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To: regionalplan@trorc.org; [Act250 - Board](#)
Cc: [Monica Collins](#); samanthaisheehan@gmail.com
Subject: Public Comment for proposed updates to Two Rivers Regional Plan
Date: Sunday, August 2, 2026 10:06:41 AM
Attachments: [Regional Plan update comments 7-26.docx](#)

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Hello, TRORC and the Act250 Board.

Please find below and attached my public comments regarding the proposed updates to the Two Rivers Regional Plan.

Public Comment: Update to Ottauquechee Regional (TRORC) Commission Plan

August 1, 2026

Submitted by:

Dan Perera

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Hancock, VT 05748

The development of a Regional Plan should create a useful and constructive tool to guide development in our state. However, if the proposed Plan is too restrictive it will likely have negative financial and social impacts on certain communities in our region.

I would point specifically to the vulnerable rural communities served by the proposed Ottauquechee Regional (TRORC) Commission Plan. Hancock is the example I will use as I have lived here for 36 years and am actively involved in Town governance.

Hancock is 85 percent owned by the Green Mountain National Forest. This severely restricts the available amount of municipal and private land that can be developed to increase housing availability and our limited tax base. Hancock is already affected by low incomes, poor access to employment opportunities, and limited local services. We are rural and are always looking for responsible ways to promote development and home ownership. The Town is currently involved in a feasibility study to develop land in the Village Center for worker housing.

The issue I need to bring to your attention is the language that is used in various locations throughout the proposed Plan.

In the Land Use section (3) of the proposed plan on Page 1, paragraph 2, it is stated that "Most of this chapter, as well as the rest of this Plan is guidance – it is a wish or hope."

However, throughout the proposed Plan words such as *shall*, *shall be*, *shall not*, *must*, and *must be* are used in such a way as to directly restrict development and land use.

Examples of the use of this restrictive language appears on pages 4 & 5 in Chapter 3 (Land Use) in the Policies section of "Goals, Policies and Recommendations: Downtown Centers." Examples are found in items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Please note that this use of absolute and restrictive language is found throughout the proposed Plan, not just in the Land Use section.

I feel strongly that the proposed Plan should not restrict property development or use. Restrictive language acts to stifle development in rural communities where economic and social development is most needed. The Plan should instead provide guidance and recommendations to promote responsible land use.

I strongly suggest that all uses of *shall/shall be/shall not/must/must be* be replaced with *SHOULD*. This would still allow the Plan to offer guidance and state aspirational goals without holding back the chance for rural communities to grow and improve their standing.

Let us not let a well-intentioned update to the Regional Plan restrict the health and development of our rural communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Perera
Hancock Select Board Member
Hancock, VT

END

Thank you,

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