

2014 Regional Plan Updates

First Round of Public Hearings

Town Office, Bethel, Vermont—April 30, 2014

Present:

Carla Hodgdon (Bethel)
Bill Emmons (Pomfret)
Peter Gregory (TRORC)
Kevin Geiger (TRORC)
Samantha Holcomb (TRORC)
Ellie Ray (TRORC)

The public hearing was called to order at 6:39pm.

All present were asked to introduce themselves.

TRORC staff introduced the purpose of the meeting and briefly explained the work that had been done in the Regional Plan update process. Staff explained that comments would be collected at the hearing, but they could also be submitted to up to two weeks after the date of the hearing.

TRORC staff turned the meeting over to the attendees, asking them for their comments.

Carla Hodgdon (Bethel) submitted the following comments:

- Regarding the Housing Chapter: The problem with fair/affordable housing is the public's perception of it—affordable housing refers to a percentage of a person's income, and not necessarily the fact that the person or family is low income. The Housing Chapter did a good job of discussing this perception. In Bethel, some families own their manufactured home, but cannot afford the land to place it on, so, there are issues that go beyond simply owning one's home. In reference to a specific policy, Ms. Hodgdon questioned how the regional planning commission would assist with water and sewer improvement projects. She also noted, in response to another policy, that rehabilitating the second or third floors of old buildings, while it provides benefits to the community, is very expensive to bring the building and spaces up to code.
- Regarding the Child Care Services Section: The State of Vermont needs to push employers to provide child care services on site, or encourage multiple businesses to work together and collectively offer child care to their employees. Ms. Hodgdon used the Bethel-based company, G.W. Plastics, as an example of a company where employees could benefit from their employer providing child care.
- Regarding the Flood Resilience Chapter: The Third Branch of the White River flows through Randolph and Bethel, not Pittsfield, as stated in the Chapter.

After all comments from the attendees were recorded, TRORC staff explained that there would be additional updates to the Regional Plan, which would be ready for public comment in 2015.

TRORC staff asked if there were any lingering comments or questions; there were none.

The public hearing adjourned at 7:14pm.