

Glaser Specific Plan
Planning Commission findings, Applicant/Committee Charge, Committee Appointments
January 3, 2023

On December 20, 2022, the Planning Commission concluded the Community Meeting and decided:

Findings of Fact:

1. The specific plan option may only be used where the Planning Commission determines that a substantial benefit to the town could result.
2. “*Conserving one or more open space assets identified in the town’s Comprehensive Plan, or another open space asset acceptable to the Conservation and Planning Commissions*” is listed as a substantial benefit per WDB 9.2.2.1
3. The applicant proposes open space to be offered to The Town of Williston in two distinct areas: 11± acres viewshed along Mountain View Road and 42± acres of pasture, forest, and wetlands near Windswept Farm. The open space must remain an acceptable asset per WDB 9.2.2.1, even if the subdivision and open space design evolves during the Specific Plan process.
4. The Williston 2016-2024 Comprehensive Plan Section 13.2 states, “Scenic Viewsheds - The town will protect and maintain the visual character that defines Williston, including open fields and meadows, wooded slopes and ridgelines, and scenic viewpoints.”
5. The Williston 2016-2024 Comprehensive Plan Section 13.3.3 states, “Protect Other Working Landscapes. Other working landscapes include tree farms, commercial wood lots, nurseries, sand and gravel mines, and fee-based outdoor recreation.”
6. Amendments to WDB Chapter 11 Growth Management, such as a separate allocation schedule for Glaser, is not considered a change to administrative procedures as defined in WDB 9.3.6.2.

THEREFORE, in accordance with WDB 9.3.3.2, I Meghan Cope, move that the Williston Planning Commission determine that an open space substantial benefit could result and to appoint an advisory committee to work with the applicants to develop the Glaser Specific Plan. This decision authorizes staff to prepare a committee charge, propose committee appointments, and a deadline for our review and approval at the next meeting on December 20, 2022. Authorizing this application to proceed to next phase of review does not guarantee any future outcome.

Vote: 4 in favor, 2 opposed. Shalya Livingston and Chapin Kaynor voted no. Meghan Cope, Cate Lamar, Alex Daley, and Ellie Beckett voted yes.

Advisory Committee Appointments:

1. Planning Commission representative – Alex Daley
 2. Conservation Commission representative – Gary Hawley
 3. Development Review Board representative – Scott Rieley
 4. Representative of the Affected Neighborhood #1 – Kyle Sala
 5. Representative of the Affected Neighborhood #2 – Rueben Escorpizo
 6. Representative of the Community At-Large – Lisa Braden-Harder
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Charge to the Applicant & Committee
As approved by the Planning Commission on January 3, 2023

The advisory committee SHALL, in accord with WDB 9.3.5 and 9.3.6:

- Review all the requirements of the WDB that would be modified or not be met by the applicant’s proposal.
- Work collaboratively with the applicant, at applicant’s expense, and town staff to draft a specific plan that uphold the Town Plan goals and bylaw standards for residential development, diversity of housing types, and open space subdivision design.
- Present draft specific plan to the Planning Commission on or before **June 6, 2023**, with check-ins as needed from January-June 2023.

The Planning Commission provides the following guidance to the applicant, town staff, and committee to considering when drafting the specific plan:

1. **Open Space Size & Configuration:** The Planning Commission anticipates the subdivision design to evolve as the applicant, staff, and committee work together to achieve Williston’s standards and incentives for residential development. To that end, the Commission expects the number, size, and location of open space, dwelling units, streets, public and private amenities to change as the Specific Plan evolves from concept to a complete site plan.
2. **Official Map and Connectivity:** The northern cul-de-sac has a single point of access onto Old Stage Road. Reconfigure the cul-de-sac so the street has two points of access. Provide for a future right-of-way designated towards the Larson and/or Martel parcels. This would align with the Official Map & Connectivity standards. Consider different scenarios, including traffic studies and comment from DPW on new street intersections, and other variables that are still shifting. Think about safety, convenience, traffic back ups on Old Stage Road.
3. **Growth Management Score:** The Planning Commission finds it feasible for a subdivision of this size and scale to achieve a competitive score of at least 50 points. The applicant, staff, and committee shall discuss ways in which the subdivision can improve its Growth Management score:
 - a. **Energy Efficiency:** State Act 250 regulations will require homes to meet Stretch Code. This criterion incentivizes the Efficiency Vermont High Performance Level (now call “Net-Zero Ready”). The applicant should consider providing a higher standard of energy efficiency than Stretch Code as well solar-ready design for all homes.
 - b. **Affordable Housing:** The Commission finds it feasible for this project to score at least 4 points (10% of units must be affordable at 100% Area Median Income). The Commission encourages a higher score than 4 points. Work with the Chittenden County Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity for ideas. Consider a more inclusive approach to housing, for example the needs of the adults with developmental disabilities.
 - c. **Housing Choice:** The current design proposes large duplexes and 1 single unit. The Commission encourages a greater variety of housing choices. In addition to one- and two-unit buildings, multi-unit buildings are allowed in this zoning district. A wider variety of home styles and sizes are encouraged.
 - d. **Provide Neighborhood Space:** private neighborhood space for residents (such as playground, gazebo, community gardens, and/or community building)

