

SLPAC Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2021
Zoom Meeting

PRESENT: Gary Taylor (Chair), Margaret Olson, James Craig. Rachel Drew, the new representative from the Housing Commission, attended but did not vote pending approval of her appointment by the Planning Board

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie

LIAISONS: Andrew Glass, Historical Commission and MBTA, Tom Sander, Finance Committee, Mark Levinson, South Lincoln, Kathy Shepard, Conservation Commission.

OTHER: Patrick Lawler

- Scope of Rezoning Proposal

Discussion of the geographic scope of potential rezoning in the South Lincoln area quickly focused upon legislation that recently was approved by the Massachusetts House and Senate and is now pending approval by the Governor. The legislation lowers the requirement for approval of zoning changes from a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting to a simple majority. Of particular importance to SLPAC, it also mandates higher density multi-family housing development within a half mile of Commuter Rail stations, which would obviously cover the South Lincoln area. MO raised the question about whether it would affect the area around the MBTA bus stop near Hanscom, but the legislation specifies bus stations rather than simple bus stops.

JC noted the legislation required a density of 15 units per acre and asked if any of the multi-family development in South Lincoln meet this standard. Data from earlier work on South Lincoln show that none of the existing developments approach this density. MO wondered about the time frames that would be allowed to meet the density requirements before any penalties would attach. ML pointed out that the only penalties encompassed in the legislation involves the loss of opportunities to participate in state grant programs. GT and PV pointed out the Lincoln has gotten significant grant funding in recent years, and that such funding would be very helpful in moving forward with the rezoning effort, particularly with regard to any funding for a septic treatment plant feasibility study.

MO suggested that we check with the Finance Committee to see how much grant funding Lincoln has received recently. TS suggested that Colleen Wilkins, Lincoln's Finance Director would be the best source of this information. PV will follow up with her.

MO noted that the legislation includes exceptions for towns where septic issues would not allow dense development. Would this cover Lincoln? JC said that we should get an opinion from Town Counsel. There followed a discussion of the questions to pose to Town Counsel. What are the requirements for the "by right" versus the "special permit" sections of the

legislation? What amount of development within a half mile of the train station would be considered “significant”? JC will approach Town Counsel on behalf of the Select Board.

GT then suggested that we postpone further discussion of the geographic scope of any rezoning until the legislation is approved by the Governor and we have the opinion of Town Counsel.

- Septic System Assessment

PV presented an update of the draft TCB septic treatment study proposal with CDM. JC raised the question of going out to get bid proposals from other firms, and if we do whether we would have to go with the lowest bid. PL said he didn’t think so, and GT noted an exception in the state bidding requirements for engineering services.

PL noted that the CDM proposal seemed to assume that the Town would take over operation of the TCB treatment plant, and that it doesn’t make sense for the Town to be involved in this manner. He also suggested that we break the study proposal into pieces because moving forward cooperatively with TCB would be much cheaper than having to build a separate, new plant. There was consensus that the proposal should be phased, the initial phase assessing improving the TCB plant, and a second phase, if needed, to study development of a new plant. GT agreed that the work should be phased, but that both phases should be included in the requests for bids so that TCB would be aware that we were prepared to pursue other options.

TS requested that we be sure to address lifetime costs including O&M in any study. PL said that engineers would be able to estimate O&M costs for new plants, but that O&M data for the TCB plant would have to come from TCB.

Action items: 1) JC and GT will seek a meeting with TCB; 2) PV, GT and PL will finalize bid proposal documents; 3) PL will identify other firms that should be approached for bids

- Approval of December 4, 2020 minutes

MO made a motion to approve the minutes of December 4, 2020. JC Seconded. Roll Call: GT aye, JC aye, MO aye. The motion passed 3-0.

- Other

PV reminded all that the South Lincoln traffic impact study would be presented at the Planning Board meeting on February 9th and that Rachel Drew would be approved as the Housing Commission representative to SLPAC at the next PB meeting.

JC made a motion to adjourn. MO Seconded. Roll Call: MO aye, JC aye, GT aye.

Approved February 5, 2021