

SECTION 203: ZONING DISTRICT PURPOSES

The following section describes the purpose for each zoning district.

Village Districts

The Village Districts, consisting of South Hero Village and Keeler Bay Village, encompass the traditional village centers in South Hero consisting of a concentration of residential, commercial and public land uses at higher densities than other parts of town. Commercial and mixed use development is encouraged to be located in the Village Districts and encouraged to be designed and sited to further traditional village center characteristics such as walkable, pedestrian friendly streets, sidewalks and walkways; human-scale buildings with architectural details, landscaping and lighting; an integrated street network; shops and services intermixed with homes; a variety of commercial establishments from retail shops to home businesses, professional offices, and tourist services; places for the community to gather for social and cultural events; small, low impact industry; and government services. Historic buildings are a significant contributor to village character and should be preserved when possible. New development shall be consistent in siting and scale with the surrounding historic structures in the villages.

South Hero Village District

The South Hero Village District is the Town's historic village center, with the intersection of Route 2 and South Street at its center. Despite the limitation on development density due to the current unavailability of municipal or community scale sewer and water supply infrastructure, it is South Hero's goal to continue to grow this village as the community's center consistent with its traditional character. Enhancing the pedestrian friendly streetscape is a high priority in the South Hero Village District.

Keeler Bay Village District

The Keeler Bay Village District encompasses the historic settlement of Keeler Bay centered around the intersection of Route 2 and Route 314. The District serves as a small community center in addition to serving commuters and tourists using the Lake Champlain Ferry accessed off Route 314. New development will be required to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian access and landscaping to improve the district's pedestrian friendliness and soften the landscape. While there is limited Fire District water available in the district, Keeler Bay Village does not have municipal or community scale sewer infrastructure.

Rural Residential District

The purpose of the Rural Residential District is to provide for rural residential and business land uses at lower densities than the village centers to preserve the traditional working landscape and to maintain South Hero's rural character. Rural residential, small-scale commercial and light industrial land uses are balanced with the natural landscape of meadowlands, agricultural fields, wetlands and Lake Champlain views. Home-based occupations and agricultural related enterprises are common throughout the Rural Residential District.

Shoreland District

The Shoreland District includes land within 500 horizontal feet measured from the mean water level on the shoreline of Lake Champlain within the Town of South Hero (95.5 feet above sea level). The purpose of this district is to carefully evaluate development in order to protect water quality, scenic beauty and to control development along public waters in the best interest of the community. Some parcels or portions of parcels within this district may be limited in their suitability for development.

Conservation District

The purpose of this district is to permit limited development and uses that respect the natural environment. Included are areas of state identified wetlands, floodplain and other sensitive resources as identified in the South Hero Town Plan with limited suitability for development.

Flood Hazard Overlay Districts

Special Flood Hazard Area

The purpose of this district is to minimize and prevent the loss of life and property, the disruption of commerce, the impairment of the tax base, and the extraordinary public expenditures and demands on public service that result from flooding, erosion hazards, and other natural or human-made hazards. The purpose of this district is also to ensure that the design and construction of development in flood and other hazard areas are accomplished in a manner that minimizes or eliminates the potential for flood and loss or damage to life and property. Designation of this district is also required for continued town eligibility in the National Flood Insurance Program. Included are all areas in the town identified as areas of flood hazard on the National Flood Insurance maps which are hereby adopted by reference and declared to be part of these regulations.

• River Corridor Area

In Vermont, most flood-related damage occurs outside the Special Flood Hazard Areas, much of which is due to the erosive power of water causing damage to critical public infrastructure such as roads and stream-crossings. Homes, businesses, and community buildings have also been damaged by flooding-related erosion. Where stream meanders are confined by human activity, streams lose their equilibrium and become steepened, straighter and more powerful. The more powerful the flooding stream the higher the risk for damage. The purpose of the zone is to identify the space a river needs to re-establish and maintain stable "equilibrium" conditions. In other words, if the river

has access to floodplain and meander area within this corridor, the dangers of flood erosion can be reduced over time.
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