

TRORC Board Meeting

Thompson Senior Center, Woodstock, Vermont

February 26, 2020 – Board Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Name	Town	2/26/20					
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard	X					
Paul Vallee	Bethel						
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X					
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)	X					
Vacant	Braintree						
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater						
Gwynn Zakov	Brookfield	X					
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield (Alt.)						
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea						
Kent Gilman	Chelsea (Alt.)						
Tim O'Dell	Corinth	X					
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X					
Mark Belisle	Granville	X					
Monica Collins	Hancock						
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford						
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)	X					
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X					
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury	X					
Rod Francis	Norwich						
Jeff Lubell	Norwich	X					
Sarah Gallagher	Pittsfield						
Anne Brown	Plymouth	X					
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X					
Phil Dechert	Pomfret (Alt)	X					
Ramsey Papp	Randolph	X					
Gary Dir	Randolph (Alt)						
Anni Mackay	Rochester	X					
Doon Hinderyckx	Rochester (Alt)	X					
David Brandau	Royalton						
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)						
Peter Anderson	Sharon						
Bill Edgerton	Stockbridge						
John Echeverria	Strafford						
Jesse Anderson	Thetford						
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)						
Jim Bulger	Topsham						
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge						
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)	X					
Bill Baylis	Vershire						
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X					
Don Bourdon	Woodstock						
Steve Schneider	At-Large	X					
Jennifer Colby	At-Large	X					
Ken Alton	At-Large						
Vacant - Conservation	At-Large						
Beth Long	At-Large	X					
Meg Emmons	At-Large						

Staff: Peter Gregory, Kevin Geiger, Lori Kay, Tory Littlefield
Guest: Danielle Owczarski, Agency of Natural Resources

1. Call to Order, Approval of the Agenda, Introductions, and Public Comments:

Chair Jerry Fredrickson convened the Board Meeting at 6:32 p.m. The agenda was approved. A quorum was declared after roll call. There were no public comments or additional guests.

2. Public Hearing on Town Plan Approval and Confirmation of Planning Efforts for Fairlee:

Tory Littlefield reviewed the Fairlee Town Plan and provided comments on the draft plan. The Plan was a major overhaul and TRORC staff assisted the Town in the update. TRORC staff recommends approval of the Fairlee Town Plan.

Commissioner Carver noted that Bradford would soon be updating their Town Plan and asked about TRORC's process for reviewing a Town Plan. Littlefield provided a brief overview. There were no other comments or questions.

Public hearing closed at 6:39 by Chair Fredrickson.

Peter Gregory reviewed the planning efforts in Fairlee. He noted that the town has met the tests under 4350 for being confirmed, assuming the Town Plan is approved. There were no other comments or questions.

Chair Fredrickson closed the Confirmation Hearing at 6:41.

3. Public Hearing – Issuance of Determination of Energy Compliance for Fairlee Town Plan:

Kevin Geiger reviewed the Energy Compliance section of the Fairlee Town Plan. He noted that he had helped write that section of their Town Plan. TRORC staff recommends the town receive the "Determination of Energy Compliance." There were no comments or questions.

Chair Fredrickson closed the Public Hearing at 6:43.

4. Agency of Natural Resources (Draft Basin 14 Plan presentation):

This portion of the meeting was rescheduled and held following Agenda Item 6.

Danielle Owczarski, Basin Planner with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, provided a presentation on the Draft Basin 14 Plan which includes watersheds and Connecticut River tributaries located within 11 of the towns of TRORC's region. Owczarski reviewed the format and the major focuses of the plan as currently drafted which includes water quality and mitigating climate change. Basin 14, overall, has good water quality so the goal is to maintain the quality into the future. The final Basin 14 Plan will be completed by June 30, 2020.

Throughout the presentation, Owczarski advised the attendees to share any concerns and recommendations on any locations that should be monitored by the State. Owczarski followed her presentation with a question-and-answer session with the meeting attendees.

TRORC will provide comments to ANR on the draft Basin Plan in March as well as a letter regarding the conformance of the Plan with TRORC's regional plan. Staff have been discussing this with the Clean Water Advisory Committee to formulate the comments that will be shared with ANR.

5. Fairlee Town Plan approval:

A motion was made by Bill Emmons and seconded by Nancy Jones to approve the Town Plan for Fairlee.

Peter Berger noted a concern that was raised during the Town's discussions with TRORC - that the nature of the Town Plan had become more regulatory than he was comfortable with, particularly around the Energy Compliance portion of the Plan. The Fairlee Town Plan was unanimously approved.