- e. **Build Paths & Trails:** Full points are anticipated for constructing the multi-use path along Mountain View Road. This is required for compliance with zoning and not considered a substantial benefit. Explore the Tier 2 Multi-use Path connection to Northridge or Martel Park across the Glaser Property (as shown on Official Map in vicinity of Windridge Road). Explore the feasibility and possibilities, including comment from relevant state agencies.
 - f. **Neighborhood Design:** In combination with housing choice and affordable housing, the Planning Commission encourages the applicant to design a neighborhood that prioritizes the human-scale areas (front doors, porches) and a compact, energy efficient design (multi-unit buildings) over garage-forward (garage protruding closer to street than front door or porch), auto-oriented design. As excerpted from the March 1, 2022 minutes the Planning Commission is *“interested in seeing more creative designs than culdesacs with garages in the front.”* Consider clustered garages separate from the homes.
 - g. **Sustainable Transportation:** The Planning Commission encourages a sustainable transportation component. Ex. if the northern cul-de-sac became a street connection to Mountain View Road then this area would be a good place to provide publicly accessible sustainable transportation amenities, which would serve as a public access point to the multi-use path and viewshed open space.
4. **Growth Management Schedule:** The applicant has requested 25 DUe/year over 4 years in addition to the 80 DUe/year town-wide Growth Target. The applicant, staff, and committee shall consider a realistic construction-start date when assigning the first fiscal year of allocation. The applicant, staff, and committee shall seek research and data from the Williston Fire/EMS department, Public Works department, and Champlain Valley School District when assigning the allocation start date and per-year schedule to ensure new units are accounted for in their respective capital plans.
 5. **More than 40 units on a dead-end:** The applicant, staff, and committee shall consider alternatives such as a street connection onto Mountain View Road to reduce the need for this exemption to only 1 cul-de-sac. The applicant, staff, and committee shall seek comment from the Williston Police and Fire/EMS departments, including data comparing Williston’s call volume in Residential Zoning District to other geographic locations and uses.
 6. **Open Space Conveyance:** The applicant shall be responsible for the costs and actions required to transfer the land to the Town of Williston. Any restrictions that would impact the Town’s future use of the land shall be disclosed and reviewed by the Town Attorney and may need to be eliminated as part of the Specific Plan. The applicant, staff, and committee shall include a bylaw amendment that requires these documents to be complete, reviewed by the town attorney, and ready for closing prior to the issuance of a discretionary permit. Seek comment from the Town Assessor about tax revenue implications.
 7. **Open Space Cost & Maintenance:** Even if the open space is donated to the town, there will be perpetual costs associated with land maintenance and management. The applicant shall research the anticipated annual cost. The applicant, staff, and committee shall seek input from the Selectboard and Town staff on the meaning of “at applicant’s expense” as it relates to the maintenance and management of the open space.
 8. **Windswept Farm Continued Operations on the Open Space:** The open space given to the town is considered automatic as part of the substantial benefit. Explore arrangements that would have the outcome of allowing continued use of the land by Windswept Farm. Provide an accounting of the

options and their pros and cons.

9. **Windridge Road:** This is a shared private driveway serving 4 properties (Parcel IDs: 09-012-013-000, 09-012-029-000, 09-012-023-000, 09-012-021-000). The Planning Commission is not interested in a shared private driveway over future town-owned land. The applicant should remove the driveway area (approx. 1.5 acres) from the open space and make necessary arrangements to transfer its ownership to the four 4 benefiting parcels, including irrevocable offer to the Town for future trail and/or multi-use path connection along the driveway as expressed by the Official Map.
10. **Bylaw Audit:** The subdivision must comply with all applicable standards of the bylaw that are not specifically amended as part of Specific Plan. To that, staff has prepared a bylaw audit. Ideally, major bylaw design standards will be addressed as part of the Specific Plan so there are no surprises during the subsequent DRB review and permitting. Highlights to consider include, but are not limited to:
 - a. **WDB 24 Outdoor Lighting:** The subdivision shall comply with the lighting standards.
 - b. **WDB 26 Street Trees:** The advisory committee, staff, and applicant shall determine if and where street trees are appropriate along the proposed streets, Mountain View Road, and Old Stage Road.
 - c. **WDB 39 setbacks** – the setback from a new street is 25'. Consider a smaller setback for the new neighborhood streets in order to provide a more compact, walkable neighborhood design.
11. **Staff and applicant responsibilities:** Per WDB 9.3.4, the applicants are responsible for the *“costs of this process, including scheduling and conducting meetings, which must be public meetings, and providing the services of attorneys, designers, facilitators, and planners, as needed.”*

Task	Staff	Applicant
At first meeting, review open meeting law, town conflict of interest ordinance, and town volunteer policy	Yes	-
Prepare agendas & minutes, facilitate meetings	-	Yes
Create a meeting schedule and timeline for addressing the topics in the Planning Commission’s charge		
Create and maintain a Cloud/drop box (or other publicly accessible cloud folder) and send link to town staff, committee members. Use cloud folder for agendas, minutes, meeting recordings, and other documents	-	Yes
Include dropbox/cloud link on town website page for committee per open meeting law	Yes	-
Post agendas to dropbox at least 48 hours before a regular meeting	-	Yes
Post minutes to dropbox no more than five (5) days after a regular meeting	-	Yes
Hybrid meetings: host, record, and provide logistical support	Yes	-
Attend meetings and site visit	Yes	Yes
Host & facilitate meetings and site visit	-	Yes
Send a reminder email with materials a few days before scheduled meeting to committee members and town staff	-	Yes
provide copies of town documents and maps, as well as general guidance on how to structure amendments to these documents.	Yes	-
Draft text and map amendments during the committee work	-	Yes