

MEETING OF THE ELMORE PLANING COMMISSION

TOWN OF ELMORE, VT

Meeting Date: Thursday, April 17th, 2025 at 5:30 pm

At Elmore Town Offices, 1175 VT-12, Elmore, VT

Agenda Status: Draft

**Planning Commission Members: Dawn Angney-Kress, Nancy Davis,
Michelle Greeson, Bruce Olsson, Glenn Schwartz, Shorty Towne (alternate)**

=====

JOIN ZOOM MEETING: <https://bit.ly/ElmoreZoom>

**Meeting ID: 677 090 6765 Passcode: 8888
Phone: +16465588656 / Meeting ID: 677 090 6765 Passcode: 8888**

=====

CALL TO ORDER est. 5:30 pm:

Review additions or deletions to the agenda

Conflict of Interest review for agenda items

Vote for approval of previous meeting's minutes - March 20, 2025

Discussion of Town Plan Chapter 6 - Education

Review of changes for Health & Wellness Chapter

**Review of changes to Chapter 5 - Historical & Archaeological
Resources**

5K Race Planning

Conflict of Interest and Open Meeting Law training

Town Plan Overview for Elmore Blog

CHAPTER 5: Historical & Archaeological Resources

In 1983 a survey of the town by the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation identified 37 buildings as well as three districts in Elmore as historically significant. These districts consist of the Lake Elmore Historic District, the Lake Elmore East Historic Camp District, and the Lake Elmore West Historic Camp District. Examples of the native Vermont architecture identified as historically significant include the Town Hall, the one-room schoolhouse, the church and the Elmore Store. The town also contains and values the remains of the once-thriving village of East Elmore.

In 1986 a National Park Service Study of archeologically significant riparian areas was conducted as a part of the Vermont Rivers Study. Findings concluded that Elmore Pond Brook, from Lake Elmore to the Wolcott town line, has an expected moderate-to-high archeological sensitivity. The rating does not necessarily indicate that any archeologically significant resources have been located in the area; it only denotes that the topography, sun exposure, availability of food and other important natural resources exist in the right combination to support the findings.

In September 1995 the Elmore Fire tower (which was used to monitor for fire activity from 1938 until 1974) was designated a National Historic Lookout and is currently owned by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

In September 1996 The Elmore Historical Society was formed to record, preserve, and collect all available information about the hamlets and people of Elmore. ~~Since then a~~ As of 2025, the Historical Society has dissolved, however, due to the town's interest in historical records, the Planning Commission hopes to reinstate the organization in the near future. There is an extensive narrative and photographic history of the town has been made available to the public via the Elmore website's: <https://elmorevt.org/historical-society/>.

As of 2025, the National Register of Historic Places has added the Lake Elmore Historic District, which spans from VT 12 to Westphal and Greaves Hill. The Vermont State Historic Registry has numerous Elmore buildings listed. See Map 7 for Historic Districts.

~~Presently, none of the structures or districts have been placed on the National Registry of Historic Structures but the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation placed all three districts on the State Register of Historic Places. See Map 7 for Historic Districts.~~

Goals, Objectives, Policies and Recommendations

Goals:

- To continue to record, identify and preserve Elmore's heritage (town history, archeological records & resources, and structures & districts of historical value) for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

-Reinstate the Elmore Historical Society.

Objectives:

~~Encourage the Elmore Historical Society to host events and workshops to educate the public on the importance of preserving archeological sites~~

- Any future findings as well as currently known documented archaeological resources should be preserved and protected from development activities.

Policies:

- Grant applications intended to augment Elmore's historical record and preserve historical sites and artifacts in town are supported.
- Elmore encourages the restoration and re-use of historic buildings.
- If during the development of a parcel an archeological site is discovered, the town asks that the developer contact the state archeologist to provide a reasonable opportunity to investigate and suggest a means to mitigate the impact.
- Projects occurring in the archeologically sensitive area around Elmore Pond Brook are to consider the potential impact of their project on archeological sites during the early stages of development in order to mitigate potential impacts.

Recommendations:

~~The Elmore Historical Society should work with the town and state Division for Historic Preservation to identify a secure and safe place for the long term storage of items intended for preservation as well as research avenues and sources of funding for historic preservation projects in town.~~

~~The Elmore Historical Society should continue to identify and preserve Elmore's historic resources as well as compile a comprehensive listing of historical areas archeological sites and structures in town.~~

- Reinstate the Elmore Historical Society with new interested community members.

- The zoning bylaws should continue to recognize the historic significance of the Elmore Village District as well as the importance of preserving and current or future archeological sites.

