

TRORC Board Meeting

Thompson Senior Center, Woodstock, VT

December 14, 2016 -Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Name	Town	12/14/16	10/26/16	9/28/16	7/27/16	6/22/16	5/25/16
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard		X	X		X	X
Carl Russell	Bethel	X		X		X	
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X	X		X	X	X
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)						
Mark Bannon	Braintree			X	X		
Malcolm Fitzpatrick	Braintree (Alt)			X			
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater	X	X	X		X	
Dee Montie	Brookfield		X	X		X	
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield (Alt)	X					
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea		X	X		X	X
Vacant	Corinth					X	X
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X	X	X		X	X
Mark Belisle	Granville	X	X	X	X	X	X
Monica Collins	Hancock					X	
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford	X	X		X	X	X
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)	X	X		X	X	X
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X	X	X			X
Richard Waddell	Hartland (Alt)				X		
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury		X	X	X	X	X
Jeff Goodrich	Norwich	X					
Matt Corron	Pittsfield						
Anne Brown	Plymouth			X	X		X
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ramsey Papp	Randolph	X	X	X		X	
Winston Sadoo	Randolph (Alt)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Larry Straus	Rochester			X			
David Brandau	Royalton					X	
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X	X		X	X	X
Peter Anderson	Sharon	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bill Edgerton	Stockbridge						
Steve Campbell	Strafford	X	X	X			X
Vacant	Thetford				X	X	
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)					X	
Jim Bulger	Topsham		X				
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge	X	X	X		X	
Bill Baylis	Vershire					X	
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X				X	
Don Bourdon	Woodstock	X	X	X	X	X	X
UVLSRPC	At-Large					X	
Jennifer Colby	At-Large			X		X	
Ken Alton	At-Large		X	X	X	X	X
Andrew Winter	At-Large		X				

Staff: Chris Damiani, Pete Fellows, Kevin Geiger, Dee Gish, Tory Levite, Lorelee Morrow, Chris Sargent, Michael Storace, Ben Wood

Guests: none

1. Call To Order/Agenda Changes/Public Comments:

Chair Bill Emmons convened the Board meeting at 6:32 p.m. A quorum was declared. There were no public comments. Tory Levite distributed Commissioner handbooks.

2. Public Hearing – Town Plan Approvals for Pomfret and Brookfield:

Chair Bill Emmons convened the public hearing for the Pomfret and Brookfield Town Plan approvals. Lorelee Morrow noted that through a municipal planning grant, the Town of Pomfret did an extensive re-write to the Plan, working through the recommendations of the Enhanced Consultation. Chris Damiani noted that the Town of Brookfield also worked on a major overhaul of the Brookfield Plan and added Flood Resiliency and Energy chapters. Both Lorelee and Chris noted that the towns need work on their Energy plans.

Steve Campbell noted his concern that as Strafford nears the release of their Town Plan revisions, that the energy chapter will not be sufficient for Act 174. Steve proposes a generic energy chapter for the Plan with the provision to review just that chapter in the next two or three years. Chris Sargent and Lorelee Morrow noted that the Strafford Town Plan is going well and that Act 174 enhanced energy planning is optional.

Peter Berger noted his concern that enhanced energy chapters are moving from a planning and visionary document to a regulatory document.

Chairman Emmons closed the hearing.

3. Public Hearing – Confirmation Action for Pomfret and Brookfield per 24 VSA, Section 4350:

There were no comments during this public hearing.

4. Pomfret and Brookfield Town Plan Approval and Confirmation:

A motion to approve the Pomfret Town Plan was made by Bushrod Powers and seconded by Mark Belisle. Approved.

A motion to approve the Brookfield Town Plan was made by Peter Berger and seconded by Bushrod Powers. Approved.

A motion was made by Nancy Jones and seconded by Peter Berger to confirm the planning process for Pomfret and Brookfield. Approved.

5. Approval of October TRORC Board Minutes:

A motion was made by Nancy Jones and seconded by Mark Belisle to approve the October TRORC Board Minutes. Approved.

