

Lincoln Planning Board

APPROVED

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST, 12, 2015 – 6:00PM
LINCOLN TOWN HALL - 148 MAIN STREET, LINCOLN NH

Present: Chairman Jim Spanos, John Hettinger, Paula Strickon, Ron Beard (alternate & Fire Chief)

Members Excused: Vice-Chairman R. Patrick Romprey, Taylor Beaudin (alternate), Norman Belanger (alternate), Callum Grant (alternate), OJ Robinson - Selectmen's Representative

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Town Manager and Town Planner Alfred "Butch" Burbank, Planning and Zoning Administrator Carole Bont, and Wendy Tanner (recorder)

Guests:

- **Karen Fitzgerald** – Landscape Architect - FitzDesign Inc., 1222 Bennington Road, Francestown, NH 03043-3014

- I. CALL TO ORDER** by the Chairman of Planning Board; announcement of excused absences, if any, and seating of alternates(s), if necessary.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Ron Beard was seated.

Patrick Romprey, OJ Robinson, Norman Belanger, Taylor Beaudin and Callum Grant were excused.

- II. CONSIDERATION** of meeting minutes from:

- July 22, 2015

There was not a quorum of members who attended the July 22, 2015 meeting needed to approve the minutes so the meeting approval will be continued to the next Planning Board meeting.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. 6:00 PM –Work Session

B. Planning Board Rules of Procedure revisions:

1. Policy re: taped minutes
2. Number of authorized alternates to the Planning Board

Motion to approve revisions to the Planning Board Rules of Procedure

Motion: Paula Strickon **Second:** John Hettinger

All in Favor: (4-0)

C. Downtown/Main Street Committee – Selectman Ludwig request to create a Downtown/Main St. Committee

Town Manager Burbank presented Selectman Ludwig's request to create a Downtown/Main St. Committee. Hettinger said that a Village Core Committee was created several years ago. The membership of the Committee included participation from Loon Mountain, the White Mountains Visitor Center (Jane O'Connor) and a number of other people who own motels and other types of businesses in town. Hettinger said that as time went on the number of active participants got less and less.

Chairman Spanos said that it is difficult to get people to commit to being a member of a committee and eventually they lose interest.

Town Manager Burbank said that he was not sure exactly what Ludwig was thinking about, but that recent talk about the skateboard park has spurred interest with groups both for and against the skateboard park. Town Manager Burbank said that the Selectmen did not take a position either way about creating a Downtown/Main Street Committee. The Selectmen felt that creating this type of committee should fall under the jurisdiction of Town Planning or Town Designing and, therefore, the Planning Board should make the decision about whether or not to investigate creating such a subcommittee.

Strickon said that if the Planning Board creates a committee, the committee must have a structure and a mission. Strickon felt that the Planning Board cannot just say "let's just form a committee" without any mission or goals for the committee.

Chairman Spanos said there would need to be specific issues for the committee to look at.

Town Manager Burbank said that Ludwig asked for a "Downtown/Main Street Committee" committee. Perhaps she thinks that the committee would determine what the downtown and Main Street should look like. For example, perhaps the committee would decide that the town should expand the public waterfront park and that the skateboard park would be a part of the larger public waterfront park. A new Downtown/Main Street Committee might be a resurgence of the old Village Core Committee with a new mission.

Chairman Spanos said that he does not think that there would be any public participation in this committee at all.

Town Manager Burbank said that it is hard to find people that will serve on committees. Is there anything new that might come up that would reinvigorate interest in the Village Core Committee? Town Manager Burbank felt that forming a Downtown/Main Street Committee was not a bad idea, however, from the public's perspective, it would be yet another study committee and the town has been studied quite a bit over the past several years.

Strickon said that we have the survey results that is the basis for a master plan. We could distill out of the survey results what the community's concerns are about the downtown and Main

Street and then address those concerns in the Master Plan. Strickon asked what would the committee do. Would it look into the feasibility of doing those things?

