

**TOWN OF LINCOLN**  
**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD**

**February 9, 2021**

**PLANNING BOARD ZOOM MEETING**

PRESENT: Margaret Olson (Chair), Lynn DeLisi (Vice-Chair), Gary Taylor, Stephen Gladstone, Robert Domnitz

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie, Jennifer Curtin

ATTENDEES: David Henken, Andrew Glass, Allen Vander Meulen, Ruth Ann Hendrickson, Kirsten Braun, Jennifer Glass, Mark Levinson, Connie Ohlsten

**7:00 PM Review of proposed Accessory Apartment Bylaw revision language.** Proposed revisions as discussed in the last Board meeting include deletion of 10 year age of structure requirement, the addition of a maximum number of accessory apartments allowed in the Town of Lincoln to be equal to 10% of residential units as determined by the most recent Federal Census, and a minimum lease length of 30 days.

PV-M had sent out draft language to the Board and asked for comments.

BD confirmed that the Board understands that the denominator for the calculations is all the dwelling units in Town.

PV-M said that there are currently 64 permitted accessory apartments, according to the ZBA, and 2,130 total dwelling units, based on the 2010 census. She added that the 2020 census will likely show around 2400 total dwelling units.

BD said that a 10% cap is too lenient and should be a lower percentage and suggested a 5% cap.

MO said that the goal is to make accessory apartments more accessible to families and agrees that the 5% number can achieve that goal.

BD noted that it is easier to relax zoning than to make it more restrictive.

SG said that a percentage cap allows for fluctuations in total dwellings and agrees that the percentage should be around 5%.

LD agreed with the 5% cap.

David Henken said that the percentage should be able to be easily calculated. He added that people are going to be more concerned with changes in the Town's Subsidized Housing Index (SHI).

GT noted that 300 additional residential units would still allow the SHI to stay above 10%.

PV-M said that 377 units could be added and still maintain the Town's SHI above the required 10%.

MO agreed that the SHI will be the largest issue.

BD said that to maintain parity with the 10% requirement of c. 40B, one subsidized unit must be created for every 9 market rate accessory apartments.

PV-M said that accessory apartments allow for more moderately priced housing that is not subsidized which is a goal of the Housing Commission.

GT said that there is plenty of room for additional market rate housing without dropping below the 10% requirement of c. 40B, but he agreed that 5% would be acceptable for now with the potential to increase that at a later town meeting. He added that accessory apartments allow people to accomplish a number of goals.

Andrew Glass asked for clarification on the specific revisions of the accessory bylaw.

PV-M said that the revisions include establishing a cap on the number of accessory apartment units to 10% of all residential units, deleting the 10 year age requirement on the structure, and requiring a minimum rental term of 30 days when the unit or the principal building is occupied as a rental unit.

Allen Vander Meulen noted that the census figures can find that there are more accessory apartments than are permitted which can change the ratios. He added that Hanscom should be excluded from SHI denominator.

PV-M said that she had clarified with Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) that they did not count Hanscom in the current SHI.

BD said that the number of unpermitted apartments could shift the SHI substantially.

MO said that the number of permitted apartments is the most easily attainable number which is what the 5% cap should be based upon. She added that this bylaw cap will allow for easy calculations and that it will not be practical to rely upon the number of unpermitted apartments since that number is not clear.

Allen Vander Meulen added that the Housing Commission is developing an Affordable Accessory Apartment program which seeks to encourage people with unpermitted apartments to get them permitted which will lead to more accuracy.

PV-M said that, under this language, the number of accessory apartments that comply with DHCD criteria that are permitted as "affordable units" under Section 14.3.4 of the Lincoln Zoning Bylaw will not be counted in the calculation of the cap.

Ruth Ann Hendrickson said that the Water Commission decided that they will not require each accessory unit to have a separate line and separate water meters from the house that they are attached to in order to support the town's effort to increase moderate income housing. The Water Commission will, however, put in place a base charge of \$50.00 per quarter for every dwelling unit.

