

TRORC Board Meeting

Thompson Senior Center, Woodstock, Vermont

May 23, 2018 – Board Meeting Minutes

Attendance:							
Name	Town	5/23/18	4/25/18	3/28/18	2/28/18	1/24/18	12/13/17
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard	X	X	X	X	X	
Carl Russell	Bethel					X	X
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X	X			X	X
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)					X	X
VACANT	Braintree						
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater					X	
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield			X	X	X	X
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea	X		X		X	
Tim O'Dell	Corinth	X	X	X	X	X	
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X	X			X	X
Mark Belisle	Granville		X	X	X	X	X
Monica Collins	Hancock			X			X
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford	X	X	X		X	X
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)		X	X	X	X	
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X	X		X	X	X
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jeff Goodrich	Norwich			X	X	X	
Herb Kuendig	Pittsfield		X		X		
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	
Anni Mackay	Rochester	X			X	X	X
Doon Hinderyckx	Rochester (Alt)	X					
David Brandau	Royalton		X				X
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X	X	X		X	
Peter Anderson	Sharon		X			X	X
Deb Jones	Sharon (Alt)				X		
Bill Edgerton	Stockbridge						
Steve Campbell	Strafford	X	X	X		X	X
Stuart Rogers	Thetford		X	X			
Jim Bulger	Topsham			X	X		X
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge	X				X	X
Bill Baylis	Vershire						
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X			X	X	X
Don Bourdon	Woodstock	X	X	X		X	X
Steve Schneider	At-Large	X	X	X	X	X	
Jennifer Colby	At-Large				X		X
Ken Alton	At-Large	X	X	X		X	
Andrew Winter	At-Large	X	X		X	X	

Staff: Kevin Geiger, Dee Gish, Peter Gregory.

Guests: none

1. Call to Order and Public Comments:

Chair Bill Emmons convened the Board meeting at 6:35 p.m. A quorum was declared after roll call. There were no public comments.

2. Approval of April 25, 2018 TRORC Board Minutes:

A motion was made by Bushrod Powers and seconded by Peter Berger to approve the April Board Minutes. It was noted that Andrew Winter attended the April meeting but was not listed on the attendance. Unanimously approved.

3. Acceptance of the April, 2018 TRORC Financial Reports:

A motion was made by Jerry Fredrickson and seconded by Carl Pepperman to accept the April financial reports. Peter reported that we are close to the end of the fiscal year and everything looks good financially. The quarter ending June 30 will have a lot of billing. There are variances from the budget with regards to the buyouts and the buyouts should end this December. VHCB buyout funding should get a new contract with a longer life. The hope is to keep the home buyout infrastructure ready in Montpelier for the next emergency. The FY19 balanced budget will be down by around \$1 million from the FY18 budget due to the end of the buyouts. The 501(c)3 and its impact on the budget will be discussed at the Annual Meeting. Accepted unanimously.

4. TRORC Regional Plan Rural Areas and Forest-based Resource Areas Chapter Review discussion:

Kevin Geiger led the discussion and highlighted the fact that 90% of the TRORC region's land is affected by these two sub-chapters. Kevin noted that when looking at the "consistency test" between the Regional Plan and Town Plans, the Plans do not have to match exactly, the Town Plan just can't be going in the opposite direction. Therefore, concerns about RPC approval of Town Plans when there is inconsistency are not likely to occur, and Town Plans just need to be moving in the right direction.

Michael Sacca asked if there was a state definition of rural area and Lori Hirshfield noted it would be helpful to have such a definition. Kevin noted that no, there is not state definition. With Act 250 there is a "existing settlement" area definition. Kevin noted that TRORC could break the definition of Rural Areas into a couple of definition categories. Lori also voiced concern that the Regional Plan is imposing densities that would be counter to the Hartford Town Plan, since Hartford separated density from lot size and went through a thoughtful planning process that should be respected (Page 4, Policy 2). Kevin noted that the Regional Plan does not impose standards on town zoning, but will add a graphic around density to help with understanding. Kevin noted

there are only a few examples of conservation subdivisions (Cobb Hill) and that this draft added policies on resource-based and land intensive commercial uses on Page 4.