Town Manager Burbank said that perhaps this study committee could be responsible for coming to the Planning Board with suggested zoning changes or requesting updated traffic studies and/or parking studies.

Chairman Spanos said that the Town already has a couple of traffic studies that the town paid good money for. Town Manager Burbank agreed that these were good traffic studies although many of the suggestions that came out of the studies have not been implemented.

Chairman Spanos asked if the Board of Selectmen took a vote on creating a “downtown” committee. Town Manager Burbank said that the Board of Selectmen did not take a vote, but suggested that the request for a Downtown/Main Street Committee should be brought before the Planning Board. The Planning Board’s minutes should reflect that the request was brought before the Planning Board and what the decision of the Planning Board was.

Strickon asked if Ludwig gave any assistance to the Town Manager as to what she thought such a committee would do.

Town Manager Burbank said that according to Ludwig, a number of folks have approached her asking her to help form a committee to study the downtown. Town Manager Burbank did not have any further information than that.

Hettinger said that the Planning Board should wait until the results of the survey are completed and the Master Plan comes together because those results will give the Planning Board a lot of direction.

Town Manager Burbank said that although some of the results of the survey may have been made public, some folks do not agree with either the form that the survey took or the results of the survey. Those matters may have spurred some people to tell Ludwig that a Downtown/Main Street Committee was needed. Town Manager Burbank said that Hettinger made a good point; the Master Plan should come together first and then the Planning Board could have a discussion about whether a sub-committee specifically on the Downtown/Main Street was needed.

Chairman Spanos said that it would not be beneficial to stop the research that has been done to date to create the Master Plan just to form a Downtown/Main Street Committee and start all over.

Town Manager Burbank agreed that we have come a long way on the Master Plan process and we should not stop the current progress.

Fire Chief Beard said that he thought creating a Downtown/Main Street Committee should wait until we start to prepare for the next master plan (in another ten years). Fire Chief Beard felt that some of the people who would want to be on this committee are the worst offenders in town as far as following the rules and they would be trying to affect policy. Beard felt that forming such

a committee at this time would not serve any positive purpose; the offenders should not get immunity because they were on the committee.

Chairman Spanos polled the Planning Board to see if they agreed with Fire Chief Beard. Strickon and Hettinger agreed with Fire Chief Beard. Strickon said that the Planning Board is in the process of obtaining information for the Master Plan. Creating a new Downtown/Main Street Committee now would only hinder the creation of the Master Plan.

Chairman Spanos said that the Planning Board feels it is premature to create such a committee. If a group of citizens wants to get together and give their ideas about the Downtown/Main Street to the Planning Board, they would be heard.

Town Manager Burbank said that he will take this information back to the Selectmen.

IV. CONTINUING AND OTHER BUSINESS (Staff and Planning Board Member/Alternates).

- A. 6:00 PM – Karen Fitzgerald of FitzDesigns with an analysis report for Master Plan Surveys. Look at the Statement of Vision in the 2003 Master Plan. Make a checklist with bullets with what you want to see for Lincoln in the next ten years based on the survey results and think about how the survey input will affect the goals of the Master Plan.

This is a work session for the Master Plan, no public participation will be taken.

Fitzgerald said that there have been no big changes of the survey since the last meeting. We are looking at the “Vision” section tonight. Fitzgerald showed the Planning Board three examples of Visions from other towns in New Hampshire:

- Town of Washington
- Town of Peterborough
- Town of Londonderry

Bont thought that it might also be important to look at Visions from towns that also has a ski area located within the town. There were included in the packet given to the Planning Board.

Examples were from:

- Town of Franconia where Cannon Mountain is located;
- Town of Carroll where Bretton Woods is located;
- Town of Lyme where the Dartmouth Skiway is located; and
- Town of Gilford where Gunstock is located.

