like to see Bethel remain a small town. Not to be built into a place I and a lot of people would not want to live.** River Road. **It's always nice to keep open land open.** Town forest. Large tracts land away from Town. **Farmland.** We need to strengthen and capitalize on our current assets and develop what we already have. Rural landscape should not be ruined by development. Work closer with Department of Agriculture to improve farmland and encourage entrepreneurs in the area of diversified farming. **Woodland. Farmland.** Agricultural land along Route 12 corridor between Bethel-Randolph. **Farmland along river fronts.** Yes, obviously, in flood plains and steep terrains. **Farmland, forests (for public recreation).** Adjacent to park lands. **Forest and farm lands.** The river areas. **Along the White River and forest land.** Back road farmland. We need to use Route 12 more for growth. **Peavine Park loop! And residential areas.** Fields and forests. Strip-logging should be limited so that wildlife may be sustained. **Any land near the river.** Low areas on Route 12. **All farm land areas.** Route 14 to East Bethel, near our rivers. **Forest lands.** Farm lands should be conserved. **Forest land and open fields near and used by farms.** Along rivers and streams. **Along river.** Wood and farm land. **Bethel has very limited amount of prime and secondary ag soils. I would rather these resources were not developed.** All woodland and farmland and watersheds. **Farm land.** Important wildlife habitat including contiguous stretches of land for animal corridors. Prime farmland. **Along the river.** Farmlands. Not stripping forests. **Farmland, river frontage, parks.** Privately owned land- some landowners don't care what their property looks like or how it affects their neighbors! **Residential areas should remain residential areas.** The open space across from the Library and all the area on Peavine Boulevard by the river. **Scenic and agricultural land.** Farm land, our flood plains and mountains determine some of where growth can occur. **Along the White River. We need to repair the green bridge on River Street.** Country sides out of town. **Conserve all areas except village center.** Farmland. **Wetland, town park, state park, woodland.** Riverscapes, scenic areas. **In Lympus.** North Main Street to Randolph- road's not safe for heavy traffic. **Peavine Park, ball fields (unless more are created), grass areas in town.** Farmlands and forests. **I welcome growth overall.** Approaches to Bethel from Randolph and Rutland. A small town that has a richness to it is a mix of a well-defined center plus some rural character – develop out toward I-89 on 107 and solidify this center. **Preserve Peavine Park area, and adjoining fields, and behind school, and both town parks- natural and fun- but more usable would draw people. Accent what we have- ask for donations like from Bahr's Stonework, Dandelion Acres etc for ornamental trees, start a Garden Club and let WHS classes work on projects and maintenance too!** Christian Hill Road. Sanders Road. **Land currently or traditionally used for farming, timberland.**

Let the people do what they want with their land! **Maintain forest lands and 20-acre requirement, especially on Bethel Gilead!!!** Farm east of Peavine Park, The Boulevard. **On agricultural lands our current zoning is good.** Farmland conserved. **Working farms.** If we leave the area off the main roads alone, then we preserve the rural character of the town and focus development where it already exists. **Back road farmland. We need to see more growth on Route 12.** Conserve the

forests, farmland, and wetlands, especially those in the near-river areas. Also Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Scientific Interest should be preserved and protected. Growth in areas currently zoned to accept trailers and mobile homes needs to be curtailed. Structures like that, while providing affordable housing, will most likely drive away potential investors in the town as well as any type of tourist interest. **Steep slopes, wetlands, rare ecosystem types, ridgelines, working farmland, important views and gateway areas.** In all designated conservation areas presently- spot zoning as has been proposed in Gilead is just WRONG. A great deal of thought and consideration was put into defining zoning areas in past decades and what exists sets good boundaries for development. **I would encourage growth in the downtown, but respect residential areas.** I don't want to see growth. **Along the river.** We'd like to see all land conserved except for land that is privately owned for residential use. **Agricultural and forests.** Along the rivers. **Current farmland and forests.** Riparian zones, large woodland tracts hosting species that need these large undisturbed greens, wetlands. **Route 12 towards Randolph.** Too congested now. **Stay away from Class III roads and dirt roads.** Mountain tops. **Traditional Vermont vistas, Vermont farms and waterways.** Farmland, river, wetland. **Forestland, farmland.** Views should be protected as well as farms. Once the beauty is gone it can never be replaced. **Farmland.** Farmland. **We are going to conserve ourselves right out of existence. There needs to be a balance between contributing, healthy business and land conservation.** Not if it destroys farmland or environment. **We should have some public parks conserved.** Farmland. **Farms & fields.** I would love to see the town acquire some land for a community garden with low-cost plots available to townfolk. I think it would be interesting to combine this sort of land with a CSA. **Floodplains, prime agricultural land.** Large tracts; river frontage. **Currently undeveloped farmland.** Scenic areas, along rivers! **Forests, fields, waterways, any scenic points.** Our main flow off growth should not take away the beauty of Bethel as overgrowth never benefits anyone. **Farms.** Farmland. **Open space & farm land.** Forestland. **I would like to see the town property behind the parking lot be used for hiking, snow-shoeing etc... further development of Peavine Park as a full community use center: kayaking, swimming etc.** Along both sides of the White River. **Flood plain should be restricted to significant degree.** Don't change the beauty and peacefulness of the quiet sleepy town we fell in love with. **Agricultural and forest land in so far as possible.** Mountains – forest – farmland. **Above elevation 1500.** Residential should stay residential and commercial should stay commercial. **RCDs.** Not sure, we do not know the whole town, but land along the river for sure. **By Peavine Park.** Productive farmland, ridgelines, steep hillsides, water recharge areas designated in current planning as conservation zones that provide rural quality, wildlife habitat, etc. **Rural farmland. Keep as much farmland as possible. Also wooded hillsides.** No more sale of development rights. **Yes. Farmland is most important.** Commercially viable forest and agricultural land not located along Routes 12, 107 or in the Village Center. **Along Route 12.** Farmland. **Along the river.** Forest, waterways, wildlife preserves, wetlands. **Country mountains.** Flood plain, old growth forests and review animal habitat. **Forestland. I live on Camp Brook road and I like the lack of development. I want to SEE Class 4 roads/trails opened back up. Enjoying these trails is the main reason why I bought property in Bethel.** Just follow State guidelines. **Riverfront.** Wetlands, scenic lookouts, future park and recreation sites. **Prime agriculture land should not be developed but maintained for food production.**

Large woodland tracts. Along rivers. Agricultural land should not be subdivided. Riverbanks and buffers and forests are essential for wildlife and water protection and environmental protection. **Good farmland.** Don't we already have Resource Conservation Districts? **Rural areas – hill areas.** Farmland. **Any conserved land.** Not along the River Road. **Our rural areas.** River / flood plain edge.

