



TOWN OF JERICHO VERMONT

TO: Vermont House Committee on Environment

FROM: Jericho Selectboard

DATE: April 10, 2026

RE: Bill S.325

Please consider the following comments from Jericho as you review Bill S.325. Thank you.

1. Jericho adopted a new Town Plan in 2024, which directs village-centric growth, compact settlement, and natural resource protection, in line with Act 181 and Smart Growth principles.
2. Jericho worked closely with CCRPC to designate its Tier 1B area.
3. Jericho adopted new zoning in 2025 for its Village Centers to eliminate both density caps and minimum lot sizes, to remove barriers to dense housing development in the village centers and position the Town to leverage Act 250 Tier 1B exemptions.
4. Jericho zoning regulations and staffing are designed to dovetail with Act 250 and Act 181, not to duplicate or replace them.
5. The Planning Commission is currently working on an update to its Natural Resources Overlay, to continue protecting mapped natural resources while enabling rural housing and working lands, to align with Act 181 goals and to leverage Act 250 protections.
6. Act 181 makes project location a key factor in determining Act 250 jurisdiction, which supports and reinforces the shared goals from Jericho's Town Plan and updated zoning. Jericho looks forward to continued Act 181 implementation, including a road rule to limit rural fragmentation.
7. Jericho has observed that applications for subdivisions in Jericho rarely exceed Act 250 thresholds for units or acres. Some zoning permit applicants have expressed a strong desire to avoid needing an Act 250 permit.
8. Based on VLCT, VNRC, and LURB recommendations, Jericho supports Bill S.325 to delay parts of Act 181 and to modify other parts of Act 181, to ensure effective and fair implementation of Act 181's provisions.
9. Jericho encourages S.325 and related Act 181 legislation to address:
 - a. For both Tier 1B and Tier 2 areas, can the acres/units' thresholds be increased before triggering Act 250 jurisdiction. Jericho believes a modest increase in the Act 250 thresholds would produce more units of housing without significantly increasing adverse impacts.
 - b. Can towns with strong Town Plans, zoning regulations, and staff capacity, like Jericho, work with RPCs on expanding the mapped Tier 1B area based on the Future Land Use Maps, zoning districts, and wastewater disposal potential. A larger Tier 1B area would provide more opportunities for Act 250-exempt housing projects.
 - c. Continue to streamline the Act 250 review process and reduce costs, so that fewer developers simply decide to avoid it altogether.

Sincerely,

Jericho Selectboard

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