Fitzgerald said that she is working with Newport which is similar to Lincoln, but with not as much rental property.

The current Lincoln vision statement is:

The purpose of this multifaceted plan is to: preserve and protect the cohesive nature of this town's character; reinforce and develop resources that strengthen both our sense of place and the bonds between our citizens; and continue to develop a town that promotes a safety, comfort, convenience, beauty, and pride and enhances the quality of life through ongoing opportunities for employment, education, and community recreation.

Fitzgerald stated that she would be going through each of the goals on the 2003 Master Plan that were stated for the “Vision” and get comments and feedback from the Planning Board. Fitzgerald stated that the goals direct the overall vision.

The General Goal:

The Town should preserve and enhance its unique design characteristics, features and identify the village, while at the same time creating locations in Lincoln which connect and bond all of the town residents.

Many people replied on the survey that they wanted to see an upgrade in the downtown area and at the same time to keep the size appeal of a small town.

Chairman Spanos asked how you keep the town small without having to tell people they are not allowed to develop their property.

Fitzgerald said that towns can have guidelines to design development.

The Planning Board felt that the folks who want the look and feel of a “quaint mill town” are ten (10) years too late. The Planning Board discussed the town in reference to the comments on the survey. Many people want to keep the “quaint” mill town look. The Planning Board felt that since the Mill has been closed and has been gone for over twenty (20) years now, the Mill Town look is going away. The Planning Board discussed that one side of Main Street is more quaint and residential and the other side of Main Street looks very commercial. Town Manager Burbank was not sure how to keep Lincoln from looking like North Conway. People keep coming to Lincoln and traffic jams are going to continue to occur.

The Planning Board discussed a number of ideas about how to keep Main Street looking the same, like restricting businesses to be only one or two stories in height. Chairman Spanos said that the lots in Lincoln are not big enough for the type of development they have in North Conway. People would have to purchase multiple lots and merge them in order to create the sizes of businesses they have in North Conway.

Town Manager Burbank thinks that there will eventually be a surge of developers who purchase one lot on Main Street and then the adjacent lot one lot back from Main Street. Town Manager Burbank said that the current vision statement is not accurate for the way the town is today. The current vision statement was written over ten (10) years ago and things have occurred in the interim to change the dynamics of the town.

Bont mentioned that there are a number of very large developments that have already been approved on the other side of the river prior to her and Town Manager Burbank’s arrival. Town Manager Burbank said that several large hotels were planned and approved on the other side of the river. The size of these hotels are possibly larger than RiverWalk.

As more service businesses are built in town, more workforce housing will be required. Town

Manager Burbank said that he recently spoke to a man who has experience with this type of tourist-related development. The man explained that in his experience, when building stops, it stops abruptly because the whole real estate market stops. Bont said the man explained that people stopped buying the second homes and condo units because they cannot hire anyone at a relatively low wage to fix, clean or maintain the units. Furthermore, the local restaurants and other business that provide services for tourists also suffer because they also cannot get employees willing to work for low-paying wages who live close enough to work for them.

Chairman Spanos said that the current administration (government) is very pro-union. Consequently, the government reduced the number of foreign students who were permitted to come to work in the US (and here in Lincoln) in the past and who were willing to work for less pay than the union folks.

Town Manager Burbank felt that a new vision statement would need to take into account the changes that have taken place over the past ten (10) years; the current vision statement is no longer accurate.

The Planning Board discussed the differences between the two different sides of the Main Street. One side of Main Street is comprised of small businesses with small homes located on the lots behind them. The other side of Main Street looks more commercial with larger businesses like Rite Aid, Dunkin Donuts and McDonalds. The Planning Board discussed where the boundaries of the Village Center are and about possibly changing or enlarging the Village Center boundaries.

The Planning Board members felt that the large buildings in town “got away” from the Planning Boards that approved them. Town Manager Burbank felt it would be a challenge for the Planning Board to get Main Street to look like an old traditional New England village.