The Board agreed to the change in language to a 5% instead of 10% cap on permitted accessory apartments.

LD made a motion to approve the language of the proposed accessory apartment bylaw amendment as discussed. SG seconded. Roll Call: SG aye, LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, MO aye. The motion passed 5-0.

**7:20 PM Presentation of Traffic Study conducted by Ron Muller & Associates in connection with South Lincoln planning.**

PV-M said that this study was conducted by Ron Muller & Associates. This was done pre-pandemic in conjunction with South Lincoln planning.

Kirsten Braun presented. This study was based on the MAPC buildout analysis. The study looked at 4 parcels at 60% lot coverage and 100% lot coverage and the impact on traffic at 6 intersections in Town. Parcel 1 consists of the Lincoln Station Shopping Center, otherwise known as "The Mall". Parcel 2 is the town-owned commuter parking lot used for Lincoln Station. Parcel 3 is consists of the Lincoln Woods apartment complex. Parcel 4 is privately owned is currently occupied by Ridge Court Condominiums.

PV-M clarified that under the Zoning Bylaw lot coverage means total gross floor area of all floors on the building divided by lot area.

Ms. Braun said that 60% lot coverage allows for 240 new residential units within these parcels and 271 additional units at 100% lot coverage with 14,500 additional square feet of commercial uses.

Residents of Lincoln drive alone, carpool, work from home and a small number use the rail system. She added that with more people likely to continue working from home post-pandemic, these numbers may change but this is a conservative analysis. More will likely use the rail system when there is more housing close by.

Internal capture is multiple trips by one car in the Mall plaza which only results in one additional car on Lincoln road. Mixed use may result in more internal capture with reduced trips on the adjacent roadways.

Traffic models show 88 addition trips on Lincoln Road at 60% lot coverage and 105 additional trips at 100% lot coverage at A.M. peak hours. At P.M. peak hours there were 70 additional trips at 60% and 107 under 100%

The capacity analysis was conducted looking at three data points; existing conditions in the study area; no-build conditions, which considered expected population increase out to 2030 without additional development; and build conditions, which considered potential population increase with development.

Level of Service (LOS) provides an index to quality of traffic flow in terms of such factors as speed, travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, convenience, and safety in an A-F

range. Grades lower than D are considered unacceptable delays. No-build conditions showed acceptable levels at each of the intersections studied, with the exception of the intersection of Codman and Lincoln Roads. Southbound traffic at this intersection is at level F during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours and northbound at a level E during those hours. Build conditions under 100% and 60% showed comparable LOS at each intersection except for the Lincoln Station Mall Driveway. Under 100% that driveway would experience slightly more delay than at 60% condition but that is common for left turning movements out of the shopping plaza. Volume to capacity is significantly less than 1 so there is enough capacity to handle the development associated with 100% lot coverage.

MO asked if the driveway backup was in the plaza or on Lincoln road.

Ms. Braun said that that backup would be in the plaza driveway. Lincoln Road traffic would operate similarly under no build and build conditions.

GT said that the Codman Road intersection is the most difficult currently.

Ms. Braun said that the backup on Lincoln Road only occurs when cars are turning left onto Codman Road northbound or right onto Codman Road southbound. Since Codman road is under stop control, drivers on Codman Road have to wait for breaks in traffic to make their turns onto Lincoln Road which leads to long delays. She said that recommendations for the future include the Codman Road intersection. The current volume to capacity is over 1 and would not allow for increased volume. This could lead to driver frustration, drivers accepting smaller gaps in traffic, and more angle collisions. Safety improvements and operational improvements could be done such as flashing beacons, a roundabout, or a traffic light.

MO said that, in her experience, traffic only backs up when the gates are down on the train crossing.

Ms. Braun said that this analysis only takes into account the peak hours in the morning and evening commutes to observe worst case scenario planning.

