

Maintain the Rural Character of the Town of South Bristol

The rural character of the Town of South Bristol is one of the most notable aspects of this community. Keeping it as is can only be achieved through community vigilance and proper zoning.

Action Plans

- Ensure that commercial and residential development are of a scale that is in harmony with the surrounding neighborhoods and that maintain the rural character of the Town
- Protect Canandaigua Lake and its watershed and continue to support the implementation of the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Management Plan.
- Identify important scenic vistas, forestlands/natural features, and the rural landscapes that define the Town's character to give direction to changes in the Town's Planning and Zoning Regulations.
- Continue to encourage the preservation of our open, unspoiled, and uncluttered spaces.
- Support agriculture and farming throughout the Town subject to the provisions of Article 25-AA of the NYS Ag and Markets Law. Also support applicable county agricultural and farmland protection plans as created under Article 25-AAA of the NYS Ag and Markets Law.
- Update existing land use regulations (zoning map, zoning code, subdivision regulations, etc.) as necessary to be consistent with the goals of this plan and maintain the rural character of the Town.
 - Identify provisions in these regulation that lead to development or redevelopment that are inconsistent with maintaining the rural character, historic resources, protection of open space and agricultural resources, and environmental quality.
 - Identify planning and zoning tool options for addressing identified inconsistencies.
- A Short-Term Rental Law was enacted in the Town of South Bristol to support the best uses for lands within the Township that would be in accordance with the Town of South Bristol Comprehensive Plan
 - Based on the study of short-term rental markets around the country and the input from public forums, a committee was formed in the Township to consider areas of concern with the existing law that were revealed during the permitting process of obtaining a permit for short-term rentals.
 - Consider the booming short-term rental market and its positive and negative impacts on the community.
 - Propose ways to streamline the application process
 - Determine if changes to the law would better serve the goals outlined in the Town's Comprehensive plan.

- Research short-time rentals across the country to come with best methods of regulating short-time rentals within the Township of South Bristol.
- Public forum meetings were held by the committee within the Township, where the committee outlined several short-term rental options for changing the law and to take suggestions from residents and owners about short-term rentals in the town and how to improve the law.
- Owners who addressed the committee expressed they had no issue with reasonable regulations and wanted stronger enforcement to deal with problem renters and owners.
- All owners were vested in preserving the value of their investments and preventing degradation by a problem renter. All participants were interested in a law that allowed them to operate their rental profitably.
- The committee recognizes that there are positive impacts of short-term rentals, which include promotion of tourism, support of local businesses, trade, labor, service workers and increased local sales tax revenue.
- The committee also recognized that short-term rentals can negatively impact the town such as a decrease in availability of affordable housing, degradation of the water quality of Canandaigua Lake and associated watersheds, loss of rural character, peace and quiet that Town Residents treasure and wish to protect as noted in the Town of South Bristol's Comprehensive Plan Survey results from Town Residents.
- The committee re-drafted the short-term rental law so that it would not interfere with the goals of the residents of the Town of South Bristol, as set forth in the Comprehensive plan, namely enhancing the identity of the Town, maintaining the rural character of the Town, ensuring that future generations will desire to live in the town.
- Due to the negative impacts identified by the committee, and keeping with and maintaining the rural character of the Town of South Bristol, it has been determined that the number of short-term rental permits shall be limited or capped with a number to be determined and documented in the short-term rental regulations.
- It is also recognized that the short-term rental law has a significant impact on the Town of South Bristol Code Enforcement office and associated staff, which hampers its ability to perform all the work tasks that fall within its jurisdiction.
- Supporting environmental stewardship, preserving and protecting scenic vistas and supporting local businesses and their development.