



**Town of Hinesburg  
Planning & Zoning Department  
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October 4, 2018

Hinesburg Landowner:

**You are receiving this letter because the Planning Commission is considering a proposal that could affect your property.**

**The Planning Commission would like your feedback on possible revisions to a land use regulation called the Official Map.** In 2009, the Town adopted an Official Map that identifies the locations of possible future community facilities – e.g., sidewalks, parks, roads, etc. It is a planning and regulatory tool that provides a clear picture of the Town’s plans to property owners, developers, and the public. You can find the current Official Map as well as a three-page overview about how Official maps work on the Town website at <http://www.hinesburg.org/regulations.html>.

The 2009 Official Map is still in force, but needs to be revised. Many community facilities have been built since 2009 – e.g., sidewalks, Bissonette Recreation Area, etc. The plans for other community facilities have changed, and several new community facilities are envisioned. Based on our experience over the last 10 years, the Commission would also like to add more specificity to the map – i.e., be clearer about what each facility is envisioned to be. See the enclosed draft map and community facility descriptions for what is being considered. This is simply a draft. The Commission wants landowner and community feedback before finalizing an actual proposal.

### **Why does this matter to me?**

- Knowing the location of future community facilities can help you craft a better plan for your property.
- If you choose to develop your property, your plan must leave room for future community facilities shown on the Official Map.

### **How does it work?**

The most common use is in development review. If the landowner or developer can demonstrate that the proposed development will leave room for the planned community facility, the development may be approved per the normal review process. Minor revisions to the Official Map can be made as part of the development review process. If the proposed development does not accommodate the planned community facility (for example, proposing buildings that block a future road corridor), the application must be denied. The Town then has 120 days from the date of the denial to institute proceedings to acquire the property for fair market value. If the Town does not take action within that time, the application must be reviewed again with no regard to official map designation.

## How do I provide input?

- Contact me via email, phone, letter, or in person at the Town Office. I am here to answer questions and provide more background. I am happy to meet with you at a time and place that works for you. I will bring your feedback to the Planning Commission.
- Attend an upcoming Planning Commission meeting for discussion and to give your feedback to the Commission in person. Fall Planning Commission meetings are currently scheduled for October 10, October 24, November 14, November 28. Meetings are at the Town Office and start at 7pm.

## What happens from here?

*Tentative time horizon and required steps – subject to change:*

- October & November 2018 - Landowner and community feedback
- December 2018 – Planning Commission discussion and revisions
- Early 2019 (likely January-March):
  - Public hearing on Planning Commission proposal
  - Planning Commission makes any final revisions and forwards proposal to the Select Board
- 2019 (potentially March-April):
  - Select Board discussion and possible revisions
  - Public hearing on Select Board proposal
  - Adoption by the Select Board

## Does this mean the Town is going to buy my property?

Not necessarily. Having an Official Map element designated on your property means that the Town is planning a future community facility, and is interested in working with you to see if it can happen. It could include the Town offering to buy a portion of your property. It could mean the Town buying an easement or some other limited interest in the property. A property owner might also decide to offer that portion of the property to the Town for a variety of reasons: to benefit the landowner's development project, to help the Town move forward with the community facility, to reduce the landowner's property taxes and maintenance costs, etc.

The Official Map doesn't commit the Town to purchasing your property. It simply informs everyone of the potential for a community facility, and establishes a process by which the Town has to make a decision if you propose a development. Creating new community facilities takes time, funding, and public input. The Official Map ensures critical locations are not lost to the Town as property is developed, but it also ensures that landowners can proceed with development of these locations if the Town fails to act in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

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