

TRORC Board Meeting October 31, 2018 – Board Meeting Minutes

Thompson Senior Center, Woodstock, Vermont

Attendance:

Name	Town	10/31/18	9/25/18	6/27/18	5/23/18	4/25/18	3/28/18
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard	X	X	X	X	X	X
Carl Russell	Bethel	X	X				
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X	X	X	X	X	
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)	X	X				
VACANT	Braintree						
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater	X		X			
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield		X	X			X
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea		X	X	X		X
Tim O'Dell	Corinth	X	X	X	X	X	X
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X	X	X	X	X	
Mark Belisle	Granville		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	X
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X	X	X	X	X	
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jeff Goodrich	Norwich						X
Herb Kuendig	Pittsfield		X	X		X	
Anne Brown	Plymouth	X	X			X	
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X	X	X	X	X	X
Phil Dechert	Pomfret (Alt)	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	X	X	X		
David Brandau	Royalton	X		X		X	
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Peter Anderson	Sharon	X	X	X		X	
Deb Jones	Sharon (Alt)						
Bill Edgerton	Stockbridge						
Steve Campbell	Strafford			X	X	X	X
Stuart Rogers	Thetford		X			X	X
Jim Bulger	Topsham		X				X
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge			X	X		
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)	X	X				
Bill Baylis	Vershire			X			
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	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	X	X
Kent McFarland	At-Large		X	X			
Andrew Winter	At-Large		X	X	X	X	

Staff: Dee Gish, Paige Greenfield, Peter Gregory, Jessica Richter

Guests: none

1. Call to Order and Public Comments:

Chair Jerry Fredrickson convened the Board Meeting at 6:37 p.m. A quorum was declared after roll call. There were no public comments.

2. Public Hearing – Town Plan Approvals for Bridgewater:

Peter Gregory noted that the current Bridgewater Town Plan was improved from the 2013 Plan. The new plan includes all of the statutorily required elements and also includes an unrequired chapter on health and wellness. There are areas that will need enhancement in future plans including expanding the sections concerned with unemployment, basin plans, child care, mobile homes and energy implementation. Expanding these areas would make a stronger plan, but the current Plan is not deficient.

The hearing was closed.

3. Action on Town Plan Approvals for Bridgewater:

A motion was made by Nancy Jones and seconded by Don Bourdon to approve the Bridgewater Town Plan. Peter Anderson asked whether, with regard to the child care section, if any towns have made good on their goals? Peter Gregory responded that these Plans are works in progress, and should demonstrate effort toward achievement. Lynne Bertram provided the example in Bridgewater of the former elementary school building that has recently been leased to a non-profit and will provide space for child care, pre-K and after school activities. The lease was signed after the Town Plan was adopted. The Bridgewater Town Plan was approved unanimously.

4. Public Hearing – Confirmation Action for Bridgewater:

There were no public comments. The hearing was closed.

5. Action of Confirmation for Bridgewater:

A motion was made by Bill Emmons and seconded by Don Bourdon to confirm the planning efforts of Bridgewater. Peter Gregory noted that confirmation provides that towns provide funds for municipal and regional planning purposes, and have active Planning Commissions that work towards a Town Plan that meets the goals of 24 VSA Section 4302. The Board unanimously confirmed the planning process in Bridgewater.

6. Discussion on White River Tactical Basin Plan:

Danielle Owczarski from the Department of Environmental Conservation presented the White River Tactical Basin Plan draft. She noted comments were due today, October 31, but that if Commissioners had any comments following tonight's meeting to let her

know. Danielle described basin planning procedures and implementation projects. Contained in the Plan is water quality information, the identification and classification of waters and remediation strategies. The Plan, she said is an "instruction booklet to enhance watershed health." Carl Russell hoped the basin plan could inform town and regional planning commissions. Lynne Bertram noted that fallen trees can block waterways and may form dams that could cause flood damage. Danielle noted that strategically removing trees may be warranted to avoid flooding and that private landowners should call a river scientist if they are concerned with town trees in waterways on their properties. Kevin Rose asked if there was a comprehensive list of protections on a website. Kevin cited the example of a private landowner clearing trees up to a stream bank – what protections are in place. Danielle noted that the ANR Atlas shows river corridors which outline minimum buffer recommendations, but is not a protection. Towns also have setback requirements and there is a list of town water quality protections in the back of the Basin Plan. Commissioners thanked DEC for attending and presenting.

Chair Fredrickson moved the discussion to the draft TRORC letter. Nancy Malmquist noted on the bottom of page one, the following statement seemed too broad and strongly worded: "TRORC agrees, but believes the level of data needed is far less, and ANR data thresholds are an unnecessary impediment to protecting waters." Tim O'Dell believes the Plan should say something about hazard mitigation and flood hazards. Tim noted that waters above 2,500 feet are A1 and the draft letter recommends other waters be classified as A1 to be afforded protection. Danielle noted that flood resiliency certainly helps water quality, funding helps to determine the focus.

7. Approval of TRORC's Board Minutes from September 26, 2018:

A motion was made by Bushrod Powers and seconded by Bill Emmons to approve the September 26, 2018 minutes as presented. Unanimously approved.

