

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE

The Committee on Natural Resources & Energy to which was referred Senate Bill No. S. 138, entitled "An act relating to promoting economic development"

respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the bill be amended as follows:

First: By striking out Secs. 30–34 in their entirety and inserting in lieu thereof new Secs. 30–37 to read as follows:

Sec. 30. [Deleted.]

Sec. 31. [Deleted.]

Sec. 32. [Deleted.]

Sec. 33. ACT 250; IMPLEMENTATION OF SETTLEMENT PATTERNS CRITERION

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) 2014 Acts and Resolves No. 147, Sec. 2 amended 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(9)(L) (Criterion 9L) to become a settlement patterns criterion.

(2) Effective on October 17, 2014, the Board adopted a procedure to implement Criterion 9L (the Criterion 9L Procedure).

(b) The General Assembly determines that additional opportunity for public comment on the Criterion 9L Procedure, as well as additional education and improved guidance, would be beneficial in implementing the criterion.

(1) The Board shall review the Criterion 9L Procedure in full collaboration with ACCD and ANR.

(A) Prior to proposing any revisions, the Board shall solicit input from affected parties and the public, including planners, developers, municipalities, environmental advocacy organizations, regional planning commissions, regional development corporations, and business advocacy organizations such as State and regional chambers of commerce.

(B) If the Board makes revisions, it shall adopt them in the form of a procedure under 3 V.S.A. chapter 25.

(2) ACCD shall work with the NRB and ANR to develop outreach material on Criterion 9L, including illustrative examples of appropriate development design, and implement a training plan on the criterion for local elected officials, municipal boards, State and regional organizations and associations, environmental groups, consultants, and developers.

Sec. 34. [Deleted.]

Sec. 35. 24 V.S.A. § 4471(e) is amended to read:

(e) ~~Vermont neighborhood~~ Neighborhood development area. Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, a determination by an appropriate municipal panel shall not be subject to appeal if the determination is that a proposed residential development within a designated downtown development district, designated growth center, ~~or~~ designated Vermont neighborhood, or designated neighborhood development area seeking conditional use approval will not result in an undue adverse effect on the character of the area affected, ~~as provided in~~ under subdivision 4414(3)(A)(ii) of this title.

Sec. 36. 10 V.S.A. § 6086(a)(9)(B) is amended to read:

(B) Primary agricultural soils. A permit will be granted for the development or subdivision of primary agricultural soils only when it is demonstrated by the applicant that, in addition to all other applicable criteria, either, the subdivision or development will not result in any reduction in the agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils; or:

(i) the development or subdivision will not significantly interfere with or jeopardize the continuation of agriculture or forestry on adjoining lands or reduce their agricultural or forestry potential; ~~and~~

(ii) except in the case of an application for a project located in a designated ~~growth center~~ area listed in subdivision 6093(a)(1) of this title, there are no lands other than primary agricultural soils owned or controlled by the applicant which are reasonably suited to the purpose of the development or subdivision; ~~and~~

(iii) except in the case of an application for a project located in a designated ~~growth center~~ area listed in subdivision 6093(a)(1) of this title, the subdivision or development has been planned to minimize the reduction of agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils through innovative land use design resulting in compact development patterns, so that the remaining primary agricultural soils on the project tract are capable of supporting or contributing to an economic or commercial agricultural operation; and

(iv) suitable mitigation will be provided for any reduction in the agricultural potential of the primary agricultural soils caused by the development or subdivision, in accordance with section 6093 of this title and rules adopted by the Natural Resources Board.

Sec. 37. 10 V.S.A. § 6310 is added to read:

§ 6310. CONSERVATION EASEMENT HOLDER; NONMERGER

If a holder of a conservation easement is or becomes the owner in fee simple of property subject to the easement, the easement shall continue in effect and shall not be extinguished.

Second: After Sec. 37, by striking out “Sec. 35–39. [Reserved]” and inserting in lieu thereof the following: Secs. 38–39. [Reserved]

(Committee vote: 4-0-1)

15

Senator Snelling
FOR THE COMMITTEE