

Community Profile

Wilmington Town, Windham County

Prepared for the Citizens of Wilmington Town

by

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Just as a community is never finished modifying, adapting and organizing its natural, political and social environment, an attempt to profile those dynamic processes must be a work in process. Materials below a

ions, inaccuracies and errors of fact.

SECTION 1. TOWN ORGANIZATION

The option to settle Wilmington was originally granted by N.H. Governor Benning Wentworth on April 29th, 1731. Wentworth chartered Marlboro, a town adjacent to the east, on the same day. The French and Indian Wars and other factors slowed settler mobilization, and the area was not significantly inhabited within the specified five year period. Wentworth granted the land for a second time, 12 years later on June 17th, 1763. Recipients of the second grant were entirely different from the initial grantees and included some of Massachusetts' most distinguished fd f

What is in a name?

The original grant creating this town gave it the name of Wilmington in honor of the English nobleman, Spencer Compton, first Earl of Wilmington (1673-1743). Compton had held various offices and for a brief time had been England's Prime Minister. It is likely that Compton's influence helped earn Wentworth the colonial governorship of New Hampshire in 1741. However, the second group of grantees, with strong Massachusetts allegiances, introduced the name Draper for the second grant, thereby honoring John and Richard Draper, well know father and son printers from Boston. John Draper (the father) had become publisher of New England's oldest newspaper the NewsLetter, and after his death, son Richard expanded it into the *Massachusetts Gazette* and the *Weekly NewsLetter*.

Ironically, subsequent settlers didn't like the Draper name and began calling it Wilmington. No official action has ever been made but the name Wilmington has been established through custom as opposed to law.

Historical Chronology

1731 - Initial granting of this area by New Hampshire's Governor Benning Wentworth in April.

1813 - Frank Hastings Hamilton is born in Wilmington. Hamilton went on to serve as a surgeon in the Civil War and later organized the U.S. General Hospital in New York. He was President James Garfield's personal doctor.

The Civil War leaves one in ten Vermont farms vacant. In the period following the war, Swedes move to Wilmington, Weston and Vershire to work on farms.

1921 - The Harriman Dam is built and forms Lake Whitingham, which becomes the largest body of water entirely within the state's boundaries.

1964 - Haystack Ski Area is built.

2001 - The VT Council of Rural Develop

SECTION 2. HUMAN RESOURCES

No single indicator is as powerful as the population measures. The number of people in a place relates critically to the carrying capacity of the locale as well as to the “density of acquaintanceship,” and thus to the very heart of life quality and social interaction. The 2000 census materials show a steady growth rate for Wilmington, yet having been recently released, yield little detail to compare changes in this place over the past decades. Tables and graphics presented below will be reinterpreted in the light of additional 2000 census information but are provided for your perusal as we await the final tallies.

Table 2.1- Wilmington Population Characteristics – one interesting note on this table is the fact that Wilmington’s population in 2000 (2,225) already exceeds the 1993 estimate for the year 2015 (2,084).

Total Population, 1990	1,968
Total Population, 2000	2,225
Absolute Population Change, 1990-2000	257
Percent Population Change, 1990-2000	13.1%
Population Projection for year 2015, 1993 est.	2,084
Persons per Square Mile, 1990	49.2
Persons per Square Mile, 2000	55.6
Percent Urban, 1990 & 2000	0.0%
Percent Rural, 1990 & 2000	100.0%
Percent Rural Farm, 1990	1.6%
Percent Dependent, 1990 (persons under 18 and over 65)	33.4%
Percent Native Born, 1990	42.3%
Percent Reporting French or French Canadian Ancestry, 1990	19.2%

sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing 1980, 1990, 2000
 crs.uvm.edu
 Vermont Place-Names: Footprints of History, Esther M. Swift, Brattleboro, VTS. Green Press, 1977.
 Vermont YearBook, Chester, VT: The YearBook
 U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1980, 1990
 Vermont Department of Health, 1997
 Vermont Health Care Authority, 1993
 Preliminary Census 2000 Release(s)

Table 2.2- Components of Population Change

Period	Initial Pop.	Absolute Change	Percent Change
1970-1980	1586.0	+ 222	14%
1980-1990	1808.0	+ 160	9%
1990-2000	1968.0	+ 257	13%

Period	Net Migrants	% Population change due to Net Migration
1970-1980	127.0	8.01%
1980-1990	-33.0	-1.83%

Period	Births	Deaths	Increase	% Population change due to natural increase
1970-1980	253.0	158.0	95.0	5.99%
1980-1990	330.0	137.0	193.0	10.7
1990-2000	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 2.4- Housing & Family Characteristics

Number of Families, 1990	499
Number of Households, 1990	803
Total Children in Single Parent Families, 1990	81
Total Housing Units, 1990	2176
Total Increase in Housing Units, 1960-1990	1,653
Number of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 1990	505
Number of Renter-Occupied Housing Units, 1990	291
Median Housing Unit Value, 1990	\$110,600
Median Rent, 1990	437
Median Gross Rent as % of Household Income, 1990	26.0%

sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990
crs.uvm.edu

Table 4.1- Natural Resources and Geographical Features

Land Area (acres)	26,023
Land Area (square miles)	39.9
Water Area (square miles)	1.9
Percent Conserved Lands, 1999	9.1%
Change in Forest Land to Developed Land, 1970-90 (acres)	122.5
Change in Forest Land to Non-Forested Land, 1970-90 (acres)	12.0
Change in Non-Forested Land to Developed Land, 1970-90 (acres)	3.8

source: crs.uvm.edu

Protection Efforts in Wilmington

The Forest Service cannot buy or sell land but is capable of swapping. The agency exchanged 6 parcels during 1986-87 and has probably done much more since then. The largest parcel swap through 1989 was the exchange of 700 acres of the former Martin farm in Rochester for 231 acres at Haystack Ski Area in Wilmington. The other

Major Jonathan Childs was a Revolutionary War hero, who no doubt set a tough standard for his progeny, many of which are still prominent in the life of the town.

SECTION 7. ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The following tables and graphs contain information on transportation, taxes, and countywide population trends.