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**8. Should the Town pave more dirt roads?**

Yes **100 (22.4%)** No **301 (67.3%)** NR **46 (10.3%)**

**If yes, which roads should be paved?**

Those that we can afford as demand grows. **Any roads with more than a certain threshold amount of traffic.** Most traveled. **Only where steep and school bus route.** Morse, Dearing, Arnold. **Dartt Hill Road.** All short spur roads like Stearns Drive, Crystal Drive. **Christian Hill.** Gage Hill. **Muddy ones.** The heaviest traveled roads. **Most traveled.** Those which have seen a substantial increase in traffic (say 50%) in the last decade due to development. **Dartt Hill.** Dartt Hill Road. **Whenever possible, the road I would most like to see paved is actually in Royalton.** **Waterman Road- the Dump or so-called Transfer Station Road- could benefit from being paved and since we use this facility from our Town I believe it should be a joint effort.** Royalton Hill Road off the North Road. **More of Bethel Gilead- at least to Charlie Young's.** Stearns Drive. **Sand Hill Road.** Gilead Brook Road- pave the road up to the Young's house and the turn around. **Peavine Boulevard.** Gilead Brook Road- pave the road up to the Young's and the turnaround. **Findley Bridge Road (under railroad).** Only where substantiated by traffic count. **Findley Bridge Road, major traffic to Randolph all the time is Rotue 12 is closed for any reason especially.** Brink Hill = school bus use. **It over rated.** Krystal Drive and Stearns Drive. **All (eventually).** Probably. **Gilead Brook Road.** Town Highway 34. **Where there is high traffic.** Sanders Road. **River Road.** Brink Hill. **Hills- so residents can make it home safely and help it so the town can maintain the roads better and easier.** MacIntosh Hill Road. **Sanders Road – Dartt Hill – Brink Hill Road.** North Main onto Sanders Road. **Krystal Drive.** Upper Church Street circle to Peavine Road- mud bog- cars sink- Ugh! Strollers and wagons sink with kids! **Gilead Brook Road.** Stearns Drive. Christian Hill. **Watershed, River Road, North Main.** Dartt Hill. **Finish Gilead.** Krystal Drive- Dangerous slope and curve. Destroying vehicles. **Class 4 roads which used to have camps (now turned into year-round homes) need to have better access. If the town permits this type of residence, they must upgrade to accommodate the higher taxes being charged.** Christian Hill. **Brink Hill Road.** More highly traveled ones. **Cautiously re: choice & expense.** All. **Sand Hill Road to the Boulevard.** Christian Hill, the connection from downtown to Findley Bridge. **All small roads within 3 miles of town center.** Not until economy improves. **Krystal Drive.** MacIntosh. It erodes every year from rain and snow melting. The surface is always too muddy in spring. It needs a better compaction base and top and runoffs with better trap rock. **Where demand justifies it.** Brink Hill. **The road that the quarry trucks run up and down on!** Campbell. **Findley Bridge Road.** Those with the highest traffic counts or at least consider using hard pack rather than low grade gravel. **Lilliesville Brook Road.**

**COMMENTS:**

Not mine- N Falcon Drive. **Not cost effective.** We should continue with the paved roads that we currently have. **Maintain paved roads and improve and maintain dirt roads. Find better source and quality of gravel for dirt roads.** Example: deterioration of Camp Brook Road since it was paved. It has become a truck route over the mountain with no efficient drainage/ crowning in design. It was so expensive, the idea of paving other roads, although they may need it, doesn't make sense. What about hard pack in lieu of asphalt in typically 'really impossible' areas (mud season/winter). **Based on the number of back roads it would be economically challenging for tax payers.** Only if the Town can afford, maintain and support it. **Not until present roads are in good shape.** Only if those roads hold the pavement. **The Town should invest in decent conglomerate to stabilize dirt roads. Fill in those mud holes with stone! They need crushed stone or hard-pack because the sand washes off downhill.** Just maintain the roads we have in good shape. **Town can't or doesn't or won't take care of existing paved roads. Don't make more!** If necessary for better traveling ability. **But use better (or any) gravel!** The 50 mph speed limit on dirt roads should be addressed before any paving is done. **Can we keep up with what we have?** A well-maintained dirt road is preferable to a poorly prepared paved road. Christian Hill is heaving/shoulder collapsing already. **It's easier to grade a bad dirt road than re-pave a bad paved road.** Cannot afford upkeep of Camp Brook let alone any more pavement. **Take care of the roads we have.** Don't have funds to keep up with pavement frost heaves. **Poorly paved and/or maintained roads are worse than well-maintained unpaved roads.** Not necessary unless well traveled. **After we fix up and repair what we have. But the question is a loaded one- we should not be afraid to pave where necessary.** Can't even keep up with the ones they have now! **More attention needs to be paid to ditching along all roads.** Better maintenance of existing paved roads. No more paving! **I think so. In the long run paved roads are less costly.** But we should use more hard pack. Are we keeping up with current obligations to infrastructure? If yes, how will improvements be funded? Cost effective? **More effort should go towards taking care of the roads we have instead of paving more.** Part of living here are the dirt roads. **The Town can not take care of the paved roads that we have!** We need to do a long-term spreadsheet on the cost/maintenance of paving versus dirt, and consider the increase in town value for pavement! **The road along the White River all the way.** The dirt roads and section are well maintained and often provide better traction than the paved roads. **Dirt roads handle seasonal changes when well maintained. Fix the roads we have.** We need to hold down increases in taxes for several years – now is not the time to increase expenses. **Well maintained gravel roads are just as good and cost less to maintain than blacktop.** Hilly – difficult – most used roads. **Keep it simple. Keep it country.** Well-kept gravel roads (good gravel base, graded) are better than paved, poor-base roads (need good drainage). **Traffic should be a consideration. If the road gets a lot of use they should be 1<sup>st</sup> to pave. Not all at once- maybe one a year or every other. Depends on cost and time.** I can't say Yes or No- I don't live on a dirt road. I would say- if we can afford it, Yes. **Can't take care of what we have.** Try to maintain what we already have- this seems to be rather difficult. **However, someone should learn how to properly crown the darn things.** Make sure ditches are in place and good drainage. **Need to improve on what roads we have, plowing/grading.** Can't take care of the ones we have. **Personally, I think they should all be paved but I know that's not possible.** [No]...but hard pack and proper grading techniques used. **Pave if there is a need- i.e. need repeated maintenance on gravel road.** The less paved the better. **Compared to the cost of paving and maintenance thereof, could buy a lot of**

