



MAD RIVER VALLEY VERMONT

MRV For Local Opportunities (FLO) Committee **Minutes** **November 21, 2018, 2:30pm EDT** **Waitsfield Town Office**

FLO Attendees:

Jared Cadwell; Bob Ackland; Peter MacLaren; Don Simonini; Jasmine Bigelow [by phone]; and Darryl Forrest

Guests: none

Jared called the meeting to order. The minutes were approved with corrections & additions by Peter. Jared will submit the minutes to the MRVPD for posting on the web site.

We agreed that the explanation of who would pay the 1% LOT should also be posted as many people are asking about this analysis, and Peter will submit to the MRVPD for posting on the web site.

We discussed short term calendar events: December 17th Waitsfield Selectboard; December 4th Chamber "coffee & conversation".

Darryl provide an overview of his impressions of the Waitsfield Selectboard meeting the prior Monday. Some of the members have more questions and concerns. Darryl said his Selectboard is committed to meeting with us on December 17th to discuss further.

Jared offered the suggestion that we need to refine and sharpen our message to the community. He stated that the Fayston Selectboard said "people don't understand" what we are proposing relative to the benefits. We need to be clear about the benefits. The issues of bonding and borrowing referenced in the draft charter are a significant concern. The Fayston Selectboard said they preferred the approach of appointed members to the FLO Commission.

We spoke about changing the sequencing of our Power Point to better illustrate what we are proposing early on in the presentation. We agreed to add something like the "funnel" used in the Woodstock presentation.

Jasmine said we need to talk about "why" 3 communities together. How we can "fix" the missing components in The Valley". She also spoke about the slide sequence. We have two audiences we are addressing: the voters and the Selectboards. We must remember most people have a short attention spans and our message must be clear, and up front in the Power Point.

Darryl brought up that Waitsfield will likely receive the lion's share of The FLO benefit, as they are the commercial center of the Valley, which makes it somewhat surprising that they appear to be have such reservations about the FLO.

Don will meet with Liza next week to garner the “wish” list of grant requests for Recreation, so we can incorporate these data points in our community conversations about the potential benefits of the FLO for the community.

It appears the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is against this Charter as written because it may usurp the authority of the towns. Karen thinks highly of the MRVPD but the VLCT is concerned about regional planning usurping the authority of town elected governments. Jared will discuss further with them to point out that the process we are proposing fully respects the roles of the towns, while leveraging the unique structure we have in place with the MRVPD; a collaborative framework for Valley wide initiatives like the FLO.

Peter concurred that the language in the Charter was a concern because of the aspects of bonding, capital programs etc., that were not required to address to the FLO, simply providing flexibility for the future. Bob will work with Peter to propose some further edits.

Affordable housing is a main concern of the Valley. Darryl asked why only Waitsfield was being considered for affordable housing. Bob clarified that the two growth centers identified in the Valley are Sugarbush Village and Irasville. It is anticipated that Sugarbush will take leadership in Sugarbush Village, so that leaves the main focus for new affordable workforce housing to be Irasville.

Peter pointed out that there is still some ambiguity about whether part of the admin costs of the LOT come from the Valley’s share of 70%. None of us believe that this is the case however the wording in the Statute appears confusing. Bob will follow up to get this point clarified once and for all. Jared mentioned some of the funds go to The PILOT program and some towns receive some of this 30% back in terms of PILOT funds, however how this aspect works is also not clear.

Jasmine asked if it was ok to continue with the Chamber “coffee and conversation” meeting on the 4th and we agreed it was. However, we will not plan an overall public meeting until after the December 17th meeting with the Waitsfield Selectboard.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10pm
Submitted by Don Simonini, with edits by Peter MacLaren