Fitzgerald told the Planning Board to look at the survey results; see what changes people want to make to Main Street. Figure out what that changes will look like; write the changes into the Master Plan. Fitzgerald said that perhaps a two story height limit would help address some of the workforce housing issues in town if the Town coupled that with enabling property owners to create apartments above their retail stores.

The current zoning setbacks and the size of the parcels of land still available for development were discussed. Fitzgerald said that perhaps the downtown “Village Center” itself as described on the back of the Master Plan Survey needs to have its own separate goal. [The “Village Center” as shown on the map and described on the back of the Master Plan Survey is larger than the “Village Center District (VC): as defined the Land Use Plan Ordinance.]

The Planning Board discussed the General Use (GU) District. The Planning Board discussed US Route 3 in North Lincoln and what the look and feel should be in that area. Chairman Spanos said that the zoning is different on US Route 3 so the vision and feel of that area should be different than the Village Center (VC) along NH Route 112.

The Planning Board discussed the fact that there are significant areas of General Use (GU) land along both US Route 3 and NH Route 112 (Main Street), however, the character, feel and relative

development of the two areas are really very different. Town Manager Burbank asked if two visions should be created, one for the General Use (GU) District area along NH Route 112 on the sides of the Village Center and a different vision for the General Use (GU) District area along US Route 3 in North Lincoln.

The Planning Board discussed the zoning differences between the General Use (GU) District and the Village Center (VC) District to help determine the differences between what could be built on US Route 3 versus what could be built on NH Route 112 in the Village Center (VC) District. All the land in the US Route 3 North Lincoln area is privately owned. Creating two (2) different General Use (GU) Districts could be helpful for making changes to the General Use (GU) in the US Route 3 area without changing the General Use (GU) District along NH Route 112 around the Village Center.

The Planning Board discussed the following:

- “portable houses”
- “work force housing”
- “clustered housing”
- “open space”. [They determined that the correct terminology for “open space” was “green space”.]
- limitations on development caused by the limitations of private and municipal parking
- traffic issues. [Town Manager Burbank said that trollies were discussed at one time as a means of public transportation. Town Manager Burbank felt that if a trolley or some other form of public transportation was used to bring people into the activities in town that might be a transportation vision that the Planning Board should pursue.]
- retail businesses in the downtown area need pedestrians traffic to support their businesses whereas a business like an auto body shop does not require foot traffic for its business.

Land Use:

Maintain the rural and village center character of the town.

Fitzgerald was taking notes while the Planning Board brainstormed. Fitzgerald said that goal #1 under Land Use for the Village Center would be to reinforce the character the town has in some areas: make it a pedestrian friendly space and encourage walking activities. The second goal might be to allow different commercial and perhaps denser development along US Route 3 in North Lincoln than in the Village Center area. Fitzgerald felt there should be a third goal covering the rest of the town that is not within the Village Center or the Route 3 North corridor.

The Lincoln Industrial Park was discussed. Potential purchasers have expressed their opinion that they feel that the lots in the Industrial Park are too expensive and that they could purchase the same square footage in a larger town for a lower or the same price.

Hettinger said that many of the developers have tried to isolate the traditional swimming holes and the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River itself from public use. Hettinger felt that all the natural recreation areas should be available to all the citizens and visitors that come to town.

Many people who responded to the survey asked for retained access to the river. The Planning Board discussed if limiting gated communities would maintain access of the public to the rivers. There was a discussion about the communities that are already gated.

Fitzgerald said that many people wrote in on the survey that they would like to be able to get from point A to point B on trails and that maintaining linkages between trails was important.

Hettinger said that there was a map that showed all the trails that the town was going to try and ensure that linkage was maintained.

Town Manager Burbank said that access to natural amenities would be a goal.