**gravel. Need to repave existing before worry about next. The Town of Bethel has to grade Stearns Drive 3-4X per summer and once in the spring and fall. The amount of gravel and rocks hauled in last summer should more than pay to have it paved. The school bus gets stuck in the mud and very slippery in the winter. Repair roads we have- extend pavement to lessen maintenance. But only if it will save money over the long run. Can't keep up with ditches and potholes now even on paved roads. I'm not aware of the difference in cost of maintaining dirt vs. paved roads, but don't feel the need for dirt roads near our home to be paved. I think the roads that are paved need to be cared for better before we consider paving further. The road crew should decide this. The paved roads are turning to shit. The dirt roads are fun. Leave them alone. More focus on maintaining the pavement we have. We need better maintenance of existing dirt roads: grading, gravel. Take care of the roads that exist before paving more. The town should look at individual dirt roads and make that decision based on their condition, funds, and what nearby citizens want. Shouldn't make a blanket decision on all dirt roads. At Town Meeting 2010 we heard it is already job enough to repair and maintain the roads currently paved. We can't afford to maintain the paved roads we already have. [No] But use gravel on unpaved instead of dirt. Only if economically feasible. [No] But add more solid stone. Just buy better gravel. Paved roads require more upkeep which equates more money. Dirt roads are not money pits. They have in the winter but it all heaves. Paved roads heave but only in certain areas. If there is extra \$\$, otherwise No. Maintain existing roads (calcium chloride and ditching). We can't keep the paved ones in good repair and the State's of no help with their road repairs... leave as many dirt as possible. Only continue paving roads as current paved roads are properly maintained. More on Gilead Brook Road- I don't know enough to say on other roads. No road improvements in 17 years—Set a plan—Start and improve some phase as money is available. Never started, never improved. Only if you get more State aid to help maintain them. As long as they are graded more regularly. If paving costs less than grading, then more should be paved. Take care of what we have first. I would advocate crushed ledge and better drainage in areas where springs now make roads mud holes in springtime. Focus on those already paved, but need repair. If extra money is available after that, then 'Yes' – but only if funds are available for future upkeep and repairs. Dirt roads need to be constructed and maintained better but should be kept. NO! Paving is very expensive, and the town is already having to pay \$90,000.00 just for fixing existing roads. Also most roads are poorly constructed and too poorly drained for being paved. A case in point is Rte 12 from Locust Creek to Woodstock that was repaved about 12 or 13 years ago, and it has already broken up and is as bad as before the repaving. They cannot maintain the dirt roads now—culverts plugged, no gravel on roads. Town should maintain dirt roads in proper manner. Spend money fixing roads that are already paved. Just take much better care of dirt roads. Paved roads are expensive to maintain. It seems easier to grade a dirt road when it needs to be smoothed then trying to stop a paved road from cracking and water abuse. We only pave the roads to the Selectmen's houses. Mr. Fox's road is a real busy street! Actually hard pack would be less expensive than continually putting more dirt as is done now!!!! Town first needs to focus on the poor condition of our 'paved' roads – North Main, bridge of 107, Pleasant Street, Royalton Hill. They should maintain the dirt roads better – instruct the crew on how to grade the roads better and purchase some gravel. Take a look at how Stockbridge roads are maintained. Maybe stop grading the roads before every major rain storm. Listen to weather forecasts. Change the hours of the crew**

so they plow every road at least once early in the morning starting at 6 am during a snow storm.

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## 9. How would you define 'rural character' as it relates to Bethel?

Securing the open land we have, especially farm land and critical wildlife habitat. Keeping roads dirt. Appreciating the animals and plants who live here with us and supporting the undeveloped land that they need to live their lives, which enrich our lives. **Maintaining our agricultural/ forests and woods/critical wildlife habitat... keeping what we have.** Small New England town. **Village centers, wooded hillsides, streams and river frontage protected. Wildlife habitat preserved.** Quite, unique town, with some added enhancements and upgrades along with commercial grow we can make this town road again. **Out of town back roads.** We love the feeling of being in this town. **Small downtown, many back roads (dirt), farms and wilderness areas, wooded areas, mountains, small population per square acre.** It is important to keep a downtown and more spaced out surrounding area. **Dirt roads, farms, town is clean. Need to do something with Richardson's building.** 'Dicky'. No, seriously—a vibrant town center with dirt roads radiating out and up a river through the center. **Small town, community presents, with lots of open land and protected wildlife.** Rural means dirt roads. **Bethel is the definition of rural character.** I hate to put it this way—slum, or headed that way. **Small-town main street, farms, people.** Charming community. **Small town values and feeling.** Open spaces, properties well taken care of, farms. **No multi-story buildings. No mall.** Rural/village mix. **Trees are close by and within sight and touch—a good feeling.** Abundant. **Beautiful working farms along Routes 12 and 14, the White River and the third branch, forested hills and quaint downtown.** Integrity of it's buildings, roads—non-commercial attitude. **We are rural as we are.** Beautiful farming community with classic and appealing Main Street. **An 'active' town- church suppers, concerts on the Common, Farmers' Market, Town Hall restoration and use of Town Hall for events, cafes downtown, small businesses (no Wal-Marts!). Support the BBA, Rotary Club, etc.- neighbors helping neighbors. Avoid losing open land along White River. Support local farming, library.** The entire state is 'rural.' Bethel is no exception that is neither good/bad but something to be cared for. **Low population allowing for people to know each other.** Forests, farms and well-defined village. **Wooded, land that can be or is farmed. Scenic.** No stores worth speaking of. **Farm land, scenic views, running rivers, forest lands and historic habitat.** Self-sufficient. **Limit height, density of construction. Encourage well-tended yards, gardens. Maintain parks, picnic areas.** The few farms that are still intact. **We have no major stores or businesses.** Vibrant agricultural use, encourage this, tax credits? Few 'chain' stores, limit major corporate development. **Farmland, mountains.** The village center remains smaller, with the older buildings renovated to retain their character; new construction would need to reflect this, too. Open areas, scenic views are preserved. **Small town appearance, but business friendly.** Bethel has been fortunate to be getting some new businesses in town—let's paint the buildings in town! **I think of Bethel as being rural with a some what down-in-the-heels downtown.** Large fields, no tall buildings; non-polluting manufacturing and business, livestock, produce, cornfields. **Average with the rest of Vermont.** People see others in the store who they went to school with 30 years ago. The rural character attracts a lot

