

SLPAC Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2020 (via Zoom videoconference)

SLPAC Attendees: Gary Taylor, James Craig, Allen Vander Meulen, Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie

Meeting came to order at 7:33pm.

GT and PVM led an initial discussion on how to better spread word of upcoming SLPAC meetings.

Agreed to provide notice in Lincoln Talk, and Lincoln Squirrel.

Agenda Item: Scope of Lincoln Planning

GT began the discussion by highlighting the 4 different quadrants that make up the "Lincoln Station Area". Used zoning maps to illustrate.

Four quadrants are: Lincoln Woods, the Mall, Lewis Street, Ridge Road/Flying Nuns Apartments.

GT and PVM discussed the zoning challenges/quirks of each quadrant.

Reviewed what prior SLIPC group had been looking at for potential zoning changes.

GT- asked for input from SLPAC members as to what the scope of this SLPAC effort should be.

JC- scope should be limited to Mall area only. Need to work together with/partner with RLF to address the needs of this area.

GT- raised the question of why exclude Lincoln Woods? Likely need to tie in to the Septic System/field which they own in order to expand.

AVM-believed a larger scope was necessary. Look at the area as a whole instead of a piecemeal approach.

Tom Sander (finance committee liaison)- asked about the impact of cost to build out infrastructure/septic-what would cost to the town be?

GT- noted that the prior septic study conducted by CDM was now outdated (over 10 years old). New study needs to be at the top of list of priorities in order to determine what is feasible in this area.

GT noted that TCB would hopefully be motivated to work with the Town on the septic issue as a joint upgrade of the septic plant would avoid failures of systems that are already past life expectancy.

Discussion with GT, PVM, and AVM to include businesses on the opposite side of Lincoln Road from the Mall and Lewis Street as part of scope of SLPAC. Could include additional permitted

uses for these businesses in order to avoid them having to go to ZBA for special permit approval.

GT and JC noted that a limited approach (i.e. smaller scope) would have the benefit of evaluating the concerns noted by residents of the area, concerning increased traffic, noise, etc.

Discussion then turned to how to solicit broader public opinion concerning the scope?

JC- felt that a town wide survey would be beneficial in obtaining a broad public opinion about development in the area.

Survey- could also be useful to address issues of “why” something needs to be done.

Group agreed to attempt to put survey together by December to send out town-wide.

Liaison List:

Group agreed to add liaisons from BOH, RLF, and Conservation Commission.

Septic Study- Group agreed that the request should come from SLPAC to the BOS for funding of a study.

GT- also look for possible grant money opportunities?

PVM- Did not think grant money was likely and that funds for a study will come out of the Town’s consulting budget.

JC- to discuss with BOS and report back.

AVM- noted that in addition to septic, a study of water and electrical systems in that area would also be beneficial.

Agenda Item: Approval of Prior Minutes

JC- made a motion to approve the minutes of the 10/2/2020. Second by AVM. Roll call vote: GT, AVM, JC all AYE.

Public Input:

GT- remainder of the SLPAC meeting to be devoted to public comment. There were many members of the public who wished to comment. PVM then called out each person in order of appearance on her computer screen:

1. Tom Walker- expressed his thanks for an interesting meeting.
2. Mark Ahearn-commented that the survey was a great idea but cautioned against having a “leading” survey. No visual preference. Make it an unbiased survey.

3. Steven Smith- commented that he thought SLPAC was doing a “great job”. If other side of Lincoln Road is included in scope, would that change anything in terms of current ownership rights? Don’t change area so that it’s not residential.
4. Connie Ohlsten-concerned about jumping to “how” and “where” concerning the scope without first answering the “what” are we trying to achieve and “why”? Do we have hard data that mixed use units are the answer? What are the goals?
5. Lynn DeLisi-agrees with Connie. NOTE- her connection was then interrupted/unable to hear her.
6. Susan Holland- agrees with Connie. What are the goals? Is it to achieve more affordable housing? Will any development there just result in more expensive housing? How will zoning achieve more affordable housing?
7. Mark Levinson- echoes Connie’s comments. Why more high density housing? No data to support this? What are the real goals and are alternative solutions being considered?
8. Richard Ohlsten-also echoing Connie’s point. What is the end goal? Not clear on what we are talking about scope wise on the Mall side. Store front retail is “dead”. Urbanites moving to more rural areas. World has changed.
9. Diana Bercel- need to have a comprehensive open ended survey. What do we mean by “diversity”?
10. John Dorr- NOTE- Mr. Dorr’s microphone was not working and he was unable to make a public comment.
11. June Matthews- supports the prior comments that have been made. What do people value in Lincoln, housing, open space? Wants Greenridge/Ridge Road area eliminated from scope. Wants to see dog parks, children’s playground. Don’t “duplicate what we already have”. “Keep the trees”.
12. Bob Domnitz-believes B2 zoning district currently allows for mixed use. PVM commented that a less onerous approval process is needed for businesses in this area (currently a ZBA special permit is required and must be renewed regularly). Bob Domnitz-asked whether Planning Board should review the proposed survey instead of just SLPAC.
13. Mary @ CW (Note- last name not given and this was her screen name). Commented that she is a resident of North Lincoln and believed that this is a town wide issue and must include a broader audience as well.
14. Andrew Glass (HDC liaison)- need to understand what the values and goals of SLPAC are. Engage as many people throughout the entire town as possible. It is challenging to do this and must be an ongoing topic of discussion. Suggested that summary/progress reports from SLPAC would be helpful and could be placed on Lincoln Talk.

15. Lynn DeLisi (Note- resolved her technical issues and wanted to follow up her earlier comments). Survey is a really important way to find out what the Town really thinks and wants. Agreed with Bob Domnitz that Planning Board should see survey before it goes out. Surveys are “hard to do”. Need to have a wide net. Need a whole design for the area.

16. Iris Hoxcha- expressed a desire for “data driven” decisions. Looks forward to a multifaceted plan on how to keep current services offered. Need to think more holistically on how to use the Lincoln Station area.

17. Jason Packineau- supports Connie’s comments about articulation of goals. Need the input of more town citizens.

18. Chris McCarthy- new resident in town. Need to think of a long term vision. Diversity and types of businesses must be addressed.

19. Melissa Shea- said that she came late to the meeting. Moved to Greenridge Road. Anything that takes away from Lincoln’s beauty is sad.

PVM- reminded Group that next meeting is on 10/27/20 as part of a report out to the Planning Board during the Planning Board meeting.

Next regular SLPAC meeting is 11/6/20 at 7:30am.

AVM- commented that while town currently has met its SHI goals, housing cannot now be ignored. Must continue to look at opportunities, wherever they may arise.

GT- in response to the public comments concerning “why” SLPAC is doing this work indicated that over 20 years of work has been done concerning South Lincoln and the Lincoln mall area. Urged people to review the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. Need to get the message out about prior work/studies that have already been performed and the goals that have been identified for this area. These goals are not “recently developed”. Look also at the Town’s vision statement.

AVM- motion to adjourn. GT seconded. Roll call vote: JC, AVM, GT all AYE.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13pm

Respectfully submitted by James Craig.

Approved November 6, 2020