

PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE

In 2017 the Planning & Zoning Office issued 95 zoning permits for land development, which marks a slight increase from the 87 permits issued in 2016. A total of 14 permits were issued for new housing units, including seven new single-family homes and seven new apartment units, while eight permits were issued for home additions and 24 permits for new residential accessory structures. Thirteen permits were issued for new commercial uses, including two new home occupation permits, and two for expansions to existing commercial uses, which is a slight increase in new commercial permits from 2016, however a significant decrease in permits issued for the expansion of existing commercial uses.

This year was a transition year for the Planning Commission as three new Commissioners were appointed in 2017 following the departure of three long serving members. Despite vacant seats throughout the year, the Planning Commission dove head first into a review of the Rural Residential Zoning District regulations in an effort to explore ways to better support the preservation of the Town's rural landscapes. This review resulted in the undertaking of a comprehensive review of the allowed uses (town-wide) contained in the Town Zoning Bylaws, which will continue into 2018, as well as the application and receipt of a 2018 Municipal Planning Grant to assist with updating the zoning bylaws to better protect Lyndon's working landscapes while encouraging more aesthetic, compact, development in the Village. Another major undertaking in 2017 involved a nearly yearlong review process for a request to re-zone a parcel of land located at 155 South Street from Residential Neighborhood to Village Commercial. During the latter part of 2017 the Planning Commission worked to develop recommendations and a conceptual plan for the use of the former town garage property, which focus on the use of the space for community recreation. Additional information about this process as well as draft conceptual plans will be available at Town Meeting. As always, copies of the Town Plan and the current Zoning Bylaws are available in the Planning & Zoning Office as well as online on the Town's website www.lyndonvt.org.

The Development Review Board reviewed 25 applications in 2017, including seven (7) minor subdivisions and 17 conditional uses (eight (8) of which also included a site plan review), and one (1) stand-alone site plan. This was a 70 % drop in the volume of applications from the two previous years, however the Board approved several significant commercial projects including a new Dunkin' Donuts on Broad Street, the occupation of a vacant warehouse on the corner of Hill and Williams streets by Aubin Electric, and the relocation and expansion of the Eliminator Pest Control to the former Packing House site on Hill Street. Additionally, the Board anticipates the review of several exciting potential projects in early 2018, including the expansion of the North Country Federal Credit Union, a fitness studio with wellness practitioners, and the adaptive reuse of the former Bag Balm Building as a co-working space.

I would personally like to thank the members of both the Planning Commission and the Development Review Board for their volunteer service to the community, as well as extend a special thanks to Susan Mills, Patrick McLaughlin, Jack Berube, and Dave Cobb who each left Boards in 2017 after many years of service. Both the Planning Commission and Development Review Board have open seats to fill in 2018 and the Town is actively seeking volunteers.

As the Planning Director and Zoning Administrator it is my job to offer guidance to the public regarding municipal or state permits required for land development. Please do not hesitate to stop by my office for assistance or to ask questions about a project. I can be reached by phone at 626-1269 or via email at annie@lyndonvt.org.

Annie McLean
Planning Director and Zoning Administrator