of tourists, such as fly fishermen on the White River. People love the small town. **A great place to live.** Town center with active commerce, plus residential, rural/undeveloped. **Country, peaceful, clean, safe.** Currently: poor, dilapidated, no character, unkept, no pride, no commerce, no vision. **Privacy.** A town that meets the needs of the community and invites visitors to a pleasant and affordable hometown that respects people and nature. **Keep the quaint small town atmosphere, not allowing box stores near interstate roadway. Keep farmland open as much as possible.** Small, friendly town feel. Self-sufficient town, from which you don't have to take I-89 to do anything. **Possibly farming will make a come-back.** Parts of town fit that description. **Bed & Breakfast- that's what it is.** Good the way it is. **Community focus.** Comfortable. **Pleasant.** Dirt roads, farms and fields, woodlands and related activities—low density development, old homes (and old-looking homes). **As it is, Bethel defines 'rural character'.** Farms, forests- not too much development. **Rural character to me would involve looking closely at Bethel's history and incorporate more of what was done in the past that worked well and encouraged a rural 'lifestyle'.** Small, quaint area. **Bethel is 'Vermont'.** The old town still shows. The old back roads. **It seems a good school is the foundation for any improvement for the community.** Nice to see original buildings and houses be restored. Develop a stronger business community. Work closer with farms to develop regular market, etc. **Country and nature accessibility are nice but if getting to your workplace outside of town is difficult who is going to want to live here?** It has very little. Go to Barnard or Woodstock for rural character. Bethel is a blue-collar town that had its day a long time ago. **How Main Street is.** Dirt roads, rolling landscape, small village, own small school. **It is a nice area. Some growth would be nice.** Farming community—residential homes disbursed broadly then town with vital town center. **Farms.** Most of the Bethel residents chose to live here because of the 'rural character' of Bethel. **Small town atmosphere on Main Street, safe for children and families to walk. Sidewalks would help it be much nicer, as well as inviting businesses on Main Street.** Non-growing, held back. **We've spent time in Bethel every year for over forty years and have seen many changes. Our Conn. License plate was once noticed! In the sixties squatters were living in the park where the Fish Nursery is now. But then and now there has always been a core of native people. Farmers and small businessmen. Honest, straight-forward and welcoming.** Bethel like most VT small towns is rural but also self-contained. It has restaurants, hardware, grocery stores etc. but also has charm. Maybe not the ideal setting for Wal-Mart but it should be attractive for small business and also some tourist traffic. **Open land, farms, woodland, back roads.** As a foolish and fictional notion. **Very important.** Simple, clean, box-store-less. **Often in a negative way. We need to overcome the negative image.** Rural character is small stores and businesses, knowing who your neighbors are, gravel roads, open farm fields, low population density. Rural character is not strip malls, large IBM-size businesses, high density development outside village limits, traffic congestion. **Good.** The farms of Bethel are an integral part of our character and should be kept as is with attention to the use of pesticides etc. **Small shops and business and open scenic views.** Properties should be made to be properly maintained so as not to distract assessment values of neighboring properties. No trash or No junkyards (abandoned vehicles). **One horse town.** Undeveloped forest and farm land. **Small town atmosphere.** View of farms – not sprawl – not high buildings. **Picturesque, farming included and respected, small.** Open space (farmland) or woodland. I think some of this needs to be preserved to a point. The right to farm on your land is important. Small local home business set our rural character. **\_\_\_??\_ black top roads**

area. Lacking. **Idyllic simplicity or whatever distinguishes one area or thing from another. It is often forgotten by making or following another so we lose our own identity.** White River. Town. **I think Bethel's 'rural character' already has the designation of being Vermont's 'identity'.** It is being connected and grounded in a place. It is good neighbors and commitment to community and agriculture. **Keeping old-fashioned looks and charm, small town feel, adding business that serves a need but not garish or neon-kinda look.** Not current, not with the times. There's no cell service in most of the town, for instance. **Lack of cluster housing and open lands.** Farmlands are gone and the sense of community has deteriorated. **Something we should seek to retain.** Woods, farms, fields. **The sounds of the church bells ringing, the fantastic Farmer's Market, friendly people, ball games at the ballfield.** No fast food. No box stores. **We're lucky not to have 'box' stores everywhere.** Community pride, 'Main Street', and knowing your neighbors. **Bethel is a beautiful town. I am proud to live here.** 'A Bethel back road.' **Bethel Gilead!!!** A few small village population centers with businesses and services surrounded by farmland and natural areas- respected and used for their natural resources. **Rural character = Bethel.** South Royalton does fine without zoning and so did Vermont for several hundred years. **Village, mixed woodlands and fields combination.** Need another grocery store. **Rural character can be defined as a town or village 'character' as opposed to an urban character. Rural character speaks of simplicity, tidiness, bucolic and pastoral views unsullied by industry, valuing of the land and the people who work it, mutually reinforcing social institutions such as churches, schools, families, local businesses and extended families. As in Cheers, it is a place 'where everybody knows your name'.** Non-growing, held back. **The town is so rural that after 6:00 PM there are no cars, people, or businesses open. I see nothing to do in the town.** No bill boards, dirt (well-maintained, though) roads. **Small population, farmland, wooded land, community events.** Small businesses. **Maintaining the historical integrity and open space/land conservation.** Forest, dirt roads, 20-acre zoning. **Quiet and peaceful. Face-lift downtown village to it's old self. Friendly.** Open farmland, wooded areas surrounding centralized development in town- ridge lines protected from visible signs of development, preservation of natural resources. **The most important aspect of rural character here is the presence of working farms and historical farms, buildings.** Clean air, wildlife, open spaces, limitation on subdivision size. **Not as rural as most towns from Bethel to Killington and from Bethel to White River on 14.** Community interaction. **Any 90-cow farms left? Depressed. Clean up property-one trailer per acre. Get rid of junk cars- behind fences so you cannot see them.** Good. **Historic buildings. Landscape. Farm land.** Good separation between homes with undeveloped parcels of land, views and sparse commercial enterprise. Cottage industry prevalent. Encourage the do-it-yourself theme for small business. **Small town atmosphere.** Bethel is a unique and delightful town and I am proud to live here. **Farm landscape. Open land, clean accessible rivers, neighborly low traffic.** Tree lined roads, open space and low-density housing. **A strong town center, no box stores, cultural events.** Fair. **Very good.** Small town living, where town people know each other. Farmland and wetlands where things can grow and people can enjoy the views and waterways. **Small town sense of community.** Bethel, as of right now, has achieved a fine balance between being a rural town and developing in terms of local business. **Living right in the village, I define 'rural character' as the fox that visits my compost pile, the many salamanders that my child plays with all summer long in the brook near our house, and the undeveloped hillside above**

