



April 22, 2014

The Honorable Robert M. Hartwell, Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
115 State Street , Room 8
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Senator Hartwell,

The City of South Burlington greatly appreciates the work of the Committee on Natural Resources and Energy with respect to H. 823 entitled "An act relating to encouraging growth in designated centers and protecting natural resources" and H. 448 "Act 250 and primary agricultural soils".

Our community is working very hard to achieve long held goals for a new downtown – City Center. In order for this to occur, a public – private partnership will need to expend considerable effort to redevelop 100 acre tract (2/3 suburban strip center development and 1/3 vacant land). This area is well supported by transportation infrastructure and centered in the heart of additional strip development and residential neighborhoods.

City Center will need to absorb significant growth in order to offset development pressures on more sensitive (but less expensive) agricultural and natural areas in other parts of South Burlington, particularly the Southeast Quadrant. H. 828 and H. 448 offers substantial regulatory incentives for the private sector to work with the City to achieve this community-wide goal.

In particular, we strongly encourage your committee to approve language in both bills that consistently supports off-site mitigation at 1:1 in New Town Centers such as ours.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this important bill. Your committee's consideration of how the language will impact our community is critical to successfully creating a compact downtown.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ilona Blanchard", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ilona Blanchard, Project Director

CC: Senator Tim Ashe
Senator Philip Baruth
Senator Ginny Lyons
Senator Michael Sirotkin
Senator Diane Snelling
Senator David Zuckerman
Kevin Dorn, City Manager