

Bethel Planning Survey January 2006: Response Results and All Comments. [Each individual's comment(s) are followed by a semi colon (;). Comments are clustered in groups of ten only to increase the ease of reading through them.]

7. “Are there areas in Bethel where growth should not occur? If yes, what kind of land would you like to see conserved? Check all that apply”

Yes: 398 – 79.3%	No: 64 – 12.7%	No Response: 40 – 8.0%
Critical wildlife habitat: 340 - 67.7%	Forests & woods: 288 – 57.4%	
Agricultural: 287 – 57.2%	Scenic views: 239 – 47.6%	
Ridgelines: 185 – 36.8%	Recreational: 165 – 32.9%	

Try to keep old farms together; *Near waterways (the river)*; You can't build in fields next to river; *Case by case*; Let's be smart about development or we could get overrun. I've seen it in my hometown (Belgrade, ME) – unrestricted growth is BAD! ; *Development should be restricted to re-development on existing areas and re-vitalization. How about tax credits for homes in the town center who do cosmetic clean up?*; Common sense should dictate; *Let the landowner decide – it's his land*; Flood plain; *In trailer parks – don't add on. Keep open spaces*;

Cluster housing should be encouraged to help keep land open and available for farming, forestry, hunting, recreation; *What wildlife?*; One of the best things about Bethel is the rural landscape, especially during foliage season. Further growth beyond existing development would be detrimental to the scenic beauty of the area and is unnecessary; *There should be some mild limitations. I would not want to see a building every 1,000 feet*; Scenic views can be enjoyed by everyone from their property or the public roads. Scenic views should not be taxed; *Farmland will be forever gone once it is taken for development*; No – we need growth wherever we can get it; *Hate to see condos along ridgelines or along the rivers where the geese are*; Ridgelines again. This is a vague + open ended question – obviously if a site were in fact a critical wildlife habitat it would not be suitable for development – however, some ridgelines might be ok for, say, wind turbines; *We shouldn't be rigid but look at each situation, have some guidelines to follow and evaluate the needs of each situation*;

Cell towers & windmills are ok, but we don't need major development on the ridgelines; *All apply in some cases. Case by case*; We should try to protect our character; *How are you going to attract tourists if you build over all the attractions*; Careful, you're getting into snob zoning; *Do not want to lose what makes area attractive place to be*; A lot of Vermont's beauty is in its nature, views and peacefulness. Let's not hurt it; *We should “bank” prime agricultural land so that we can grow more of our own food locally, especially when transportation costs go up* Forest & woods + wildlife – both hand in hand; *The only exception should be to allow wind power development. Global warming and energy shortages will be more and more problematic in the future. Any “alternative” energy production must be encouraged. Wind power should be encouraged even if we lose some scenic views*;

Use common sense; *Need quiet places*; If considering to build by scenic areas (river, farmland) consider imposing restrictions on types of structures build; *Ag. land is most*

desirable for development. It is most likely are to be proposed. I have no objections to ridgelines for wind power or phone towers; Bethel does NOT need additional unchecked growth! ; Perhaps – but again it should be case by case decision; Zoning should control density in all above areas; Historical (other); Again over all town plan would help; Do we have critical wildlife habitat?;

Lets keep country living, country living; I would like to see wind towers – they do not detract any more than the light and telephone poles we have all over; Along the river; Flood plains of the White River + major tributaries – maybe the work with the State to enhance the protection of state laws; Late town by laws would help; River frontage; The law of supply, demand, and economic suitability will automatically control it, as it need before planning and zoning; People who come in the area is because of what they left behind – usually and not necessarily work; I understand that growth must occur (like telecommunication towers) But Bethel's precious landscape is worth preserving + and development should be careful; Bethels best attraction is the White River. This should be considered;

Other; We need to have a cell phone tower; White River and waterfront; Wet lands and shorelines – conserve all of the above; Each area should be decided individually on merit. etc.; We need to look @ it case by case. It's good to conserve but we need to grow; This leaves village center and transportation lanes; Critical Wildlife – within reason / this is one of the toughest issues to deal with. Land is a limited resource – we can't make more land. But individual property rights must be preserved. Eminent domain should be used carefully and only for public use like schools, sewer plants, etc. Never for any private benefit even if the tax base would be enhanced; Growth – yes – with planning; Agricultural - Unless it is agricultural;

What other areas are there besides what are listed – all of the listed should be conserved; I would like to see nature preserved... but I can only really speak for myself and my property; Most of those named areas are not feasible for business; Property taxes should be cut on these properties as an incentive to preserve; Other river areas; Bethel needs growth to survive; Growth should be limited to 107 N & S village ctr.; Farms and businesses are very important to future survival; Ridgelines no bldgs., turbines might be ok; All of these areas should be protected from development;

Try using locations that need to be refurbished or fixed up instead of encroaching on the above; Keep the dirt roads; Again let the boards decide; Trails (for walking); Ridgelines - (some); All valid – encourage cluster housing, co-housing + affordable housing grouped around open green spaces; I don't feel it right for my opinion to exercise dominion over some one else's property. Private property belongs to owners; If we as a community think something is worth preserving, then we should spend taxpayer dollar and purchase it. Whether it's a building, a field, a forest or a ridge. Simply taking landowner rights via regulation is getting close to socialism; River front; River frontage;

You have to work with the owners of the quality land; But there is in not much in Bethel to attract tourists;

Agriculture is not as important as open space; Recreational – wish the town would acquire Ketchum land next to the pool – water shed areas so our water supply is protected, maintaining the rural character of Bethel is desirable.