**our house. It's the connections between people and the nature that exists around us.** The way it is. **Poor working class people that are over taxed.** Farm lands and wooded areas appeal to most visitors which brings business to area. **Nice village.** Rural and poor looking. The downtown area looks bad. More regulations on junk vehicles & trash to improve appearance of town. **Small town community qualities that are set in a healthy watershed with only thoughtful and beneficial development.** Open fields, farms, dirt roads. **High taxes with not much services.** Ain't too bad. **As it is now.** Low population density, working farms, large amount of forested land—poverty. **An idea of quiet even in town that gives the onlooker a great view and idea of what Vermont really is like.** Full of rural characters! **Small town with majority of population living on country roads.** Wonderful! **Bethel is a quiet little town with helpful and friendly people.** Missing... we tend to have two detached agendas- business/attracting families/taxes. We need to focus on attracting families and let small business follow... **A characteristic found only in small town Vermont.** Most business activity based in the village, preserving farms and forests in rest of town. **A thriving village center with outlying farms and other rural businesses.** Ensuring that commercial development impacts forest and agricultural land as little as possible. **Quaint, friendly, local.** Scenic views and enjoying the great outdoors. **Safe, quiet but neglected.** Small town slightly run-down. **Maintaining a town center or area of commerce and farm and forest land surrounding it.** Agricultural use of land. **Dirt roads, forests and farmland, wildlife... Access to land for hiking, hunting, fishing, mountain biking.** Rural character is where production agriculture still has a role in the local economy—we should preserve this! **Farming, multi-use residential / business properties, Town Meeting government.** Bethel is a small community which should retain its small town charm. **Small town – dirt roads. Open protected land available.** Six miles to do anything. **You can live out of town but still feel a part of the whole.** Farming, open fields, no Wal-Marts. **A town center and most people living in the outer limits.** Open spaces, forest, and farmland. **Our town has good character: small shops, churches, no big business.** Dirt roads, farms, scenic views.

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## **10. How could Bethel attract businesses and activities to town?**

Revitalize downtown. Streetscaping. See plans Michael Mills did for the Downtown Committee 10-15 years ago. Walkways behind Main Street by river. Develop more recreation trails like up in Town forest parallel to Main Street. Also focus development downtown as success breeds success. Keep it cleaner than we do now. More benches. **We should build on the forward movement started by the Church/River St. bridge and Town Hall renovation. Make downtown a vibrant place and businesses will want to come.** Spruce up Main Street- paint storefronts, plant trees- do something with Richardson's old store. **Have a real business-focused Chamber of Commerce organization with a professional focus. The BBA does good things, but is more socially, culturally focused. It's too narrowly focused and does not always maintain a professionally correct attitude towards all people. Bethel's rich history should be promoted. Town hall and downtown could be promoted. River front could be more developed. Forest (hiking) and bike paths could be developed.** Cut taxes. **More housing.** Attract larger businesses with decreased tax rates. We need more people in this town and to do it we need bigger businesses. **Good**

**question. Can't see that happening soon.** Bethel and Vermont needs jobs. Act 250 and other regulations w/ state are driving businesses out at an alarming rate. Without jobs tax revenue falls. You people need to try to attract employers! **Lower taxes and good schools.** Not sure how or why... it would depend on what type of business and activity—Too broad a question. **Improve information technology infrastructure.** Lower taxes. **Better parking.** Lower taxes. **People often stop and ask where they can find a nice place for dinner.** It would be very difficult in this economic climate. **Bring hydropower back. Make a riverwalk.** Lower taxes. **Improve school-Encourage business.** Make it look nice- improve sidewalks, cross walks (more/better), tare down rural blight. Improve schools and curriculum. **Develop Main Street. Revitalize it.** (1) Move the Pharmacy and Healthcare Center to downtown. (2) Consider using a downtown building as a museum/art gallery (e.g., 'The Museum of the Underground Railroad'). **Lower rent / but get rid of Richardson's – eye sore.** Chamber of Commerce, advertising, internet resources. **Better signs at intersection of Routes 12 & 107. People traveling from Rutland/NY to I-89 have no knowledge of businesses in downtown.** Offer good incentives, compatible taxes. **More dining options- not fast food.** Encourage businesses to open stuff for children's activities. **Restore downtown buildings and make the village attractive.** If VT cuts taxes, and less regulations. **Plan more activity. \*\*GET A HANDLE ON EDUCATION TAX\*\*** **Promote use of Town Hall once renovation is complete. Support efforts for hi-speed internet access throughout Bethel businesses in telecommunications-work from home businesses.** Tax incentives. **AmTrak stop? Advertise close access to Interstate. Develop list of skilled labor in area.** High speed internet. Better back roads. **The BBA is a good idea. Out increased public spirit, i.e. the Town Hall. Flowers are good idea. A Welcoming Committee, better schools.** Lower taxes. **Tear down vacant old buildings- replace with nicer new ones.** Meet their needs... financial incentives, streamlined approvals. **Revitalize the downtown. Pay attention to public spaces (Town Hall, Peavine Park, band shell).** Continue revolving business loans. Assure child care for working parents. Improve reputation of school system. Streamline State permitting process. **Tax credits, property incentives.** Woodsmen/timber-type of fair/festival. Acquire properties that could be rented out for studios, business incubators. **Having a vibrant village center does wonders. I've already seen a dramatic improvement just in the last 9 years since I've been here.** Tax breaks. Work with business to get the permits required. **Lower tax rates for businesses that will be a lasting contributor to our town.** Clean up the junk and encourage homeowners to take pride in appearance. **Town would be beautiful just some painting—Black Forest is a mess. If our town looks nice it will attract people.** Better parking! It is difficult to access downtown businesses with the present on-street parking. **Tax incentives.** Lower taxes. **Clean up, update if possible.** Overhaul school (building and curriculum). **Have volunteer committees (activities could be broken down by season to limit over commitment) that would be tasked with creating plans for the town.** Affordable rents and willing residents. **Improve the school, improve cell coverage, improve the downtown, improve roads and sidewalks and streetscapes.** Availability of high-speed internet access, cell phone access. **Tax incentives. Green technology.** Proximity to highway, central location in State. Allow businesses to build tax free, and use Town Hall as a community center. **Have a Woodstock once a year.** Have an attractive Main Street. **Available commercial space @ affordable pricing.** Positive attitude toward business. **We have enough—** Tax brakes. **Rely on Town Hall as a community center.** Tax incentives. **Renovate the empty buildings on Main Street.**

