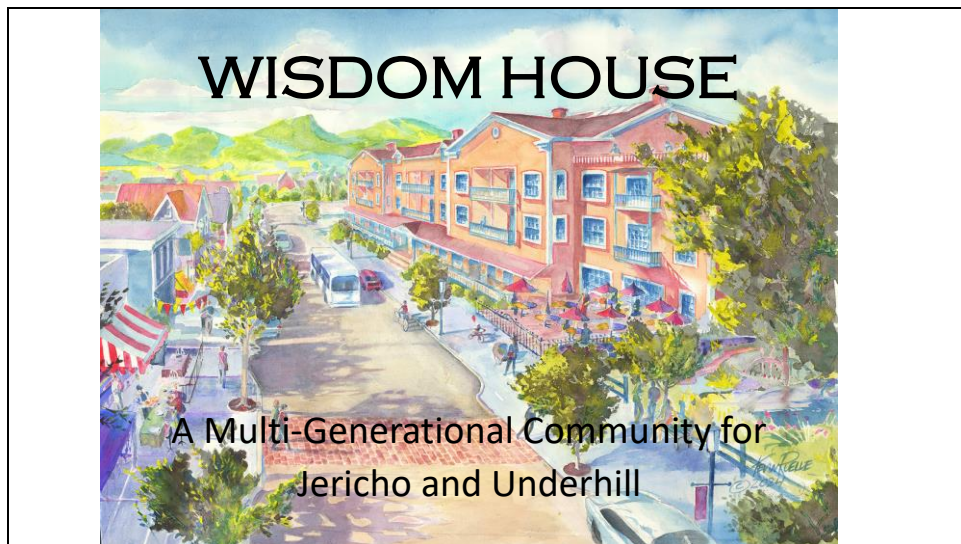


WISDOM HOUSE VILLAGE CONCEPT



Senate Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs Committee
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Our group, incorporated as Wisdom House L3C, is working to site a senior oriented housing development/complex on the old sawmill/Tatro property in the Flats.

The WH concept originated as an idea for addressing our own needs as senior citizens of Jericho and Underhill who want to 1. continue living here among our network of friends and family, and 2. do it in a rewarding environment of gardens and friends/neighbors. It has grown into a larger vision of housing and community-building.

What Is Wisdom House: the WH vision

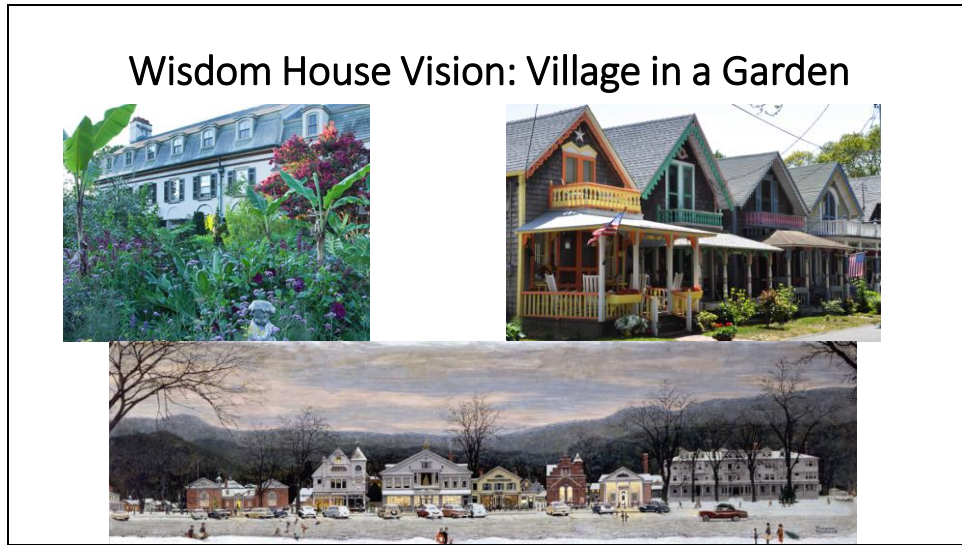


- 50 - 60 units +/-
- mix of condo apartments & cottages (60/40)
- affordable market rate (missing middle)
- multi-generational housing with a senior emphasis; not assisted living
- some services: village model
- supportive community
- stay in our community: family & friends
- open up existing units for younger families

We envision a total size of about 50 - 60 units. This will consist of a mix of condo apartments & cottages, likely on the order of 30 - 40 units of condo apartments and 20 cottages. This may evolve.