6. Acceptance of the unaudited October and November Financial Reports:

A motion was made by Ramsey Papp and seconded by Bushrod Powers to accept the October and November Financial reports. Dee Gish noted that the long standing receivables from Woodstock and Hancock will be coming soon, since state payments and contracts are on their way. TRORC continues to upgrade computer and software equipment, so expenses are higher than budgeted on the expense summary. Accepted.

7. TRORC Brownfields Program Overview and Approval of New Site Access Form:

Kevin Geiger gave a presentation of the TRORC Brownfields program and noted that TRORC is currently working under its sixth Brownfields grant from the EPA. A motion was made by Jeff Goodrich and seconded by Bushrod Powers to approve the new Site Access Form. Lori Hirshfield asked if the form had been reviewed by an attorney or by the state, and asked why this form needed Board approval, as she noted changing this form is more procedural. Kevin responded that the form had been reviewed by both the EPA and Downs, Rachlin, Martin attorneys, and that prior Site Access forms had also come before the Board. Bill Emmons thanked Lori for the question and noted that for transparency sake, the form can come before the Board. Approved.

8. TRORC Regional Plan chapter Review – Forestry and Rural Areas:

Kevin Geiger began a discussion about Rural and Resource and Conservation Area portions of the Land Use chapter in the Regional Plan. Commissioner questions and discussion followed.

Lynne Bertram asked why TRORC and the State are involved in telling land owners how to manage forest land. Kevin pointed out that the RPCs have a statutory directive to identify areas to maintain forest blocks. Lori Hirshfield noted her concerns that land use planning takes a great deal of time. Lori noted Hartford has been looking at forest and habitat blocks for years and trying to write appropriate policies and procedures to support local development patterns. Carl Russell noted that we need to consider ecological factors to maintain healthy ecosystems. Carl also warned that some current forest practices aren't managed to support the principles of forest blocks. Steve Campbell noted that the rural area maps are not helpful in light of the New Vistas idea. Kevin noted that towns can identify preferred areas for development and preferred areas for forests.

A discussion ensued regarding density, lot sizes and zoning. Kevin outlined some draft policies. Steve Campbell voiced his concern over the use of words like "shall" and "must" in Regional and State plans, since there is the potential for conflict, with local wishes being over-ridden with impacts on local cultural and property values. Chris Sargent noted that in Act 250, decisions will defer to the local plan barring unusual circumstances. Nancy Jones wondered why the four towns involved with New Vistas wouldn't want some type of regional protection from large-scale development. Nancy Jones also asked about the impervious surface restriction to one acre.

Kevin noted that informational meetings on the Land Use chapter are scheduled for January and February. Lori asked who decided not to extend the Regional Plan approval date? The Board had not previously directed a delay in adoption. Chris Sargent described the current proposed schedule for Regional Plan adoption and noted the need to move swiftly on the Energy chapter so that towns can seek Act 174 certifications through TRORC if desired. Steve Campbell noted that this was an aggressive schedule and also suggested that Commission meetings do not include guest speakers so that the Board can focus on the Land Use chapter. Carl noted it was important to take enough time for a more comprehensive discussion.

Carl Russell made a motion for the Board to hold two meetings in January to discuss the Energy and Land Use chapters. Seconded by Michael Sacca. Approved.

Lori Hirshfield made a motion to work toward, to the best of the Boards' ability, a June adoption for the Implementation, Definition, Energy, and Health chapters of the Regional Plan. Seconded by Don Bourdon. Approved.

A Doodle poll will be sent to Commissioners to select dates for the second TRORC January meeting.

9. Staff/Commissioner Updates:

Due to time constraints, there were no Staff/Commissioner updates.

10. Adjournment – 8:32 pm:

A motion to adjourn was made by Bruce Riddle. Meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25th at the Thompson Senior Center in Woodstock. Commissioners will be notified of additional meeting times and places.

Minutes Prepared By Dee Gish – December 15, 2016.