Commented [MM15]: Per conversations on 3/20 I will delete all points that reference the Historical Society and add one aiming to reinstate it

CHAPTER 6: Education Plan

Local Schools

Overview

In 2016 the town of Elmore voted to join Morrisville in forming the Elmore-Morrisville Unified Union (EMUU) School District. The combined school district now owns five buildings; one located in Elmore, the Elmore School; and four in Morrisville, Morrisville Elementary School (MES), Peoples Academy Middle Level (PAML), Peoples Academy (PA), and the Graded Building which houses preschool services and administrative offices. The seven member combined school board consists of two representatives from Elmore, two from Morrisville and three at large. The Town of Elmore strongly supports the continued operation of the historic Elmore School.

Currently children grades 1-3 residing in Elmore can still attend the Elmore School, the last one-room school house in the state. This facility has a capacity of 20 students with preference given to Elmore students. Per the existing school policy, elementary school children who cannot be accommodated in Elmore school building go to the Morrisville Elementary School. Elmore's Middle and High School students also attend the Morrisville schools. For students wishing to attend another high school of their choice, (provided it has available capacity at the time of enrollment), there is a state regulated lottery system which accepts up to 10% of the EMUU student population grades 9-12.

The EMUU School District has a long-term facilities maintenance plan, which covers all buildings and facilities including the Elmore School building. For specific information on this plan contact Lamoille South Supervisory Union.

Enrollment Data:

As of 2023, the Elmore Schools total enrollment was 17, with 7 first grade students, 5 second grade students and 5 third grade students. Lamoille Union Middle School had 267 and 506 students respectively.

Early Education Services

Elmore recognizes the importance of early care and education to the community and supports the development of these types of services. EMUU provides access to preschool programs both in school and through partnerships with private providers. There are a variety of early care and educational opportunities available in the community as well, such as the Lamoille Family Center, which offers a range of early education services.

Goals Objectives, Policies and Recommendations

Goals:

- To continue Elmore's history of providing access to high quality education to all children without placing an undue burden on taxpayers.
- To maintain a strong and active school board with participation from the community to guide them.

Objectives:

To ensure safe and adequate facilities are available to provide for the education of residents.

- Encourage maximum participation in filling at large positions on EMUU school board by Elmore residents.

Policies:

- Elmore recognizes the importance of early care and education to the community and supports the development of these types of services.
- Elmore strongly supports the continued operation of the Elmore School.

Recommendations:

- The School Board should continue to monitor the needs of students and assess the most effective way of meeting those needs to ensure students have access to high quality education.

CHAPTER X: Health and Wellness

~~This Health and Wellness Chapter emphasizes the role the Elmore residents community can play an important role in promoting the health and well-being of its community residents. Wellness, in its broadest sense, includes not only physical health but also mental, emotional, social, and environmental well-being, all of which contribute to a vibrant, thriving community. By addressing various aspects of health, the town can create an environment where individuals have access are aware of s to the resources and opportunities needed to live healthier, more fulfilling lives. For a one-stop-shop site to find resources like food, housing, financial assistance, health care, and more visit <https://www.findhelp.org/>. This chapter promotes health equity for all Elmore residents. As defined by the Center for Disease Control, health equity is “the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health”. Achieving this requires ongoing societal efforts to overcome economic, social, and other obstacles to health and health care, and eliminate preventable health disparities. Health equity in community planning links traditional concepts of planning (land use, transportation, community facilities, parks and open space) with health themes such as physical activity, public safety, healthy food access, mental health, air and water quality, and social well-being. The key focus areas below address these aspects of health equity. For more information on health equity planning visit the Health Equity Planning Toolkit at <https://www.lcpcvt.org/>.~~



Planning for Healthy Communities, Change Lab Solutions

Key areas of focus to foster health and wellness in the community include:

- Access to healthcare
- Healthy food access and choices
- Substance prevention, treatment, recovery, and mental health
- Active living, active transportation, and recreation
- Promoting health equity
- Social inclusion, engagement, and sense of community
- Age-friendly environments
- Prompt and effective services in the event of an emergency

The Town of Elmore is committed to fostering the health and well-being of all residents and visitors, and it will prioritize community health when making local level decisions and establishing and reviewing existing Town policies. ~~We recognize our responsibility to reduce risks in our community that contribute to negative individual and community wellness outcomes.~~ Additionally, we aim to enhance protective factors for youth and individuals of all ages and support older residents in aging in place through intentional planning. This includes building a town culture that promotes healthy behaviors and social well-being while reducing risk behaviors, such as substance misuse.

~~Although the Community Health and Wellness Element is not a required element of the Town Plan, the Town believes that its inclusion in the Plan ensures that public health and wellness remains a top priority for the Town of Elmore.~~

~~Access to Health Care~~

~~Equitable access to healthcare ensures that everyone, especially populations that historically experience challenges, can access the care they need and desire to meet their full potential for health and well-being.~~ Resources for healthcare are outside the borders of Elmore. Knowledge of resources and how to access them are available through 2-1-1 or Lamoille Find Help Social Services at www.findhelp.org.