We are hoping to achieve prices that are “affordable market rate” (middle income), although in today’s construction environment this is proving a challenge.

We are seeking multi-generational housing but with a senior emphasis. While avoiding an institutional assisted living character, we are pursuing some services for residents based on a “village model”; possible engagement with Mount Mansfield Villages (MMV) and other health and elder services.




Although the WH vision has as its centerpiece a large, pedestrian friendly multifamily/multi-use building(s) we envision some small cottage units on individual (small) lots. One idea that we like is a “Crafters Row,” consisting of cottages where craftspeople live and work in a teaching environment passing on vital creative skills to the next generation. Existing models for such units at significant densities and beautiful arrangements abound, especially such as these on the Cape Cod islands.



- > multifamily: localized density; free open space; community support/interaction
- > integrated services + commercial; (make the cafe(s) in the vision sketches a possibility)
- > parking under the building for more open space/gardens, and safety.
- > reduced autos & auto circulation; proximity to surrounding services
- > keep affordable: (middle income/market rate)
- > example illustrates all-weather central atrium garden from Vancouver BC cohousing community
- > example of Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge, MA demonstrates the ability of such a larger scale structure to enhance village character

Wisdom House at Riverside



- walking distance to market, services, library and Mills Riverside park
- central location for Jericho-Underhill
- existing GMT bus service, water

Mill property in context: Riverside/Underhill Flats area.

Flats/Riverside Community Vision



Jericho has recognized the importance of the Riverside area for a long time. Enormous effort has been put into crafting the current vision.

Planning for Riverside began in earnest in 2004 with a series of public forums, planning fairs, "charrettes," and professional input. As the result of this process, a vision for the area has been developed.

The resulting vision is one of a compact and vibrant community center, with a traditional Vermont village feel that should make a significant contribution to community life well into the future.

OK, but what does Jericho need?

- #1 issue on the Select Board's ARPA Survey
- Frequent discussion topic on FPF
- Increase in # posts on FPF seeking housing
- The real estate market is incredibly active.
- Our student population has shrunk, (leading to higher taxes).

We plan to remain in Jericho to enjoy our retirement. We wish we could downsize, but there just aren't any smaller homes available.

Our son wants to return to Jericho to raise his family, but they can't find any starter homes.

Source: Jericho Affordable Housing Committee

JERICHO'S JOURNEY FORWARD
2024 Jericho Town Plan

2023 Jericho Housing Resolution

A target rate of New Dwellings Constructed to average **30 housing units per year** for the resultant total of **150 new housing units by 2028**, of which at least:

- 30% of New Dwellings Constructed qualify as Missing Middle-Income Housing. At target rate of development, this would represent **45 new Missing Middle units, by the end of 2028**.
- 20% of New Dwellings Constructed qualify as affordable to individuals or families with Low or Very Low Income. At target rate of development, this would represent **30 new affordable units, by the end of 2028**.
- **10 new units qualify as Perpetually Affordable**, and,
- **15 new units qualify as Senior Housing**

Housing has been identified as the single most critical issue in Jericho. Wisdom House offers a clear contribution to housing in both Jericho and Underhill. The Jericho Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) has conducted an in-depth look at the housing issue and identified numerous needs and a radical inability to keep up. Just a small sampling of these:

- housing for seniors who wish to remain and grow old here
- housing for our own children--the younger generation starting out
- housing for the rest of us: teachers, Town employees, service employees; aka “workforce housing” for the workers on whom our economy turns; housing for the “missing middle”

Density, Housing, and Rural Character

Conventional

Design Based

Rural Character + Housing = Wisdom House

Dense village development, including significant multi-family structures, is critical to addressing the twin, and often competing, demands of protecting Vermont’s rural character while growing housing. This calls for unusually high quality architecture and planning.

