

## Meet

**Lori Hirshfield**  
Town Planning &  
Development Director

**Age:** 54

**Current Hometown:**  
Windsor, VT

**Other Jobs Held:** Neighborhood  
Conservation Program  
Coordinator, Community  
Development Planner, Researcher

**Hobbies/Interests:** cooking,  
gardening, pottery, biking

**Strengths:** outgoing, optimistic,  
ability to think on my feet and  
see the bigger picture,  
organizer; multitasking,  
communication skills



Photo: Geoff Hansen

### **How do you use your strengths in your job?**

I work with a variety of people, businesses and property owners. Because I spend a lot of time building agreement among often diverse opinions, it's helpful to have patience, perseverance, and to be able to communicate effectively how the current activities fit in with the bigger picture.

### **What was your biggest learning challenge in school?**

School work was never easy for me, and I had to work so much harder than my sister to get good grades. I had trouble remembering some things and couldn't spell for beans. I would devise little tricks to help me remember.

### **What motivates you to go to work?**

What I love about my job is working with people to set in motion the future of their community. When I ask people: "What do you want to see when you walk down the street in 20 years", it opens up so many more possibilities than having a problem and trying to fix it. I guess it all boils down to making a difference in their lives and the community as a whole.

### **Every job has specific skills. What do you need in yours?**

Having a degree in community planning gave me a good foundation in the basic elements of land use planning and development that I draw upon all the time. Every aspect of my job involves working with people, so having good people and communication skills are essential. I also need to have good management skills and the ability to develop and execute a budget. In general, I try to do my job according to a few simple mottos: 1) What looks like a curse is a blessing. 2) It never hurts to ask. 3) Saying you're sorry is easier than trying not to. It also helps to not take life too seriously.

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