8. Acceptance of September Financial Reports and review of FY18 audit:

Peter Gregory noted that the negative expense for Tuition Reimbursement was due to Chris Damiani's repayment of tuition assistance upon his departure from TRORC. The large A/R amounts in September have mostly been received. A motion to accept the September financial reports was made by Bushrod Powers and seconded by Doon Hinderycykx. Unanimously accepted.

Peter noted that the FY18 audit is posted on the TRORC website and the management letter was meant to be included in the Board packet. The FY18 audit was clean with no findings. Auditors suggest ways to improve each year, and this year noted that TRORC did not have a written credit card policy. The TRORC Executive Committee has approved such a policy and it is now in place. TRORC will be going out to bid this spring for a new 3-year contract for audit services. A motion to accept the FY18 audit was made by David Brandau and seconded by Bill Emmons. Audit unanimously accepted.

9. Approval of TRORC's updated Procurement Procedures:

Dee Gish highlighted the changes in the Procurement Procedures. Tim O'Dell had multiple comments regarding the policy and will phone Dee with his suggestions. Peter will incorporate Tim's suggestions for page 6 item iii(d) after the second sentence to include "In addition to those described here, additional conditions may be described in instructions to bidders with specific project bid packages.", and on page 7 item iv(a) to include "All information in the RFP must be addressed or the bid may be disqualified.", (d) replace the sentence to read "Contracts must be awarded to the responsible, qualified firm meeting evaluation factors, whose proposal is most advantageous to the program; with price and other factors considered."

A motion was made by Don Bourdon and seconded by Bill Emmons to approve the Procurement Procedures with Tim's suggestions. Approved unanimously.

10. Regional Plan Chapter Review:

Peter Gregory noted that the updates to the Economic Development chapter included cutting redundant information and data that is not helpful or relevant. Bruce Riddle noted that many of the recommendations on page 30 overlap in other chapters and that TRORC could focus on investments that the region could make that would impact economic development. Bruce cited examples of getting a cost estimate from EC Fiber to bring broadband to every house in the region and a VTC advanced construction program to build two or three experimental houses as specs for affordable housing. Getting a dollar figure for marginal investments such as these would be helpful to move the recommendations forward. Chair Fredrickson appreciated the comments and suggested these ideas should be incorporated into the TRORC Strategic Plan. Carl Russell noted that there is a link between the economic development of value added agricultural and forest products to land use practices and that attributes at the ground level such as organic farming and grass-fed beef, happen before the value-added economic development. Carl would like to see the link between land use practices and economic development articulated to show how practices support land use goals and feels that recommendation #17 on page 32 is too narrow. The recommendation should include land use and management practices are linked to economic development. Peter Gregory believed that there is mention of this in the Working Lands chapter. Nancy Jones noted some discrepancies on the Regional Employers table #23. Peter responded that the table should be removed due to inaccuracies and a link to a state list will be included. Bruce also noted that the poverty and per capita income discussion on page 13 needs more careful attention. Peter requested that additional comments should be sent to him and noted that there will be other opportunities to comment including upcoming public listening sessions.

11. Director Remarks:

Peter Gregory noted that there have been few Act 250 and Section 248 applications lately, other than minor projects. The Act 250 Next 50 years report is due to the Legislature by year end. Peter reported that TRORC has received another year of funding from the Vermont Arts Council for the creative economy work and that TRORC will see contracts for Hazard Mitigation Plans for Braintree, Rochester and Granville. Peter reported that Rita Seto has completed 28 applications for better roads sites and is grateful for her aggressive efforts to secure funding for all 30 towns to comply with the municipal roads general permits. Funding for such programs is suspect in the future,

and towns may be asked to provide more funding without state support. New staff member, Paige Greenfield, introduced herself. Peter noted that another new staff member, Sarah Wraight will be joining TRORC in December.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 19th at the Barnard Inn.

Adjourn:

Nancy Jones made a motion to adjourn at 8:25 pm.

Minutes prepared by Dee Gish 11/1/18.

Bridgewater 2018 Town Plan Review Presentation for Board Meeting

This version of the Bridgewater Town Plan was an update from the 2013 Plan, not an overhaul. TRORC Staff assisted the Bridgewater Planning Commission throughout this update.

Improvements from the 2013 Plan include the following:

- A New Flood Resilience Chapter that has recommended goals, policies, and actions that strive to protect existing infrastructure, facilities, and buildings in the event of a major flood.
- Now Contains language and policies related to the preservation of forest blocks and habitat connectors. The Energy section was expanded to include information about the State's energy goals.
- More detail within the Implementation Chapter specifying how goals and policies will be met.
- Added a Health and Wellness Chapter with goals, policies, and recommendations aimed at supporting a healthy community.

Suggestions for improvements for the next version of the Plan include the following:

1. Address unemployment in the economic section.
2. Include specific basin plan information regarding water quality in the Critical Natural Areas chapter.
3. Discuss childcare more in-depth by adding information on financing, business assistance, and childcare work force development.
4. Include more about mobile and manufactured homes in discussions on housing.
5. Acknowledge the need for transportation forms to be mutually supportive and balanced.
6. Be more specific on strategies for implementing energy goals.
7. Explicitly encourage flood emergency preparedness and response planning.

These suggestions are all aimed to expand and improve on existing elements of the Plan – not to point out any missing elements. The required elements of the Plan are in place, and so TRORC Staff is recommending approval of the Plan.