Fix up the old vacant buildings. If you build it they will come. **Not sure we want to—encourage and support existing businesses. Plan should preserve and protect assets and promote development within that perspective. ‘Small is beautiful’.** Hopefully, our newly renovated Town Hall will attract a variety of activities to our town. As for attracting businesses, we need lower VT taxes. **By keeping its ‘rural character’.** Needs more parking and access to shops. **Bethel is never going to be a growth center. We should try to support our existing firms but most people are going to work outside the community.** Lower taxes, do a better job on their roads. Try to attract more jobs for young people. **Start by letting the one we have to expand.** Keep developing the Village Center. Good housing. More police presence in the Village. **When businesses are already in town, make them feel welcome instead of not wanted. Not just pick and choose.** Improve the school system. **Work more closely with entrepreneurs and on a more positive note to make them want to develop a business in town. Be more flexible if needed to achieve this, even if on a more temporary basis.** Incentives, better housing, promote walking! **Have it be more about FUN instead of making money for local businesses.** Change of attitude. And support local businesses. **Incubator space for small businesses. High speed internet. Much better cell phone coverage.** Give new business a tax break but they guarantee employment and minimum 5 year stay. **By encouraging the State to become more business ‘FRIENDLY’.** Close to the Interstate should be an attraction. **Continue to improve the vitality of our downtown!** Make sure that water and sewer are in good condition. Otherwise property values could drop. **Parceling of land and development is generally not desired.** Initial tax break but with guidelines. **Slightly less restrictive on zoning, etc.** No condemned, previously-used buildings downtown, nice downtown with good, shoveled sidewalks so you can walk to shops. **If there is money available it would be wonderful to refurbish the buildings downtown and have some small shops- a clothing store, bookstore, sub shop, gift shop, etc.** Parking and congestion on Bethel’s Main Street is a huge problem. It is really too narrow to allow parking on both sides of the street, it really is too narrow for parking on either side. **Lower taxes.** Lowering property taxes. Tax incentives for businesses. **Tax breaks.** 1. Get the Legislature to repeal the sales tax. 2. Get a new River Street bridge. 3. Get a HUD grant. 4. Widen Main Street. **Lower taxes.** Restore structures downtown. **By upgrading the quality of the schools. Attracting more ‘organic’ style options.** Tax incentives – maybe ?? with VTC in Randolph Center. **Buy and refurbish old store buildings and offer for a reasonable rent.** By having a good looking town and school system and advertising our small town atmosphere with a clean environment. **Tax breaks.** Lower taxes. **Set aside a section of town for commercial development – as in Randolph Beanville Road.** Become business and development friendly. **Businesses need incentives and there needs to be a public hall or place to have more public get-togethers (Bingo, card parties, etc.).** Improve the school system. **(1) High speed internet.** Have a good school system and an HONEST one! The administrative management is not doing their job and there has been no oversight. We don’t even bill for the free Medicaid money – where are our priorities? The paper gave the excuse there was only a ½ time person doing the job- that’s not valid. The Director of Special Ed should pick up the slack and manage. **Clean up downtown.** Not so much red tape. Tax breaks until they get established. **Better educational situation.** Make the Village section of Route 12 wider by creating parking elsewhere. **We need place for people to stay, motel or hotels – don’t have to be large places.**

**Affordable taxes and transportation to the area.** By encouraging present businesses to make their places of business more attractive- paint, window displays, etc. **Make permit system work for all the people.** Possible tax break. **By being a little more relaxed and make it more attractive to outsiders.** Clean up what is there now, new paint, clean up retaining walls which look dumpy, fix sidewalks, add a tourism destination spot, i.e. commission a mural by Sabra Field. **We have had activities always happening but it is the same people doing it year in and out and they all get worn out so it finally stops.** Have an open house for our businesses big and small; also have some of these same businesses have a day at our schools so young people can see other type of jobs and work that a dream can do for them. Remove Neal Fox--- **The store fronts on Main Street need to be made 'ready to move into'.** At present, the available ones appear dilapidated. Need to be more of a group/community and not so divided. **If we had a desirable school system this would be a more attractive town to live in.** Right now very few young people that could afford to support a vibrant downtown want to move here because the High School and middle school have such a poor reputation. I think if you were attracting people that commuted to other town centers to work- but wanted to live here because of school choice, then you would see a vibrant downtown that had a café, hardware store, general store, etc. (We already have these things, but I'm not sure they are thriving.) Using Vermont Clean Green ideas. Re-create and beautify the downtown. **Better use of downtown buildings- our town is boring!! Tear down Riverside Apartments and make it a lovely brick building w/ town offices, meeting room, town clerk, information center, and walkway to river!!! Hiking paths on mountain behind Main street! Movie theater? Roller skating? Encourage live school plays. Stuff for kids to do! Nice picnic tables and play area next to Spaulding Press for families!! More things to look at and do- better window displays- a mini museum spot for tourists- more functions at park- more in-town décor and stone work like Randolph has and a wellness center!! Put up banners for Farmers Markets on both ends of town and on green bridge to make it more used- sometimes I just forget when it is!! Add bike lanes from Paine's to school and a crosswalk by Upper Church Street and by Town Offices and by Nelson's Corner. We have many wasted places!! Do something w/ our Rec Center!!! By the pool, add stuff for kids and families to make our town fun and appeal to newcomers!!! State Park- picnic areas, paint ball area, 'dog' area, etc!! Just do it! Encourage people already living here to invest in or start businesses. Note available space and resources and needs and see if anyone responds. **Downtown needs a lot of sprucing up, but it's not necessarily the town's job because the buildings are owned privately.** Give small business a tax break. Advertise. **Smile- be more welcoming to new business and entrepreneurs.** Less organizations doing the same thing with more focus. **Better schools, better wages, and improved infrastructure.** Have a good local salesman and/or a welcoming committee. **Better promotion of assets. Better promotion of revolving loan fund.** By having better communication- 'Yes, towers'. **Tax incentive for store owner.** Get rid of road side parking on one side of Main Street down town Bethel. Main Street is not user-friendly. By having lower taxes, more choices of restaurants, clean up Main Street- Main Street and South Main Street... have more community play performances. Offer additional activities for families to do. **A river walk would be an attraction.** Focus on schools: they still are the key. **Radically alter the downtown layout. Until that happens, you can't do much.** Easing school and property tax burden! **Support the school fully so that young families want to move here. This will lead to more business.****

Encourage 'destination'-type business, restaurant, antiques. **Go light zoning. Tax breaks for businesses.** Tax breaks I guess- \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$. **Focus on bringing commuters in to live in village centers. Focus on providing services essential in daily living a walkable distance from home.** People who live here need to get excited about our town. Other people will see and will want to become part of our community. **Get rid of planning, zoning, and all the things that hinder good business and homes.** Develop a vibrant center where people can comfortably gather with adequate parking. **Pride. In order to attract businesses, Bethel needs to start taking itself more seriously. It requires fresh ideas and people with the courage to actualize them. Take a walk downtown in the spring and you will see what seems like apathy in the structures along Main Street. Homes and businesses are not maintained with structural repair and paint, many storefronts are empty, several shops that do exist cater to extremely low-budget clientele. There are many ways to bring activities to town. Giving citizens incentives to do so is a start. Witness the success story found in Hardwick. Teaming and partnering with neighboring towns like Rochester is another option. Recruiting for certain types of businesses can also be effective. But at the end of the day, the people of Bethel need to figure out what they want to be and what kind of place they want their town to be. Personally, I like small town authenticity. I can't stand the artificial quaintness of a place like Woodstock, for example, but I appreciate the look and feel of Barnard with its general store, fantastic inn, thriving hospitality industry, quiet demeanor and overall small town sensibility. If you ask me what Bethel needs for business I'd tell you this:**

- a good coffee shop with broadband, and plenty of chairs,
- a little breakfast diner,
- a live music venue,
- a place where training and small conferences can be held,
- a bakery/confectionary,
- outdoor vendors and outfitters, to include instruction and which supports non-motorized water sports such as canoeing and kayaking, trail running, snowshoeing, hiking, etc,
- a little art house where independent films can be shown,
- better options to rent office space with adequate connectivity,
- a high end restaurant/inn.

