

TRORC
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
King Farm, Woodstock, VT
March 12, 2025

Attendance

Board Members: Bill Emmons, III, Chairperson; John Echeverria, Vice Chairperson; Peter Berger, Treasurer; Nancy Jones, Secretary; Nancy Malmquist; Brian Loeb, Ken Alton

Others Present: Kevin Geiger, TRORC, Chief Planner; Kyle Katz, TRORC, Regional Planner; Kyra Wood, TRORC, Grants Manager

1. Call to Order, Changes to agenda

Chair Emmons convened the meeting at 3:03pm, a quorum was present. No changes were made to the agenda.

2. Public Comment on items not on the agenda

Public not in attendance, no public comments received.

3. Approval of February 12, 2025, Minutes

On a motion made by Peter Berger and seconded by Nancy Jones, the minutes of February 12, 2025, were approved unanimously.

4. Acceptance of unaudited February 2025 Financial Reports

On a motion made by Nancy Jones and seconded by Nancy Malmquist, the unaudited February 2025 Financial Reports were approved unanimously.

Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner, made a note that invoice #25-144 listed in the Accounts Receivable is for RIVER engineer funds. TRORC is receiving invoices from engineering contractors and requesting advanced funds from the State, as they are federal dollars.

5. Draft Housing Chapter to review

Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner, and Kyle Katz, Regional Planner, presented the first draft of the revisions to the Housing Chapter of the TRORC Regional Plan. This update aligns with the ongoing revisions to the Future Land Use Chapter, as required by state statute. Kyle Katz will be working on the housing chapter revisions in collaboration with Kyle Hansen, and Kevin are coordinating the revisions for the Future Land Use Chapter.

TRORC has been assigned a regional housing target of 3,640 units (on the high end) over the next five years, as part of the State's 2030 housing target per state law that passed in 2023. This target also addresses homelessness and vacancy rates. TRORC utilized various factors to prorate and 'weigh' the housing target ranges for each member town, such as population, road accessibility, and the availability of sewer and water systems.

During the meeting, the Committee discussed the State's housing targets including whether employment centers should get more housing. Kevin Geiger noted these targets are aspirational, based on the State's 2025 Housing Needs Assessment and that neither towns nor TRORC actually build homes. The majority of the data used in the chapter revision is drawn from the 2020 Census, as it is considered the most reliable source. Data from more recent years were not utilized due to a larger margin of error.

The Committee provided the following feedback on the draft Housing Chapter:

- John Echev provided written comments prior to the meeting, and Brian Loeb noted he liked those.
- Increase TRORC's ownership throughout the chapter by greater local detail and 'voice'. The current draft is written with a more external perspective, and increased ownership would reduce this tone.
- TRORC should show what 'levers' towns and the Region have to actually increase housing as well as further justify the barriers to housing development claimed in the chapter.
- Consolidate the information on sprawl and smart growth over in Land Use.
- Include guidance for actions municipalities can take to encourage more affordable housing development activity, as there is a limited number of developers in the region.

Kyle Katz will continue working on the revisions to the Housing Chapter, incorporating the feedback provided. Future updates will include additional details, including the purpose of the chapter, goals, and the demonstrated need for housing in the region. Another draft for review will be presented in the future.

6. Updates: Projects, Legislation and Staffing, Other

Geena Baber, Planner, will be leaving at the end of March. TRORC is actively seeking a new staff member and has posted advertisements for a Municipal Assistance Specialist position.

Kevin provided a brief update on state legislative activity, sharing that funding for regional planning commissions is secure. Additionally, there are efforts being reviewed by the legislature regarding housing.

7. Executive session, if needed

No Executive Session.

8. Other

None.

The Executive Committee meeting concluded at 5:06 pm on March 12, 2025.

Meeting minutes prepared by:
Kyra Wood, Grants Manager
March 14, 2025