Economic Development:

Lincoln presently supports many commercial businesses but few scattered industrial businesses. The growth and reliance of Lincoln's economy on the service and trade sector creates a situation where it may be beneficial for the Town to investigate economic development incentives which encourage business diversification of the local employment and business establishment base.

Hettinger said he is concerned that the only employment opportunities for young people who want to come here to live or to stay here after school are low paying jobs in the retail or hospitality industry. Hettinger said that the Town should see if there is some way to stimulate an attraction for architectural firms or medical laboratories. These types of businesses are small but they pay well.

The Planning Board talked about how they could encourage alternative types of business owners to develop in Lincoln. The Board talked about how could they bring in better jobs for engineers or architects, encouraging young families to move to Lincoln.

The Planning Board discussed the following:

- whether “more reliable broadband service” should be a vision or goal
- how to work on improving or creating a stronger infrastructure
- whether diversity should be the main goal of Economic Development
- Fitzgerald said to encourage economic diversity and employment opportunities.
- Chairman Spanos said to take the seasonality out of employment opportunities and make year round employment a goal.

Hettinger said that on the survey people asked for more retail and restaurants in Lincoln.

Based on the age of those surveyed, most of those who responded to the survey were of retirement age or close to it. Bont said that according to the survey responses, there are one hundred thirty (130) people planning to move here fulltime within the next five to ten (5-10) years. This means that many of those moving here will be older (i.e., of retirement age and not with young families).

2010 Median Resident Age in Lincoln:	48.5 years
2000 Median Resident Age in Lincoln:	___ years
1990 Median Resident Age in Lincoln:	___ years
1980 Median Resident Age in Lincoln:	___ years
2010 Median Resident Age in Grafton County:	48.5 years
2000 Median Resident Age in Grafton County:	37.0 years
1990 Median Resident Age in Grafton County:	32.2 years
1980 Median Resident Age in Grafton County:	29.3 years
<i>2010 - NH has the 4th oldest population in US (tied with Florida)</i>	
2010 Median Resident Age in New Hampshire:	43.9 years
2000 Median Resident Age in New Hampshire:	37.1 years
1990 Median Resident Age in New Hampshire:	32.8 years
1980 Median Resident Age in New Hampshire:	30.1 years
2010 Median Resident Age in United States:	37.2 years
2000 Median Resident Age in United States:	35.3 years
1990 Median Resident Age in United States:	32.8 years
1980 Median Resident Age in United States:	30.0 years

US Census Bureau

Most of those surveyed were asking for additional retail shops and restaurants. Town Manager Burbank said that the respondents are not asking for more pizza shops, but rather for higher end or upscale restaurants.

Fitzgerald said that the Town of Lincoln appears to want a diverse population; she does not think that Lincoln has a diverse population right now. Fitzgerald said that the survey respondents recognize that the tourist industry will be the main driver of economic development, but they would like to see efforts to diversify business opportunities.

Fire Chief Beard commented that seasonal businesses are not offering forty (40) hour week jobs and consequently, their employees have to go find their own medical insurance.

Town Manager Burbank said that a lot of private industry is downsizing by purposely going to part time employees to avoid paying the high cost of medical insurance.

The Planning Board discussed people who work from home and the different types of industries that encourage their employees to work from home.

Fitzgerald said she would make changes to the “vision” based on what she has heard and present the Planning Board with her draft changes at the next meeting.

Housing

The citizens of Lincoln enjoy a variety of housing opportunities in both style and affordability. The housing goals listed below will continue to provide citizens with a variety of options.

Fitzgerald felt that the first line of the statement was not true. The Planning Board members agreed.

The Planning Board discussed what affordable and available housing for the workforce was currently available in town. Fitzgerald said that the Town can attract developers who specialize in workforce housing. She suggested that Lincoln go after that money and talk to New Hampshire Housing and be proactive about the type of housing needed.

Town Manager Burbank said that he did not think that there was land left in Lincoln to promote affordable housing. Chairman Spanos said that there are many condominiums in town that are difficult to sell.