Unsure, but we need to do something. **It would be hard because not too many people like Bethel. But if there was an arcade, movie theater, club, or handout built for teens. Less taxes. If Bethel had a grocery store, perhaps other businesses would be drawn in, knowing people were shopping in town.** Develop an identity. 'Bethel is the town where...' (fill in the blank). **Fix up around Richardson's old store.** Better recreational facilities. **Get good internet access everywhere in the town.** By restoring and maintaining its old buildings and homes in the center of town to their original beauty and by maintaining a friendly atmosphere and keeping taxes down. **Sidewalks into town. Re-do existing buildings.** Main Street revitalization. **Focus on maintaining and improving the village (landscaping, sidewalks, etc) would make it more attractive to prospective businesses. Bringing in quality, successful establishments (e.g. Cockadoodle) is key.** Tax incentives, improving the downtown, pedestrian area, improving storefronts, better cell coverage, fiber-optics. **Encourage business activity in the village center. Bethel of lacking a real center, which sends people to surrounding towns instead...** A good reputation for our school and for Bethel as a community that welcomes newcomers and

encourages volunteerism. **Improving the look of downtown would help—fixing the retaining wall at the intersection of 12 and 107 (paint a mural on it?), displays in empty storefronts, etc. Business incentives might attract some growth. Look into the VCRD community visit program to get some help with this. Utilize 89 and 107 as drive through stopovers. Lower property taxes. Lower taxes – tax incentives? We need to provide excellent cell/internet services to residents- all tower- If not, we will continue to be behind the rest of the modern, technical world. Work magic on Main Street. Work magic on school. Need more parking in town, tax incentives for small business, develop a business park. Don't have so many rules. Shop local. Keep properties clean and visually attractive. Promote quality of life in small town with clean industry (green). Safety and activities for families. Need more parking availability. Do something with Richardson's eyesore. Fix buildings in town proper. The Town Hall will have a bright future with events. The restaurants are ready for action! Bethel is coming along nicely... Revitalize Main Street. By revising the zoning requirements. Tax break- 5 years. Tax breaks with time limits. Create a scenic riverwalk. Encourage more families to move to Bethel – support our school! Can't. Very poor interstate transportation. No busses, train or air available. Can't make commerce without available transportation. Make an effort. Clean up downtown!! Make the cost of owning and running a business affordable. Work together as a community, do more town-wide things like the Forward Festival. Establish a music venue or two. Continue to improve & maintain village center buildings, landscaping, roads, sidewalks, etc. The state has taken care of that. Hard to get jobs. Lower taxes. More growing space along with better parking areas. Easier access. Less government. Less taxes. More parking. Tax incentives. Reduce property & business taxes. Availability of high speed internet. I would like to see us use our local area for more recreation- walking trails (river, behind the parking lot, connector to Randolph), mountain bike trails, snow mobile trails... I would like to see us maximize the 107 traffic with the local businesses- perhaps a VT artisan shop, local co-op. Up-date Main Street- don't have abandoned stores. Tax incentives. Property tax incentives to establish and/or relocate businesses to Bethel. Business must fit with labor force capabilities, market availability, or shipping/communication capabilities to match business. Take pride in the town—get rid of eyesores—take care of the Common! School Board stop whining—we sound so 'needy' – talking about who we can join with. If the town looked more inviting and had more places for activities they could be attracted better. (1) Improve school system or scrap it (2) Get a more active Planning Board and Board of Selectmen (3) Renovate downtown to make it more attractive (4) Get woman who owns land where Richardson was to see sense. Start by showing pride in our school system. Also make sure it is deserved. Encourage Fraternal Organizations to work together on town projects and activities- we need to join together. We operate in single units. Downtown redevelopment. Parking downtown. The reconstruction /renovation of the old Town Hall is a great start. Attract more 'green' business and support Central Vermont Fiber so we and our kids can have the best connection to the internet. Bring back rail service! Emphasize the proximity and beauty and recreational benefit of the White River, it is Bethel's treasure. Clean up the downtown area. Currently it looks very run down, indicative of an area where there is not much money. If I were looking to open a business, I would want it to be where people could support it. Bethel suffers from a negative attitude. Promote recreational activities, especially (mountain) biking dirt roads, especially river road to Randolph and Gaysville. They are as good as many bike paths. Also fishing. A nice**

restaurant in town might be good, and a nice inn or B&B. **Can we promote from within the community? Give incentives to young people (like reduced business tax) who are from the Bethel area or at least native Vermonters and focus on hydro-electric and bio-mass energy and agriculture.** Reduced tax rate for 20 years. **Tax holidays. Organize arts & crafts/paint/art street fairs, to attract out of towners, and traveling vendors such as food specialties, music festivals, bike racers.** Improve the general appearance of downtown. Have Town Mgr/offices protect local historic value. Downtown is on main thoroughfare, but looks and is considered shabby. **Advertise – Scheme – Activities.** Availability of high speed internet to homes (and competition between providers). **Business & development zones from center of Bethel to the interstate.** Tax incentives for new businesses, and addressing eyesore properties that contribute to a poor impression of the town (both commercial and residential). **Attractive tax incentives and qualified work force.** Careful tax policy. Expenditures are up 30% this year in the middle of the worse recession since the Great Depression, and more and more people are behind in their taxes. This is not conducive to luring people here. There are also properties downtown that could be refurbished to attract businesses. **More parking.** Cell phone service and greater access to broadband. **Lower taxes and make the Road Agent be voted into office.** Town Hall being revived- offer plays, a community annual event, etc. More up-scale shops, like Quechee. **Advertise.** Tax -?- for the use of village center properties. **Tax breaks, and providing infrastructure and services.** Lower taxes! **DEVELOP MAIN STREET. A GREEK RESTAURANT (delicious meat and vegetables).** Downtown Bethel should be cleaned up to attract local small businesses. The area is beautiful but the buildings are not maintained. Perhaps a small business tax break. **Tax incentives. One national chain pharmacy in town.** Lower school taxes. **Try advertising that we are 'central' in Vermont making travel for work to other areas easy- access to 89.**

11. 'Planning' can involve a wide variety of activities – some concrete things to do or not to do, as well as effort(s) aimed at creating a desired atmosphere or environ. Please review the following items and –for each– indicate your rating of whether the item is VERY important, SOMEWHAT important, or NOT Important for Bethel's future.

