[Rec’d January 23, 2023]

My name is Donald Bedard, and I'm here tonight to advocate for my appointment to the Planning Commission.

South Hero became home in 2017 when I moved here with my wife, Anna.  We live on South Street with our two young boys, DJ and Nathan.  I am an original Vermonter, having grown up in Rutland.

It didn't take long for me to call South Hero home, and take an interest in our town's proceedings.  I regularly attend meetings hosted by the Selectboard, Development Review Board and Planning Commission.

Some of you may recognize me from those calls.  You may have also seen me in town.  I am the Branch Manager at Community Bank in South Hero and Essex Junction.

Being that I am a Vermonter but have also lived in other, larger communities, I have a unique perspective on South Hero's potential.  We as a town have a great foundation and opportunity to progress into a well-rounded, diverse and supportive community.

Over the last 6 years, I have seen great progress in town  and the community grow as well. I'm advocating for my appointment as I now have 2 young children, and realize what an impact a small community like this will have on their upbringing. I believe the best way for me to help support my family, is to help support my community.  I hope to work with community members to ensure our collective vision for the town is reached through thoughtful discussion and planning.

I bring with me over 15 years of banking experience ranging from local to national providers.  I understand and value the importance of community while adhering to policy and procedure.

If appointed, I will approach challenges with an objective lens, guided by my core values.  I  will use my experience and expertise to provide insight and recommendations to agenda items.  I value moments to strengthen connections amongst neighbors and encourage opportunities to continue promoting community progress for young families.

What matters most to me is working with my peers to foster a great community that will continue to support healthy families in Vermont.   I also serve local and neighboring communities as the Safety Officer and Scheduler for YOGI Little League and volunteer coach for Essex Youth Hockey.

Thank you for your consideration.

Don Bedard