The Planning Board discussed population density and how to add more apartments to the current building stock. In order for property owners to add a second story with rental apartments above their retail businesses the density would need to be changed in the zoning regulations.

Chairman Spanos said that in other towns that have town water and sewer they allow four (4) dwelling units per acre and Lincoln barely allows 2 per acre.

43,560 (number of square feet in an acre) divided by 15,000 (square feet minimum lot size per dwelling unit in the General Use (GU) and Rural Residential (RR) Districts) = 2.904 units.

Line 4 in the report should read “elderly and disabled”, not just “elderly”.

The Planning Board discussed current and possible regulations for attached and detached apartments and what was allowed in each of the zones.

At the next work session for the Master Plan will be on September 9, 2015 and will start with Section F. Transportation.

Fitzgerald thanked the Planning Board and left.

Fitzgerald left the meeting.

Driveway Permits

Bont explained to the Planning Board the problem that arises when people submit their plans for a driveway that looks like all of the other driveways in the neighborhood, but do not comply with the Lincoln Driveway Regulations. In this case, many of the driveways in the Forest Ridge neighborhood do not comply with the ordinance. When Public Works Director Bill Willey went to inspect the two proposed driveways on Spruce Drive, he found that many of the driveways in the Forest Ridge development do not comply with the driveway ordinance. The driveway entrances should be a minimum of ten feet (10') wide and a maximum of fifteen feet (15') wide at the curb line. Many of the driveways are wide enough for two cars to drive in side by side.

The Planning Board discussed the width of driveways. Chairman Spanos said that the driveways are on private roads. Town Manager Burbank said that for fire prevention the Town still has to issue driveway permits on private roads.

Bont said that according to Willey, the various Forest Ridge Homeowners' Associations apparently have their own approval systems for driveways.

Town Manager Burbank said that one thing that could happen is that eventually someone could petition the town to take over the private road(s) and make them public. If the roadways and driveways are not built to the standards as set forth in the town ordinances, the town will not take over the road. In the case of Forest Ridge the driveways are too wide.

Fire Chief Beard mentioned that the noncompliant driveways make it difficult in some areas to get a fire truck to the houses where the turns are too sharp. Town Manager Burbank said that driveways are important and they have been overlooked in the past.

Bont said that we should be trying to make sure that the roads and driveways as close to code as we can get in case the town ever should look at taking over the roads. Bont asked the Planning Board what they wanted the staff to do about issuing driveway permits.

Chairman Spanos explained that this driveway ordinance was enacted because of a driveway that was put in the wrong place and not approved.

Town Manager Burbank suggested that Fire Chief Ron Beard and Public Works Director Bill Willey team up to look at the proposed driveways and approve the proposed size and location based on their best judgement and experience. The Planning Board agreed. Once building resumes in "The Landing" development the Planning Board will take a better look at driveways in town.

Junk Yards

Paula Strickon stated that several times a week she makes deliveries on Bog Brook Road. There are too many unregistered vehicles on that road in several locations. The properties on Bog Brook Road look like a car dump.

Town Manager Burbank said the Petersons are under a Cease and Desist Order. The next step is for the Town to take them to court. The son dropped the vehicles from his former business on his parents' properties. Most of the vehicles were towed to remove them from the property the son formerly rented on US Route 3. The vehicles were then dumped at the father's house. The next step in the process is to take legal action.

Strickon was not aware of the legal goings on and was happy to hear something was being done.

- V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OTHER BUSINESS:** Public comment and opinion are welcome during this open session. However, comments and opinions related to

development projects currently being reviewed by the Planning Board will be heard only during a scheduled public hearing when all interested parties have the opportunity to participate.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:20 PM.


Motion: John Hettinger Second: Ron Beard

All in Favor: (4-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Tanner, Planning and Zoning
Recorder

Dated: August 12, 2015


James Spanos, Chairman