Community Vision



- vital community center/residential neighborhood; commerce and community life
- economic/financial viability
- economic & social attraction for Jericho/Underhill & beyond
- PRIDE of PLACE
- beautiful
- legacy project; built to last

Unique opportunity: unusually high degree of overlap between the interests of the key players in this undertaking

The Town wants this to be at the heart of the community & town's identity/image

Owner wants the successful development depicted here + the legacy contribution

We (WH) want to live there

Some of the qualities that make up that common vision include:

- a vital community center/residential neighborhood that embraces both commerce and community life
- economic/financial viability
- economic & social attraction for Jericho/Underhill & beyond
- PRIDE of PLACE: we are looking to create a PLACE that we can all, residents and visitors alike, be proud of
- beautiful: often forgotten or dismissed, beauty is a real contributor to the quality of life
- we see this as a "legacy project" to be built not just for the expediency of the day, but that our descendants in 100 years will still enjoy
- although located on a comparatively modest site in Riverside, our focus includes engagement with and contribution to the wider community
- where residents and visitors alike will want to go spend time

Wisdom House Mission

- Build a model for state/other rural villages
- Legacy project; built to last
- Build a centerpiece for community vitality and economy
- Build attractive new homes for long-time local residents who have the choice to remain in their existing homes

Build a model for state/other rural villages: In order to address its housing needs while honoring its rural heritage and character, Vermont is going to need to construct many multi family buildings in its town and village centers. In addition to modeling this approach, it is critical that the early prototypes, such as Wisdom House, evoke an appreciation for and a desire to emulate them.

Wisdom House represents an early step on a learning curve towards a statewide approach to enhanced housing and community vitality.

Legacy project; built to last: Large, centerpiece community buildings throughout the world often embody not only community functions, but historical echoes and a sense of permanence. We intend to build Wisdom House to last and not to take on an air of deterioration and shabbiness as it ages.

Build a centerpiece for community vitality and economy: Provide services and enrichment for community life including commerce, entertainment, housing and jobs.

We anticipate that Wisdom House, as a critical element of the larger Riverside development, will be a focal point for community life, not only for the immediate communities of Jericho and Underhill but of northeast Chittenden County and beyond.

Build attractive new homes for long-time local residents who have the choice to remain in their existing homes: The goal of Wisdom House is to attract existing residents to a rich and vital environment. This has 2 functions: to provide meaningful lives for community residents as they age, and to free up the family homes they have occupied for other younger residents and families. To do this, we want to not simply warehouse people in conventional apartment blocks or worse, in institutions. We must develop an architectural environment and supporting social programs to do this.

This freeing up of existing homes will increase school enrollment and support for other community needs

A few thoughts to carry away...

1. **Local land use policy** is a more powerful tool for limiting housing than it is creating it. Be careful in the way you wield policy when it comes to housing.
2. The single most impactful thing a community can do is **add financial resources (or reduce costs)** for housing:
 - Support projects leverage unique state/federal sources
 - Establish a local "Housing Trust Fund" or a local/regional Housing Bond.
 - Reduce the costs associated with permitting and local processing.
 - Include housing in community development projects.
3. Incremental additions of housing in primarily market rate buildings can unlock resources for all types of housing.



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VHFA has identified two critical elements for enhancing housing in Chittenden County:

1. financial resources (to) reduce costs, and
2. additional market rate housing to enhance housing of all sorts.

This creates an ideal environment for public/private partnering to realize the goals of enhanced housing.

Realize Vision: Wisdom House at Riverside

