

TOWN OF LINCOLN
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD
MAY 26, 2020
ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: Margaret Olson (Chair), Lynn DeLisi (Co-Chair), Gary Taylor, Richard Rundell, Stephen Gladstone

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie

7:00 PM South Lincoln Planning Discussion

MO welcomed all the attendees to the Planning Board zoom meeting. She explained that the Planning Board was taking a step back in the Planning process for the South Lincoln area and wanted to reset the process taking into consideration the feedback and public input received during the past year regarding the South Lincoln Zoning. GT noted that the Board should discuss whether the current SLPIC Committee was the right group to continue the South Lincoln planning. He noted that feedback from residents at the Ridge Road Condominiums underscored the concern that redevelopment might undercut the existing middle range housing in Lincoln. It is important to have an appropriate process that considers the needs for housing and the viability of the commercial activity at the mall. He also noted that septic capacity is a critical piece that needs to be studied in order to have a realistic plan for the area. MO concurred with the need for reorganizing the SLPIC Committee and noted that the process needs input from the residential area across from the mall. The Committee is too large and there was often trouble convening a quorum.

GT suggested a smaller committee to pull things together and to alleviate the difficulty of convening a quorum. The small committee would solicit feedback from a larger group to include area residents, the RLF, Lincoln Woods, and local businesses as well as the wider town audience. This new process would encourage broad participation to get everyone to consensus.

MO noted that much of zoning is technical work and agreed that a smaller committee is needed. She thought that the smaller committee should meet with stakeholders and the public on a regular basis to have a steady stream of feedback. She suggested a schedule of publicized meetings. MO suggested rethinking the structure of the committee to enable SLPIC to directly tackle the South Lincoln planning and zoning process. Once a restructuring of the SLPIC committee is complete, the Planning Board should think about the proposal itself and how to best incorporate the feedback.

RR agreed and noted that the original members of the committee provided an initial zoning proposal and solicited the feedback. It was appropriate to now step back and rethink the structure and process in response to that feedback.

LD joined the meeting at this time.

MO updated LD on what had transpired so far and that the Board members agreed that the SLPIC committee should have more frequent public meetings to broaden the participation and to obtain regular feedback.

LD agreed that when the SLPIC committee was first formed the membership made sense and the focus was on re-vitalizing South Lincoln with improvements to the train station and the business make-up. She noted that SLPIC formed sub-committees to work on different aspects of proposed plans, but now things have changed, and it makes sense to restructure or even terminate it.

RR noted that there are other commercial areas and opportunities in Town where similar planning efforts could be applied.

MO suggested that a restructuring of SLPIC to a smaller committee could include five members: 2 Planning Board members, 1 Board of Selectmen, 1 Housing member, and a fifth member to be determined. Staff for the committee would be Jennifer Burney and/or Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie. The charge of the committee should include fairly formalized public outreach and there should be regularly scheduled meetings.

The Board agreed on next steps:

1. Review and modify the SLPIC charge as necessary to incorporate suggestions at this meeting.
2. Get on the BOS calendar
3. Finalize the composition of the new SLPIC committee.
4. Discuss who should be the 5th member of the new SLPIC committee

MO opened the discussion to public comment.

Connie Ohlsten: Ms. Ohlsten thanked the Board for their response and asked the Board how the structure of the process worked. The Board stated that the new SLPIC Committee would be advisory to the Planning Board and that any new zoning would need to be voted at Town Meeting. SLPIC does not have the power by itself to enact any zoning changes.

Jessica Packineau: Ms. Packineau thanked the Board for listening to the residents. At first she did not think that the Planning Board had been listening when the neighborhood showed up to the public meetings but she was grateful that the Board was taking the time to reflect on what would benefit the Town.

June Mathews: Ms. Mathews seconded everything that Connie and Jessica said. As a resident of South Lincoln, she was concerned with impacts to the neighborhood. She was concerned with increased density, changes to the existing rural environment, and increased traffic. She thought this meeting showed that the Planning Board is going in the right direction.

Kim Manuell: As a resident of the Flying Nuns she asked that the Board try to get the word out to renters. She noted that official notices only go to the owners of property. She suggested using a sandwich board or flyers because not everyone is on Lincoln Talk.

GT noted that getting the word out is always an issue. RR noted that resident associations or neighborhood captains are a good way to help get information distributed.

Jeanine Taylor: Ms. Taylor said that she did not have much to add to June Mathews' eloquent words.

Jane Herlacher: Ms. Herlacher said that she was glad to see this latest iteration of the South Lincoln process and looked forward to seeing its progress.

LD thought it would be a good idea to add someone who is a resident most affected from the community to the SLPIC committee. MO suggested that the BOS may have a suggestion for the fifth member of the committee. RR thought that there are many stakeholders and that they all should be included in the broader group that regularly attends SLPIC meeting to give feedback.

A final comment was for the restructured SLPIC committee to take timely minutes.

Business:

RR made a motion to approve the May 12, 2020 minutes. LD Seconded. Roll Call: MO aye, RR aye, GT aye, LD aye, SG aye. Passed 5-0.

Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie informed the Board of the Minute Man National Park proposed shuttle feasibility study that was beginning. The study would see if it will be feasible to have a shuttle that would give visitors access to the Park's Revolution 250 events celebrating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. The purpose of the shuttle would be to have visitors park once and then take the shuttle to the events and historical sites in Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord. Ms. MacKenzie suggested that the shuttle could make a stop at Lincoln Station to bring visitors to the events who have taken the train to Lincoln. MO thought it was a good idea. GT noted that it could be used to take advantage of the rail station and relieve traffic from cars. SG agreed.

Ms. MacKenzie also updated the Board regarding the Battle Road Byway's recent submission of its application to designate the Byway as a federal All American Road.

GT made a motion to adjourn. SG Seconded. Roll Call: SG aye, RR aye, GT aye, MO aye, LD aye. Passed 5-0.

Approved as amended June 9, 2020