

From: [martin hale](#)
To: regionalplan@trorc.org; Act250 - Board
Subject: public comment on trorc regional plan
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ear TRORC and LURB:

My name is Martin Hale. I am a member of the Vershire Planning Commission and a resident of Vershire, Vermont. I joined the Planning Commission recently, and one of the first things I was handed was this regional plan and the new future land use maps. I want to tell you what my reaction was, because I think it matters.

My reaction was: did anyone from TRORC actually come out here before drawing these lines?

Because it does not look like it. It looks like someone sat in an office in Woodstock or Montpelier, pulled up satellite imagery, and drew boundaries based on what the land looks like from the air. That is not the same as knowing what is actually happening on the ground. There are working farms in Vershire. There are timber operations. There are families who have had their land enrolled in Current Use for years because they are actively managing it — farming it, logging it, keeping it as working land. Some of that land ended up in Rural Conservation, which is the most restrictive category on this map, yet we weren't told which ones specifically. You do not make that mistake if you actually come out and look and talk to the people who work this land.

I believe in local control and keeping our working lands "working". That is why I joined the Planning Commission. The whole point of local planning is that the people who live somewhere get a say in how it is managed — because they know it better than anyone sitting in a regional office does. What TRORC has done with this map is the opposite of that. They made decisions about Vershire land without coming to Vershire, without talking to the landowners whose property they were classifying, and without giving us a real opportunity to review and respond before the boundaries were set.

This process was done backwards. The maps should have started with conversations on the ground, not ended with a public comment period after the lines were already drawn.

My ask is straightforward: before this plan is even voted upon by the Commission, TRORC should be required to demonstrate — specifically, not generally — what information they used to classify each parcel in Vershire into each category and why; and to provide parcel-by-parcel change data to each landowner affected by these reclassifications. If they cannot answer that question for each parcel, the map is not ready to be adopted.

Respectfully submitted, martin hale 828 tullar corinth vt 05039