Desired Environ/ Atmosphere	Year	VERY Important	SOMEWHAT Important	NOT Important	No Response
'Small town atmosphere'	2006	337 (67.1%)	131 (26.1%)	17 (3.4%)	17 (3.4%)
	2010	279 (62.4%)	125 (28.0%)	14 (3.1%)	29 (6.5%)
Scenic Views	2006	258 (51.4%)	178 (35.4%)	44 (8.8%)	24 (4.8%)
	2010	213 (47.7%)	174 (38.9%)	26 (5.8%)	34 (7.6%)
Local Employment	2006	335 (66.7%)	125 (24.9%)	21 (4.2%)	21 (4.2%)
	2010	316 (70.7%)	90 (20.1%)	13 (2.9%)	28 (6.3%)
Village Center	2006	282 (56.2%)	173 (34.5%)	18 (3.6%)	29 (5.8%)
	2010	273 (61.1%)	130 (29.1%)	11 (2.4%)	33 (7.4%)
Available Housing	2006	233 (46.4%)	191 (38.0%)	50 (10.0%)	28 (5.6%)
	2010	181 (40.5%)	196 (43.8%)	34 (7.6%)	36 (8.1%)
Zoning & Land Use	2006	251 (50.0%)	189 (37.6%)	30 (6.0%)	32 (6.4%)
	2010	200 (44.7%)	175 (39.2%)	34 (7.6%)	38 (8.5%)

Stores/Public Services	2006	261 (52.0%)	202 (40.2%)	11 (2.4%)	28 (5.6%)
	2010	258 (57.7%)	145 (32.5%)	10 (2.2%)	34 (7.6%)
Sense of 'Community'	2006	316 (62.9%)	147 (29.3%)	13 (2.6%)	26 (5.2%)
	2010	288 (64.5%)	115 (25.7%)	8 (1.8%)	36 (8.0%)
Clean/Healthy Environment	2006	401 (79.9%)	71 (14.1%)	4 (0.8%)	26 (5.2%)
	2010	369 (82.5%)	49 (11.0%)	3 (0.7%)	26 (5.8%)
Well-planned Development	2006	350 (69.7%)	97 (19.3%)	16 (3.2%)	39 (7.8%)
	2010	319 (71.3%)	89 (20.0%)	11 (2.4%)	28 (6.3%)
Sidewalks & Bike Paths	2006	147 (29.3%)	223 (44.4%)	101 (20.1%)	32 (6.4%)
	2010	134 (30.0%)	208 (46.5%)	67 (15.0%)	38 (8.5%)
Building Regulations	2006	193 (38.4%)	234 (46.6%)	40 (8.0%)	35 (7.0%)
	2010	157 (35.1%)	225 (50.3%)	29 (6.5%)	36 (8.1%)
Available Child Care	2006	138 (27.5%)	229 (45.6%)	103 (20.5%)	32 (6.4%)
	2010	113 (25.3%)	221 (49.4%)	78 (17.5%)	35 (7.8%)
Condition/Main of Town Roads	2006	380 (75.7%)	106 (21.1%)	4 (0.8%)	12 (2.4%)
	2010	346 (77.4%)	73 (16.3%)	3 (0.7%)	25 (5.6%)
Affordable Housing	2006	249 (49.6%)	193 (38.4)	36 (7.2%)	24 (4.8%)
	2010	179 (40.0%)	188 (42.1%)	45 (10.1%)	35 (7.8%)
White River & Branches	2006	318 (63.3%)	138 (27.5%)	18 (3.6%)	28 (5.6%)
	2010	295 (66.0%)	105 (23.5%)	14 (3.1%)	33 (7.4%)
Farms and Fields	2006	341 (67.9%)	127 (25.3%)	14 (2.7%)	18 (3.6%)
	2010	306 (68.5%)	103 (23.0%)	11 (2.5%)	27 (6.0%)

### **Comparison of Public Surveys: 2006 and 2010**

[The Public Survey in 2010 included some questions not seen on the previous survey (in 2006) in order to gather input on 'new' issues. The following is a comparison of responses for questions that did appear on both the 2006 AND 2010 surveys [to ascertain if public views on planning issues remained the same or had changed in the intervening five years].

**2006: 502 of 1257 returned (39.9%)      2010: 447 of 1195 returned (37.4%)**

<b>Are you a Bethel resident?</b>			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	329 (65.5%)	77 (15.3%)	96 (19.1%)
2010	308 (68.9%)	78 (17.5%)	61 (13.6%)

<b>Are you a Bethel landowner?</b>			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	359 (71.5%)	59 (11.7%)	84 (16.7%)
2010	357 (79.8%)	33 (7.6%)	57 (12.8%)

<b>Should commercial development be focused:</b>				
	Year	YES	NO	No Response
<b>a. in the Village Center</b>	2006	349 (69.5%)	71 (14.4%)	82 (16.3%)
	2010	309 (69.1%)	70 (15.7%)	68 (15.2%)
<b>b. along Route 12 toward Randolph</b>	2006	231 (46.0%)	138 (27.5%)	133 (26.5%)
	2010	207 (46.3%)	126 (28.8%)	114 (25.5%)

c. along Route 107 toward Rutland	2006	208 (41.4%)	140 (27.9%)	154 (30.7%)
	2010	185 (41.4%)	129 (28.9%)	133 (29.7%)

Should Bethel's municipal infrastructure be extended? (water, sewer lines, sidewalks, etc)			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	108 (21.5%)	297 (59.2%)	97 (19.3%)
2010	102 (22.8%)	250 (55.9%)	95 (21.3%)

Should more development than current zoning permits be granted on a piece of property if soils and slopes allow?			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	240 (47.8%)	199 (39.6%)	63 (12.5%)
2010	225 (50.3%)	161 (36.0%)	61 (13.7%)

Should we continue to grow without further limits?			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	164 (32.7%)	290 (57.8%)	48 (9.6%)
2010	138 (30.9%)	251 (56.1%)	58 (13.0%)

Are there areas in Bethel where growth should <u>not</u> occur?			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	398 (79.3%)	64 (12.7%)	40 (8.0%)
2010	215 (48.1%)	136 (30.4%)	96 (21.5%)

Should the Town pave more dirt roads?			
Year	YES	NO	No Response
2006	128 (25.5%)	315 (62.7%)	59 (11.8%)
2010	100 (22.4%)	301 (67.3%)	46 (10.3%)

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