

## Summary of Survey responses

### Planning survey Fall 2019

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Responses:   Postal mail = 51  
                  Online = 41  
                  Total = 92

**General Summary:** While this was not a scientific survey and the results are harder to measure and quantify, the information received provides good information for the PC's consideration as the board continues to evaluate the Bylaws. In particular, the questions about junkyards and wood processing businesses prompted the strongest responses and show there is quite a range in opinions on both subjects. Respondents have strong feelings about how the land is used and how those uses may infringe on others' experience in residential communities. How to care for the land, support local business, and balance the needs of people in residential areas remains challenging. Starksboro's mixed use districts allow for a variety of uses that can be at odds with each other. Many respondents acknowledged the challenges with enforcement of bylaws and ordinances.

#### JUNKYARDS

There is quite a bit of support for a junk ordinance and enforcement of bylaws and ordinances related to people cleaning up their property. There is recognition of the challenges of enforcement but also quite a bit of confusion about how fines/penalties could be applied and collected.

On the other side, there were several comments such as "live and let live" and notes about how people wish to have the ability to do what they want on their own property on which they pay taxes.

#### WOOD PROCESSING

This question brought to light that there is a general lack of understanding about the town's zoning districts and that all are regarded as "mixed use." Many comments included reference to restricting wood processing operations to commercial and/or industrial zones. This may be an excellent opportunity to educate the town about the zoning districts again and why the PC believes this is in best service to the town.

Noise and visual trespass were the biggest concerns raised.

On the other side, many respondents commented on the value of our "working landscape," that firewood is a necessary part of our local economy and a renewable heating source that grows in our area. There were also comments noting that wood processing is an activity that keeps many local people employed.

#### EV CHARGING STATION

This question raised the least number of concerns. In general, respondents were supportive of stations with some basic regulation about signage, lighting, and that the town doesn't foot the bill for the electricity used.

A few commented about why the town would support EV stations for such a small population of users when the majority of people in town use gas powered vehicles and have no where to buy gas.

## VILLAGE DESIGNATION

The responses to this question were wide ranging. Many didn't feel they knew enough about the designation or what would be required of the town, so didn't have much to contribute. Others felt strongly that seeking designation could be helpful in creating more of a "town center" with resources for people, perhaps in a walkable community (i.e. sidewalks, community center, eldercare services, local store, etc.).

Again there were also responses indicating additional state level designations would not be helpful for our small town and energy would be better focused on other projects.

## CANNABIS

The majority of respondents are supportive of cannabis/marijuana growth. Sales are more controversial and fewer people were in support of a retail outlet in the town. However, most stated that if the product is legal in the state and can be a useful crop for farmers to add to their income, then the town should not stand in the way. Several commented that the market will determine what's needed and it is likely retail cannabis stores would be in larger towns to the north or south of Starksboro.

## LOCAL PRODUCTS

This question brought a wide variety of responses. The most common theme was a differentiation between food products (particularly produce and meat) vs. products that need manufacturing. Respondents tended to see local foods in a smaller radius than other products. The average radius seems to be the 5-Town area and Addison County. Some people were more expansive and regard all Vermont products as local. Others include NY and NH or a 50-100 mile geographic radius.