Notice of Public Hearing
TOWN OF WILLISTON
Thursday, October 5, 2023, 6:30 PM

In-person: Town Hall Beckett/Maguire Meeting Room, 7900 Williston Road
Online: Zoom Meeting ID 873 0175 0819 on zoom.us/join or call (646) 558-8656

The Williston Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider proposed amendments to the *Williston 2016-2024 Comprehensive Plan ("Town Plan")* and *Williston Unified Development Bylaws ("WDB" or "Zoning Bylaws")*. The purpose of these amendments is to proceed with the Glaser Specific Plan (SP 23-01) in strict conformance with the criteria and procedures of WDB Chapter 9.

To view the proposed amendments online, including the proposed site plan, go to https://bit.ly/GlaserSP. Or go to www.town.williston.vt.us then select "Public Records and Documents," then "Agendas and Minutes" and navigate to the Planning Commission meeting of October 5, 2023.

Public comment is welcomed and encouraged. Comment letters can be emailed to Emily Heymann (eheymann@willistonvt.org) or mailed: Williston Planning Commission, 7900 Williston Road, Williston VT 05495. Questions or requests for accessibility accommodations can be directed to Emily Heymann at the Williston Planning Office at (802) 878-6704 or eheymann@willistonvt.org.

Specific Plan Informational Session: Thursday, September 28, 2023 from 12-1pm. Williston's Specific Plan process is codified in WDB Chapter 9. Learn more about this unique and rarely used zoning tool, as well as Williston's Town Plan and zoning bylaws at this online-only information session hosted by Planning staff. A recording will be available. *Please note: this is an informational session with staff and not a public hearing with the Planning Commission.*

What is a specific plan? In Williston, the specific plan is a tool that replaced the Planned Unit Development/Planned Residential Development (PUD/PRD) provisions. A specific plan is a detailed guideline for the development of a site presented in the form of proposed amendments to the *Town Plan* and *zoning bylaws*. If the development proposed by the applicants is not made, the underlying zoning remains in place. A specific plan must go through the same process required for amending the Town Plan and bylaws. A specific plan can refine and add detail to the objectives and policies of the Town Plan, provided that it is consistent with and implements the overall vision stated in the Town Plan. A specific plan can refine the standards adopted in this bylaw, or create new zoning districts with their own standards. The specific plan process cannot begin without a finding, by the Planning Commission, that substantial public benefits could result. WDB 9 provides five options for substantial benefit, including the conservation of one or more open spaces assets. A substantial benefit is an action taken at the applicant's expense and goes above and beyond the requirements of the bylaws.

Summary of the Glaser Specific Plan Development Proposal: The Glaser Specific Plan (SP 23-01) proposes a 109± unit residential subdivision with the provision of ±53-acres open space donated to the Town as the substantial benefit. Jack and Caitlin Glaser own ±97-acres at 1095 Old Stage Road, located at the southwest corner of Mountain View Road and Old Stage Road. The land is undeveloped, and portions are currently leased to a neighboring farm for hayfield and horse pasture. This property is in the Residential Zoning District (RZD) and water/sewer service area where for decades town policy has planned for medium-density residential development. The homes are proposed in two distinct areas: 39-units on a cul-de-sac located off Mountain View Road and 57-units with two-points of access onto Mountain View Road (across from Wildflower Circle). The open space offered to the Town includes ±15-acres of viewshed along Mountain View Road with views to the Green Mountains, a view that is identified in the town plan, and ±38-acres of pasture, wetland, and forest, in alignment with broader town plan goals to support working landscapes and conservation.

Iterative revisions to the subdivision sketch plan and proposed town plan/bylaw amendments were developed January-May 2023 through a collaborative process involving an ad hoc citizen advisory committee appointed by the Planning Commission, the application team, and Planning staff. The proposed amendments are as follows:

The proposed amendments to the town's *Comprehensive Plan* include:

- **Chapter 13** Natural and Cultural Resources, Section 13.2: Refer to the fields southwest of the intersection of Mountain View and Old Stage with views towards the Green Mountains as a protected viewshed, rather than unprotected. Also, acknowledge the other protected open spaces for working landscape and conservation.

The proposed amendments to the town's *Unified Development Bylaw* include:

- **Chapter 11** Growth Management: At discretionary permit, the Development Review Board (DRB) must make findings that the subdivision upholds a 50-point score. Following approvals, no more than 18 dwelling units (DU) per fiscal year can receive administrative permits to being construction until project completion (18 DU/year). This allocation schedule is separate from the town-wide growth target of 80 DUe/year (20 DUe/year designated to this area of town) and competitive allocation system that applies to all other residential development projects.
- **Chapter 26** Street Trees: Clarify that the exemption from street trees to preserve a scenic vista applies to this property's frontage along Mountain View Road and Old Stage Road.
- **Chapter 39** Residential Zoning District: Recognize the existence of the Specific Plan and codify its required substantial benefit as follows, "*The Glaser Specific Plan shall provide 53± acres of designated open space as substantial benefit for the purpose of upholding viewshed, working landscape, and conservation goals of the 2016-2024 Comprehensive Plan 13.2 and 13.3.3. The discretionary permit shall include irrevocable offer(s) of dedication to the Town for the ownership of the open space area(s). Floating easement(s) for path connectivity towards the south and west may be required across minor sections of private land that may exist between the proposed the dedicated town open space and multi-use path that connects the two neighborhood clusters (see Appendix F site plan for notations)."*
- **Appendix K:** As required by WDB 9.3.5, The "detailed guideline for development" includes the site plan, Growth Management questionnaire, the viewshed rendering, and accompanying materials from the Planning Commission and advisory committee review process as reference documents during the permitting process.