Frank Tegethoff believes that line 9 on page 3 Rural Areas reads like a policy and infers a "shall." Don Bourdon noted that adaptive reuse is healthy. Peter Gregory noted that a qualifier on line 9 like "minimize visual change" would be better. Lori requested that line 18 on Page 4 of Rural Areas include description of "too intensive" to add things like noise, traffic and light pollution. Nancy Malmquist requested that "undue adverse" be added to "impacts" in Policy 5 on page 4. It was noted by Commissioners that local zoning can be helpful and towns should be encouraged to use zoning effectively or to adopt zoning if they don't have it. Steve Campbell believes that Policy 9 on Page 4 reads like "shalls." Andrew Winter noted that there is a qualifier to Policy 9 that says "substantially satisfy the following" and Don noted that this policy has been in the Plan for a long time. Frank would like "natural environmental features" on Line 5, Page 6 defined, or can say "as defined in Town Plans." Kevin noted that the policy seemed vague to him. Nancy Jones would like a recommendation added on forest blocks.

Peter Berger noted that Lake Morey is not defined as a watershed in any of the maps of the Forest-based Resource Areas chapter. Lori asked if it were possible to create an overlay map with districts. Kevin noted that maps in the draft come from Vermont BioFinder and the maps are a starting point and will be refined after looking at Town Plan maps. It was suggested that line 16 on Page 4 be changed to "Conservation and management plans..." and that line 21 be changed to "primitive" camps from "noncommercial seasonal." Doon would like biking to be added to Policy 6 on Page 4. Don noted that Policy 6 only applies to public sales, not private. Carl Pepperman noted that Policy 12 on Page 4 seemed exclusive as people define outdoor recreation and motorized vehicles differently and that we would not want to rule out a large section of the population. Mountain biking should also be included. Frank Tegethoff will provide language ideas from Newbury and Kevin noted that more work will be done to clarify this policy. Michael Sacca suggested adding language from the Rural chapter to #10 on Page 4 "projects that would require the paving of roads are not appropriate in forest-based..." Lori had a concern with defining acre lots on #11 Page 4. Nancy Jones would like to add that TRORC encourage towns to adopt zoning and to educate towns on the value of forest lands. Lori asked about the timeline of the Regional Plan. Kevin noted that the TRORC won't meet again until September, at which time, maps will be ready. There will be some back and forth over the summer with Towns.

5. TRORF update:

Peter Gregory reported that the TRORF has been established in Vermont and the application and fees for the 501(c)3 designation as a non-profit have been sent to the IRS. TRORC has talked about seeding the TRORF with some of TRORC reserve funds and this will be discussed in the fall after the 501(c)3 is established. Peter asked Commissioners to consider how much they thought might be appropriate.

6. Staff/Commissioner Updates:

Peter reported that the Vermont Legislature has approved a measure so that the RPCs can invest reserves the same way municipalities do. Peter will be bringing forward an Investment Policy for the Board's consideration. Steve Schneider wants to be sure that the Board is not responsible for poor investment decisions. Peter also noted that funding for the water bill has been punted and that the state budget was vetoed. This may delay some of TRORC contract payments. There is a 20MW solar project in Randolph Center that will submit its Certificate of Public Good (CPG) application soon. The developer, NextEra is willing to discuss this project with the Board. Nancy Malmquist noted that she is representing NextEra as an attorney and will recuse herself from any decisions regarding the project. Peter noted that TRORC staff are working on road and culvert inventory projects and that Grants-In-Aid letters went out to towns. Peter also noted that Chris Rimmer, Executive Director of Vermont Ecostudies will be the guest speaker at the June Annual Meeting. Peter reported that Kent McFarland, also of Vermont Ecostudies has agreed to be the TRORC At-Large member for Conservation. Michael Sacca reported that a non-binding resolution opposing the New Vistas development passed in the House.

7. Adjourn:

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.
Minutes prepared by Dee Gish 5/25/18