

DRAFT PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

June 14, 2022

PRESENT: Robert Domnitz (Chair), Ephraim Flint, Margaret Olson, Gary Taylor

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie, Jennifer Curtin

7:00 PM Site Plan Review, Sections 6.6 & 17.7: William Hobbs & Caroline Mitchell, 26 Longmeadow Road, Parcel 178-24-0. Site Plan Review for the addition of a screened porch and portico to an existing single-family home in a cluster subdivision. Vote Expected.

Jennifer Curtin presented the project as submitted by the applicant. A portion of the rear side of the house will be demolished and replaced with a 269 square foot, one-story screened porch. It will not project beyond the side of the house and should not be visible from the road. It will be 35' from the side lot line at the closest point.

A 3' x 8' portico will be mounted to the north face of the house to provide cover for a door adjacent to the garage. It will be 59' from the roof overhang to the closest side lot line. The height of the porch structure will be 12' 8". The calculated gross floor area after construction will be 5,747 square feet.

The project is subject to Site Plan Review because the work makes a major modification to the approved site plan in a cluster subdivision.

The project complies with the requirements and setbacks of the Longmeadow Cluster Documents.

The lighting will be 4 sconces, 3000k color temp, 800 lumens, one in the porch roof overhang, two on the side of the house at the portico, one at the exterior porch door.

The project will not impact landscape, open space, circulation, or screening on the site. The canopy and porch design elements are consistent with the aesthetics of the existing home.

All abutters were duly notified. The Planning and Land Use Department did not receive any request for plans or comments on the application.

MO said that she uses the trail easement that runs through the property and this project seems innocuous.

BD asked for confirmation that there will be no trees removed and David Whitney, the architect for the project, confirmed.

BD added that the applicant's submission stated that the width requirements under the cluster were 100 feet. The cluster documents are difficult to read but appear to state that it is 160 feet. However, the project complies with that requirement.

MO moved to approve the project as submitted. GT seconded. Roll Call: BD aye, GT aye, MO aye, EF aye.

7:15PM Business

MO said that we had planned to discuss accessory apartments at this meeting, however she did not have time to write up a draft of the changes.

EF said that we should discuss what we are trying to accomplish ahead of drafting changes.

MO said she has started writing a section on goals for updating the accessory apartment section of the bylaw and preserving the look and feel of Lincoln and promoting energy efficiency.

GT said that starting with the towns vision statement and Comprehensive Long Range Plan will help determine overall goals.

BD said that we should discuss accessory apartment goals and research projects at the next meeting when LD is in attendance.

Discussion of B1 and B2 Business Districts

PVM shared a presentation with an overview of current B1 and B2 zoning.

In addition, she added information on how much lot area is needed for different types of units supported by septic. The form of the building can impact the area needed so that more townhomes could be supported than single family homes on the same lot size.

BD said that septic and wastewater capacity appear to be fundamental limitations to housing. He added that B1/B2 are not typically residential.

PVM said that these districts could be a good option for small lot neighborhoods with multifamily housing that fits New England character to address middle housing needs.

GT added that rezoning and changing regulations can also promote commercial success in the mall.

PVM explained the differences between the B1 and B2 zones. B2 was historically zoned for light industrial uses. It is reasonable to regulate high impact uses with special permits. Over time, however, uses from the B1 retail business zone were added to the B-2 district which also require a Special Permit. She added that these regulations put off small businesses from coming to Lincoln.

GT said that the uses that require a Special Permit need to be renewed every three years and are non-transferable. This makes it difficult to sell and maintain businesses.

PVM asked what Lincoln envisions for the business district and specifically for Lewis Street located within the village center. It may have been desirable to have light industrial uses near the railroad in the past, but it may not be desirable now, especially in light of efforts to create a walkable commercially viable village center.

Jennifer Glass asked what the visioning process will be for the Town and how the discussion can be brought to a wider audience before the Board drafts new bylaws.

GT said it is important to explain things in a way that makes sense and start with building blocks and go from there.

BD said that we need to determine what uses we want to encourage and discourage. Changes could potentially push out less lucrative businesses. High level discussions should be initiated by the Board before the issues are brought to the public.

MO agreed.

EF asked what types of additional businesses would complement the existing businesses.

GT said that the ambulance service provides support that our fire department cannot provide which allows for shorter response times. He noted that the ambulance provides a valuable service to the Town and should be supported and kept.

PVM said that is not listed within the allowed uses so they require a Special Permit, but the Town could change the zoning to allow the use by right.

Mrs. Glass said that these are detailed discussions and the process to engage the town should draw on what was learned in the survey to discuss what people want to see in the center and how to get there.

GT said that the survey showed varying opinions and we need to figure out what the Board thinks is worthwhile to pursue to preserve the Town's identity and services.

BD said this is the first discussion the Board has had, and the survey results showed that the majority were interested in preserving economic viability and somewhat less of a majority were interested in housing diversity. We need to take some leadership and figure things out and then go forward with more input from the town.

MO said we need to give people something more concrete to react to.

Mrs. Glass said it is a combination of not entirely open-ended questions but taking what we have already learned and structure conversations on what people think about what these ideas mean to them before proposing bylaw changes.

MO agreed that we need to have a broad conversation with the Town. The Board, however, often hears from a narrow subset of the Town in public hearings which is a problem.

PVM said we received an enormous response to the survey and got a lot of good high-level feedback and consensus to support businesses, create a viable and sustainable village center, provide housing options, promote climate initiatives, and preserve the character of the Town. The next step may be to have structured conversations around those goals and determine what those goals look like to people.

GT said that it comes down to what the project being presented is. In his experience, people who support certain goals in general may oppose it when it is next door.

EF said we need to figure out how to translate the bylaw for B1 and B2 into what development may look like in south Lincoln.

PVM will send around the concept of the Historic New England neighborhood which is small lots with small scale multifamily houses in a village center in a way that creates community. It is not housing on a large scale and could be a good fit on small streets in the village center.

BD said that direction could work in Lincoln. People are not opposed to more housing and development, but they do not want a large housing project.

EF said there is room to balance size and aesthetics.

BD asked what the Board thinks about the aesthetics of Battle Road Farm since those are multifamily colonial structures, particularly whether that style would be appropriate for Lewis Street

MO said the town also has a substantial modernist history so regulations should support that.

PVM said we do not have to designate architectural style but create a neighborhood that fosters community.

MO said we have the time to start conversations the fall and we need to figure out how to engage a broad audience.

BD said we can start outreach at the State of the Town meeting in November.

Mrs. Glass said State of the Town could be a good opportunity to start the high level connections of the various interest in Town. The Climate Action Planning process will ask the questions we are discussing such as who we want to be as a town and how to get there.

GT said that the Board needs to come to some agreement on a few priorities in the next meetings.

Approve May 24, 2022 minutes

GT moved to approve the minutes as amended. MO seconded. Roll Call. BD aye, EF aye, GT aye, MO aye

Approved on June 28, 2022