

## **Pomfret Planning Commission**

Meeting April 3 , 2023 7 pm.  
Pomfret, VT.

Approved 4/17/23

**Present:** **Bill Emmons**, Nelson Lamson, John Moore, Karen Hewitt Osnoe (Zoning Administrator).

**Absent:** Cy Benoit, Tyler Wellington

**Guests:** Nancy Mathews, Bruce Tuthill, Doug Tuthill, Ron Galotti, Frank Perron, Chip Carver, Peter Brooke, Caroline Robbins, Chandler Evans, Jeff Barger, Cindy Barger, Margaret Jackson, TRORC: Pete Fellows, Connor Rigby, Peter Gregory.

### **Call To Order/Agenda Changes/Public Comment:**

Bill Emmons called the Planning Commission meeting at 7:03 pm.

Public Comment. None

Bill Emmons gave overview of Act 171 outlining the purpose for Forest Blocks and Habitat Connectivity areas and the goal to follow state requirements and have our Town Plan approved by TRORC.

Connor Rigney presented a map of the Ridgeline and Hillside Conservation Area Map as what might work for Pomfret's Forest Block and Habitat Connectivity areas in addition to its current purpose: To allow development in Pomfret's Ridgeline and Hillside Conservation Areas and to provide screening if necessary, when viewed from Pomfret's class 1-3 roads.

The discussion centered around the Regional Plan. Landowners were concerned about overreach by TRORC on the Forest Blocks and Connectivity areas and associated policy and recommendations as outlined in the regional plan adopted in 2020. According to state statute the citizens closest to the impact shall be contacted early in the process and this did not happen.

Pete Fellows stated that TRORC took the State data to make its own Regional Map. This map does not affect individual home family projects, barns, etc.

Doug Tuthill mentioned concerns about lack of affordable housing. He also mentioned in the State literature in particular Act 171 it talks about the good of the whole but not much concern for the rights of the landowner.

Frank Perron is concerned about governmental overreach. Concerned lands are on the map that in future administration from the State and or Region he would be more restricted. Peter Gregory confirmed that the Regional Plan does not restrict... Perron suggested having language in the regional plan to confirm that. John Moore was concerned that once we agree on an area in our town plan as Forest Blocks and Connectivity Areas it may be subject to further State and Regional restrictions. Ron Galotti was also concerned and did not want anyone to tell him what he could or not do with his land.

Vern Clifford echoed that the Regional Map and associated restrictions does affect the value of his property. He wants to be a good steward but does not want restrictions on what he can and cannot do.

Bruce Tuthill asked about mineral rights mapping.

John Moore motioned that Town Plans to be approved must have same degree of intent... Peter Gregory said only in Principal Retail did that occur.

Irrespective of what Pomfret decides on its map Peter Gregory said TRORC will not modify their map as it relates to Pomfret.

In an Act 250 hearing The Regional Plan could trump what the landowners and Pomfret agree upon.

Nancy Mathews mentioned there is a way to develop and still maintain the rural character of Pomfret.

Peter Brooke agreed with the overall sentiment... he wants to be a good steward but does not want to be told what to do. Does not want to be told he cannot divide for his grandchildren at some point. It annoys Peter that putting a glass bowl over the property, so it is not going to change. Peter asked what would happen if Pomfret does not get Regional Approval... Peter Gregory said only loose a couple of grant options... not a big deal... Planning is optional at the State.

Caroline Robbins mentioned the restrictions on the Regional Plan are telling them what they can and cannot do.

John Moore asked if Pomfret included the Appalachian Trail, all the conserved land, would that suffice... Peter Gregory said he had not thought of that but he would consider it.

Frank Perron stated landowners should have been consulting early on. Frank encouraged putting in the town plan all of the conserved land along with parcel lines .... It is an easy thing...it is already on the Regional Plan. Peter Brooke and John Moore supported putting forth the

conserved land... Nelson Lamson stated that the Ridgeline map would stay as it is for its own stated purpose.

Connor motioned it appears that there is a lot more work to do on the subject we discussed tonight. We will have town forum on the entire draft town plan on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Connor may do a table at the library for a few hours to satisfy the other requirement. In the planning commission meeting on April 17, we can decide what goes into the draft as far as Forest Blocks and Connectivity areas.

John Moore thanked TRORC for their participation in town plan assistance and this meeting tonight.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

John Moore, Clerk