6. Determination of Energy Compliance of Fairlee Town Plan approval:

A motion was made by Frank Tegethoff and seconded by Mark Belisle to approve the Determination of Energy Compliance for Fairlee. Unanimously approved.

7. Approval of TRORC Board Minutes – December 11, 2019:

A motion was made by Anne Brown and was seconded by Peter Berger to approve the December 11 Board minutes. Unanimously approved.

8. Acceptance of the December 2019 and January 2020 TRORC Financial Reports:

A motion was made by Mark Belisle and seconded by Nancy Jones to accept the December 2019 and January 2020 Financial Reports. Unanimously accepted.

Peter Gregory noted that TRORC had completed a number of buyouts in Stockbridge and Pittsfield under the HUD DR2 grant. The grant will be finishing up by the end of June 2020 with a buyout in Cambridge. The VHCB contract remains in place to help with property buyouts due to weather disasters. State funds are needed to continue this effort. In general, the financials are on target.

9. Staff/Commissioner Updates:

- a) Act 250 Projects – a log processing and kiln operation in Pittsfield still in process; upcoming hearing in Hartland regarding a property whose owners wish to use it for camping (glamping).
- b) Bruce Riddle shared information regarding an invasive species that has been introduced within the U.S. – Chinese Worm. It is known to eat organic matter and has no natural predator.
- c) Funding for Pandemic Flu – Vermont Department of Health is talking about Vermont's response. No information on funding yet. Flu may have an impact on tourism in Vermont as well as whether summer camps will be able to run.

- d) Climate Emergency Resolutions – Bill Emmons asked if any of the Towns in the region have Climate Emergency Resolutions in place and whether the resolutions mandate actions by the town. Randolph and Woodstock were both identified as having a resolution in place. Ramsey Papp read the Randolph Climate Emergency Resolution for the group.
- e) Jennifer Colby made an announcement regarding the Vermont Agriculture Water Quality Partnership annual meeting which will be held at Norwich University on Tuesday, March 10. The meeting is open to the public and could be of interest to Towns.
- f) TRORC Volunteer of the Year Award – Nominations for the 2020 award are currently being accepted.
- g) Conflict of Interest Statements – These forms have been sent to the Commissioners for completion and return. Gregory noted that it's important to comply with this request as TRORC receives Federal dollars.
- h) As part of TRORC's participation in a Housing Study with other Regional Commissions, TRORC staff handed out posters announcing an online survey for area residents. The survey is designed to collect information from residents on the kind of housing they like, any concerns they have about housing options, etc. The survey will be live for the months of March and April 2020.
- i) Legislative Update – Peter Gregory noted that TRORC has testified on the Act 250 bill and provided comments on the Housing Bill. The Governor has submitted the budget for next fiscal year to the Legislature and it includes the municipal planning grant program as level funded; but adding \$150,000 to help Towns update their zoning bylaws as they relate to housing. The RPCs would also be allocated another \$150,000 (approximately \$10,000 per RPC) to help towns with their zoning bylaw discussions. TRORC is watching the appropriations for Towns related to the Water bill that was passed a few years ago to inventory their assets and meet the Municipal Roads General Permit and make any necessary road repairs in the next 10-15 years. TRORC is mindful that funding will be needed by the Towns to complete this work and will be reminding the Legislature to keep this in mind as they make their future budget plans. TRORC submitted comments on the Climate bill that has passed in the House and is now with the Senate.
- j) TRORC Updates – The TRORC Brownfields program has been very active in the past few months. Work is being done in Wilder, Bridgewater, Randolph and East Randolph right now.
- k) Funds have been secured for five towns to update their Hazard Mitigation plans and most will be hiring TRORC to conduct this work.
- l) The East Orange Supervisory Union in Bradford has contracted for TRORC's assistance with scoping a sidewalk project. Corinth has a CDBG grant to help make the town library ADA accessible and has enlisted TRORC's help.
- m) TRORC Regional Plan Update – Staff have met with Bradford, Hartford, and Topsham as previously directed by the Commissioners. A full proposal on the three towns' changes will be ready for review by the Commissioners sometime this spring.

- n) Next meeting - Royalton's Town Plan review will potentially be on the agenda. Rita Seto will bring the Transportation Capital Projects listing and prioritization. She is meeting with the TAC in early March. Hartford Energy Compliance determination may be on the agenda as well. Gregory will not be at the March meeting.

Adjourn:

Fredrickson entertained a motion to adjourn at 8:06 pm. The motion was received and seconded by Emmons.

Minutes prepared by Lori Kay 3/3/20.