

TOWN OF LINCOLN
SLPAC MINUTES
OCTOBER 2, 2020

PRESENT: Margaret Olson (departed at 8:00), James Craig, Allen Vander Meulen, Gary Taylor.

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie

The Zoom meeting was also attended by Connie Ohlsten, a South Lincoln resident.

1. Business

The Committee first addressed the minutes from the meeting of September 18, 2020. AV moved and GT seconded that the minutes be approved as amended. Roll Call: MO aye, JC aye, GT aye AV aye.

2. Liaisons/Letter Policy

Liaisons and opportunities for public input were then discussed. Tom Sander will be the liaison from the Finance Committee and Andrew Glass for the Historical Commission. GT noted that Jim Henderson had indicated willingness to represent the Conservation Commission. The Committee also felt that the Rural Land Foundation (RLF) should be represented as well. PV will extend invitations to the ConCom and RLF.

There was then a lengthy discussion of whether to have other liaisons, particularly for residents of South Lincoln. There is a group of South Lincoln residents (including Ms. Ohlsten) that has been very active in expressing concerns about rezoning. JC thought that we should take a broad approach to liaisons. GT expressed concern about designating a single, specific liaison for all South Lincoln residents when there might be differences in views among the residents. The recent e-mail communication from Mr. Chris McCarthy, also a South Lincoln resident, was mentioned as an example of a different view. MO indicated that if there were a liaison representing an organized group of South Lincoln residents, the members of the group and their interests should be provided to the Committee. Ms. Ohlsten was asked if she would confer with the concerned residents to see if they would be interested in proceeding in this manner, and she agreed to do so.

Mr. McCarthy's e-mail raised a question regarding a policy with respect to the disclosure of communications received by the Committee. PV said that Mr. McCarthy sent an e-mail, and people might want e-mail communications to become public. All agreed that communications reflecting input to SLPAC's deliberations should be made public and that this policy should be reflected on the SLPAC page of the town's website. PV will follow up with Mr. McCarthy about disclosure of the content of his e-mail.

3. Timetable and Process

JC raised the question of opportunities for public input and feedback and suggested that we provide regular dedicated times for public participation. After some discussion, it was agreed that we would dedicate the first hour of our regularly scheduled evening meeting every other month. That would give us a feedback session every other month, and as the first item on the agenda, interested parties would have a specific time and would not have to wait through other business for an opportunity to speak. It was also suggested that people should be able to send in questions to be addressed at the feedback sessions. PV will put a note on the SLPAC webpage.

The Committee then moved to the topic of what SLPAC should shoot for in terms of the timing of a proposal on how to proceed in South Lincoln. GT noted that with the pandemic there is a lot of uncertainty, so it will not be possible to move quickly. The earliest we might have something ready would be the SOTT, in November of next year. Most members thought that even this would be too ambitious. MO said that she liked aggressive targets but noted that we might just be ready to report out by then and have a proposal ready for Town Meeting in March of 2022. All were comfortable with that approach.

The discussion turned to materials to be reviewed as a foundation for moving forward. The Comprehensive Long Range Plan dated September 22, 2009 is the key document that Committee members should review. AV noted that it was over 300 pages long. PV pointed out that only certain portions (primarily the early sections) are relevant to SLPAC's charge and that the Plan is available on Lincoln's website. Another relevant document is the Planning Board's now not-so-recent study of South Lincoln options. GT mentioned that Bob Domnitz at a recent PB meeting discussed a study he did using data from 2010 on housing affordability in Lincoln at various income levels. PV has it available, and it might be worth updating. Ms. Ohlsten noted that a lot has transpired since 2010, and this needs to be factored into our considerations. [MO left the meeting at this point.]

4. Former SLPIC Subgroups

GT brought up the subject of potential ongoing work by for SLPIC subgroups, which were Zoning, Wayfinding, Placemaking and MBTA. SLPAC has taken on the zoning issues. Wayfinding has been quite successful with signage and branding. PV noted that a second phase of the Wayfinding effort is still in progress in cooperation with the de Cordova Museum. All agreed that this should continue, and that other grants/funding should be pursued. Placemaking was focused upon improving venues around Lincoln Station Mall, and the Committee agreed that it makes no sense to pursue this further until there is resolution on a way forward at the Mall. Since transportation-oriented development is a key issue for South Lincoln, everyone agreed that efforts to improve MBTA facilities and service at Lincoln Station must be continued. AV was a member of the SLPIC MBTA team, and he agreed to carry it forward with Andrew Glass, Lincoln's liaison to the MBTA. AV raised the question of transportation options other than the Commuter Rail. The Committee agreed that efforts to develop bus shuttles and support/promote outbound (to

Lincoln) traffic. should be a part of the MBTA effort. At the next meeting we should consider adding more people to this activity.

5. Scope of SLPAC Activity

The geographic scope of proposed rezoning was a major point of contention encountered by SLPIC. The question of narrowing the scope of any rezoning, or whether to rezone at all (instead of using an Overlay District) is critical in moving forward. JC suggested that scope should be our first area of concern. He also noted that the unresolved issue of septic treatment capacity could constrain the scale of any potential redevelopment effort and that the appetite of the RLF to undertake a major project at the Mall must also be well established. GT said that scope might be affected by the willingness of The Community Builders (owners of Lincoln Woods and the septic treatment plant) to cooperate with redevelopment efforts. All agreed that scope should be the key topic at our next meeting.

JC made a motion to adjourn, AV seconded. Roll Call: AV aye, JC aye, and GT aye.

Approved October 20, 2020