~~Rural locations such as Elmore are served by health care facilities in neighboring towns that can assist residents with general health care needs but may not be suited for more complex acute care services that require specialized services and equipment. The nearest Hospital to Elmore is Copley Hospital located approximately 15 minutes away in the Town of Morristown. Elmore residents have access to a range of health care providers in Morristown including the Lamoille Health Partners network. The next closest hospital and healthcare service center is located approximately 45 minutes away in Barre, Vermont including the Central Vermont Medical Center.~~

~~Healthy Food Access:~~

Access to healthy culturally appropriate foods enhances thriving communities and supports economic development. Elmore residents access healthy foods from their own gardens, local farms, and from various sources in the village center and neighboring towns. Elmore residents without a car or mode of transportation can access grocery stores by requesting public transportation through Rural Community Transportation's (RCT) On-Demand Service. For more information visit <https://www.riderct.org/>. Local food resources include the Lamoille County Food Share (<https://www.lcfoodshare.org/>) and Meals on Wheels (<https://www.mowlc.org/>).

Substance Misuse Prevention:

Building a positive town culture that promotes healthy behaviors also reduces behaviors such as substance misuse. Town policies are an important mechanism for creating a healthy culture. Citizens, especially youth, get "messages" from what they see in their communities, thereby influencing their choices.

Mental health and substance misuse present significant challenges across communities, impacting both youth and adults. The effects of individual struggles can ripple through households, neighbors, and friends, and affect the broader community. When one person struggles, we all feel the impact. ~~Community support is essential for achieving our health goals, and its success benefits everyone. Effective interventions are necessary at individual, relationship, organizational, community, and policy levels.~~ Local resources related to prevention, treatment, recovery and mental health include Healthy Lamoille Valley, Lamoille County Mental Health, Lamoille Health Partners, LHP-Behavioral Health and Wellness, North Central Vermont Recovery Center and Jenna's Promise. However, we all play a role in prevention-- parents and caregivers, local and state government, faith-based institutions, organizations, businesses, adult-use substance retailers, schools, health care providers, law enforcement and the media.

Early substance use increases the likelihood of dependency and negative health outcomes later in life. When young people are exposed to community messages that normalize substance use, it can have damaging effects. Our youth are surrounded by tactics from the substance industry that encourage misuse. The more we normalize substance use in our daily lives, the more likely young people are to use substances at an earlier age. Mental health challenges, ongoing pressures, and cumulative stressors on families can lead to higher rates of misuse, impacting some families more than others.

Active Living & Active Transportation:

Bicycles are used both for transportation and recreation. Many bicyclists can be seen riding throughout Elmore and the Lamoille County region. Recreational users include local residents who seek the health benefits of the sport and visitors who come to Vermont to experience the outstanding scenery. Walking is an important part of community life and much like bicycling, actively contributes to vitality, reduces our dependence on the automobile, and provides a healthy recreational opportunity.

Elmore has many examples of recreational opportunities; for example, hiking, swimming and boating at Elmore State Park, and walking and cross-country skiing along the local VAST and Catamount trail network.

Social Inclusion, Engagement and Sense of Community:

Social well-being plays an important role in a person's health. Promoting a sense of community and public spaces for community members to gather can play a positive role in the lives of Elmore residents and visitors. The Town of Elmore can continue to promote a sense of community by enhancing community green space for all users and ages to enjoy. Continuing to promote community events such as live music by Lake Elmore, the Polar Plunge, Community Pancake Breakfast, and Fire Department BBQs, help promote social well-being among Elmore residents.

Goals

- Support a community vision for health and wellness.
- Support health equity planning in Elmore.

Policies

- The Town of Elmore supports universal school meals and Farm to School programs.
- Promote local farmers' markets and access to healthy food options.
- Promote a healthy, vibrant and socially connected community.
- Promote a healthy environment and programs/community greenspace that support physical activity.

Recommendations

- ~~Explore strategies to increase healthy food access such as mobile markets, year-round Farmer's Markets, or food hubs.~~
- Make the community aware of local health, mental health and substance abuse treatment and recovery services and prevention initiatives like Healthy Lamoille Valley and others. Utilize the town website, newsletter and social media channels to promote 2-1-1 and the Lamoille Find Help webpage.
- Obtain community input regarding improvements to health and wellness infrastructure by conducting a variety of strategies such as walk audits, community surveys, community engagement events, and targeted project studies.
- ~~Install substance free signage in public spaces as appropriate.~~
- Explore ~~Create and maintain~~ recreational facilities and opportunities for all community users, with special attention to the needs of handicapped, youth, elders, those with low incomes and people from a variety of ethnic groups that may not be current users.
- Consider opportunities for establishing community garden space.