

TOWN OF LINCOLN

SLPAC MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

PRESENT: Margaret Olson, Gary Taylor, James Craig, Allen Van der Meulen

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie

PV-M welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Organization - Elect chairperson, discuss OML protocols (rotation & approval of minutes) and timing of meetings.

Margaret Olson nominated Gary Taylor noting his background in the previous SLPIC committee, housing, and planning. James Craig agreed and noted that it would be preferable to have a Planning Board member as the chair since this committee from the Planning Board. Gary Taylor accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations.

MO made a motion to appoint Gary Taylor as Chair of this SLPAC committee. James Craig seconded. Roll call: AM aye, MO aye, JC aye, GT aye. The motion passed 4-0.

The committee agreed to rotate taking the minutes. PV-M will do the first set. All meetings will be recorded and posted on the Town website. GT volunteered to take minutes for the next meeting.

The committee discussed how often to meet. GT thought it important to meet every two weeks and that some of the meetings be in the evening in response to requests from South Lincoln residents. The committee members were polled as to their availability. MO and JC preferred a regular rotating schedule of morning and evening meetings. AM said he was flexible with a few exceptions. GT noted that there would also be a once a month meeting at the Planning Board. AM thought that having a spread of meetings at different times would provide the best access. MO suggested that access be given to the public through the website that would allow questions to be submitted to the committee through PV-M.

The committee agreed on an alternating schedule of morning/evening meetings. The schedule will be the first Friday of the month at 7:30am and the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm. The SLPAC discussion will be on the Planning Board agenda on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm.

Tim Higgins next updated the committee on the Diversity Roundtable series and the Virtual SOTT. There is a place holder for a discussion on South Lincoln. The presentation

can be anything that this committee or the Planning Board sees fit. In addition, the RLF will be at the BOS meeting on October 5th to explain existing conditions of the Mall.

2. Review charge, lessons learned from previous efforts.

The committee decided to leave the review of the charge for the next meeting to give everyone a chance to review the charge. The next meeting will be used to establish goals considering the charge.

The committee next discussed lessons learned from previous efforts. MO noted that the immediate neighborhood was concerned with traffic and density. Many people think the Mall is fine as it is. It is important to now consider the effects of the pandemic and what life might look like afterwards. Is there increase demand for housing outside of the city? Are local businesses busier? The Planning Board has heard from one owner of a commercial building that is empty and not economically viable.

JC thought that the committee needs to do a better job to answer the “why” of any proposed changes. Also, it is important to have the RLF join this group for a discussion of their thoughts and concerns. AM also suggested that owners of small businesses in South Lincoln be invited for a discussion.

GT also noted we do not know how the pandemic will affect train ridership and the Mall. The train is important to the residents of the Town as well as to the small businesses such as Donelans. He hoped that a discussion with the RLF would inform the committee. He also noted residents’ concerns with preserving middle housing in the Lincoln Station area and there needs to be a discussion about focusing on a smaller area. MO agreed and noted that the Burlington Mall is taking advantage of lower traffic during the pandemic for construction. AM noted that Donelans has seen increased traffic and sales during the pandemic. He also stated that the Housing Commission is concerned about the evaporation of middle housing in the Town.

GT suggested that it would be a good time to hear from members of the public. PV-M polled the attendees.

Sara Mattes: There will be a long time before the dust settles from the pandemic. It would be interesting to hear from the Mall. It is a difficult task to know what the wants and needs of the Town will be post pandemic.

Steven Smith: It is pertinent for housing to be affordable. He also agrees that none of us know what the situation will be post pandemic.

Connie Ohlsten: Would like to hear how Oriole Landing is leasing up. It will be interesting to work with the RLF as to what businesses will be viable for the Lincoln Station area. She also agrees that we need to preserve the Flying Nuns for middle housing.

Jane Herlacher: Thinks all the comments are great.

JC has asked for the occupancy numbers at Oriole Landing. PV-M reported that the final certificate of occupancy has been issued and leasing was soft because of the pandemic but has picked up in the last couple of weeks. In addition, there has been a good response for the affordable units.

Iris Hoxha: Thinks that the Town needs to dig into the data points available regarding the impacts on traffic, businesses, the environment, and middle range housing. This data will help inform the residents as they think about how to make decisions and understand how to think about the challenges that are facing as a Town.

Andrew Glass: Stated that he was encouraged that SLPAC is considering having liaisons from other Boards and Committees. This was a model that worked well for the school committee and their respective connectivity to town citizens. The Historic Commission is the front line for seeing demolition requests and are trying to preserve smaller housing units and he would like for the Historic Commission to have a liaison to the SLPAC committee. Mr. Glass thinks that starting the planning process for South Lincoln is important so that the process can have broad input of ideas and expertise.

MO left the meeting at this time.

GT suggested that we put liaisons on the SLPAC agenda for the next meeting. He also asked P-VM to send the members of the committee a three-month schedule to review for conflicts so that it can be posted on the website as soon as possible. The next meeting's agenda will include a review of the charge and liaison positions.

JC made a motion to adjourn. GT seconded. Roll Call: AM aye, GT aye, JC aye. Motion passed 3-0.

Approved October 2, 2020