MO said that that intersection does have safety issues and added that the Pedestrian and Biking Committee and the Roadway and Traffic Committee are particularly concerned with this intersection.

BD said that Southbound on Codman Road under current conditions is a 92 seconds delay which would jump to 399 seconds under 100% build conditions.

Ms. Braun said that 2030 predictions were that there would be a large increase in traffic due to incremental growth in the wider area, even in the absence of additional growth at Lincoln Station.

MO said that some surrounding towns were in the planning stages of new housing development pre-pandemic which could drive more traffic down 117. She asked if there is some way to understand that impact on traffic in the study area.

Ms. Braun said that Ron Muller & Associates reached out to Sudbury about their housing development on 117 and were able to obtain the traffic study. It was determined that once that traffic reached the Lincoln study area, it had dissipated.

Mark Levinson asked if the delays caused by the train crossing had been taken into account in these calculations.

Ms. Braun said that those delays were only analyzed under existing conditions and noticed that the extensive queues dissipated quickly after the gates were raised. She added that it is difficult to know how those gate closures would impact future conditions.

Mr. Levinson asked if doubling the number of cars in the area would double the wait areas in the adjacent intersections and in the plaza.

Ms. Braun said that that is accurate.

Mr. Levinson said that with the expected additional vehicles in the hundreds, the number of extra trips shown in the report seemed low.

Ms. Braun said that these estimates are observed at during peak hour of peak period. 200 extra cars during that period would be worst-case scenario but that would require everyone to leave at the exact same time. It is a natural assumption that not everyone will leave at the same time.

Mr. Levinson said that traffic backs up considerably during school drop-off and pick-up. He asked how closely the methodology would compare to actual driver experience.

Ms. Braun said that the methodology is based on national averages for these kinds of communities.

Connie Ohlsten asked if the study took into account the five-way intersection where the library is because that area also backs up considerably during peak hours.

Ms. Braun said that they did not extend the study area that far.

She added that there are improvements that could be made to pedestrian connectivity and safety and that there are 5 crosswalks in a 650 foot section of roadway. Many of these crossings are missing signage or ADA ramps. The report suggested consolidating the number of crossings to limit interactions between motorists and pedestrians, such as removing the Ridge Road crossing since there are no sidewalks on either side. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) could be added to alert drivers to recognize pedestrian crossing areas and to limit speeds in those areas.

Mr. Glass asked if there are any predictions of how traffic will be affected post-pandemic and if conditions have changed so far since the beginning of the pandemic.

Ms. Braun said that it is a difficult question to answer and that some communities have been affected more and others have bounced back to pre-pandemic numbers. She added that the study looked at increasing the predicted traffic volumes off of pre-pandemic numbers.

Mr. Glass asked if work-from-home conditions assume less vehicle trips.

MO said that more people working from home does not necessarily change the number of trips but changes the time of day that traffic is highest and other traffic patterns.

Ms. Braun agreed that there may be a more even spread across the day.

Jennifer Glass asked how the number of parking spaces allowed for housing development may change the model.

Ms. Braun said that parking analysis was not done as a part of this study. She added that developers will use fewer parking spots but come up with transportation demand management measures to incentivize the reduction of personal vehicles use such a bike shares, rent incentives, or carpools.

Ms. Hendrickson said that transit oriented development sounds good on paper but that the cost of taking the Commuter Rail into Boston is very high and people will often drive to another station.

MO said that this does play into the discussion because fare structure has been prohibitive to people considering the train an option and that further development may not actually make people utilize that service for this reason.

**8:00 PM Business**

- Approval of January 26, 2021 minutes.

MO made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. LD seconded. Roll Call: SG aye, LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, MO aye. The motion passed 5-0.

SG made a motion to adjourn. LD seconded. Roll Call: SG aye, LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, MO aye. The motion passed 5-0.

Approved as amended February 23, 2021