



## ***Town of Panton Chartered 1761***

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Special Selectboard Meeting

July 29, 2019

Selectboard Member's present: Howard Hall, Teresa Smith, and Zachary Weaver. Also present was Town Treasurer/Clerk Pam Correia.

Invited Guests included: David Raphael and Mary Rudd representing the Panton Design Review Board/Planning Commission as well as Mike Winslow representing the Addison County Regional Planning Commission.

Also present were approximately 30 people in attendance to include Panton, Vergennes, and Addison residents.

At 7:02pm, Howard Hall called the meeting to order.

2. Howard Hall introduced David Raphael and Mary Rudd and noted their presence as Panton DRB/PC members. Howard explained that the purpose of the meeting was to serve as an informational meeting only.

3. Presentation on VT 22A Bypass by ACRPC Representative – Mike Winslow introduced a PowerPoint presentation addressing the VT Rte. 22A Bypass Study. Mike stated that the real problem is that 800 trucks per day pass through Vergennes. He added that there is an 11% grade on the hill coming up from the bridge, which is less than ideal for truckers. Mike stated that the goal of the bypass study is to build consensus. He advised that alternatives to the bypass are being studied and the time frame is under consideration. Mike also stated that the purpose of the corridor includes the downtown, freight, other corridors, and costs. Mike conveyed to those in attendance a new alignment plan for the bypass.

The floor was then opened to the public for any questions or comments.

4. Public Comment/Questions - Many questions and concerns were raised from those in attendance. The topics included:

- Noise
- The Harbors & Rivers Act
- 80-foot Bridge across Otter Creek
- Limited Access Highway
- Location of Round-About
- The Cost Benefits and What it is Based On
- Increase in Tax Base
- Location of Stop Signs
- Expense of Re-routing to Rte. 17
- The Impact to the People of the Community
- Alternate Routes

- Effect on the Trailer Park and Houses Along the Proposed Route
- Economic Stability
- Support from Surrounding Towns

Mike Winslow advised that the number of trucks is expected to double by the year 2043 if no changes are made.

David Raphael stated that he totally recognizes the real issue but is worried about assumptions being made at this stage. He added that as far as economic development, there has not been pressure to develop industry, but there has been some pressure for housing. Discussion continued regarding further studies on economic benefits.

Bob Hartenstein wondered if Panton is in favor, what the benefits are and how does that effect the project. Mike Winslow confirmed that if Panton is in favor, it will strengthen the position going to VTrans.

Gretchen Bailey wondered who decides in the town of Panton if the Town is in favor. Howard Hall advised that currently the Town Plan states that it does not endorse this proposal. He added that going forward there will be hearings with the DRB/PC, a vote on the proposal, and the Selectboard will also hold hearings on it. Howard stated that the matter could be put on the ballot for Town Meeting Day and voted on as it is about local control.

Teresa Smith suggested contacting the Selectboard members in Morrisville to see if they could come to talk about the decision-making process and the benefits they have gained from putting a bypass in their town. Howard assured everyone that this is not a sprint and the Town would be taking their time to make decisions.

Mike Winslow advised that the public does have access on-line to the study through the Addison County Regional Planning website under the transportation section.

David Raphael explained the process to go through the DRB/PC and stated that the Town should advocate for what the Town wants. He added that the bypass could become the entrance into the Panton community and the Town wants to hear concerns from the citizens.

5. Next Steps for Panton – Howard Hall stated that the next step for Panton will be to notify citizens when the DRB/PC hearings will be held to include warning the hearings in the newspaper and to hold the hearings. Howard advised that the matter will next move to the Selectboard and the Board will then decide the fate in which direction to travel. Teresa Smith encouraged everyone to get in touch with Town Clerk/Treasurer Pam Correia at the Town Office to get on the Selectboard agenda if there are still more questions.

Brief discussion followed about Panton not currently being in favor of the proposal and whether there will be support on Town Meeting Day to include it on a ballot.

David Raphael reiterated that the DRB/PC will be amending the Town Plan soon for the energy section. He advised that the language in the Town Plan is dated and the DRB/PC will do some light housekeeping based on the previous proposal currently in the Town Plan while making the change to reflect the current status of things, with no position. David added that Panton will need to know more as the project is further developed. He stated that the Town doesn't oppose or support the project but does recognize the need for it. David advised that the review of the language will be noticed and amended to adopt more detailed information and guidance for the energy section.

At 7:46pm, Teresa Smith moved to adjourn the meeting; Zachary Weaver seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Correia  
Town Clerk/Treasurer