

TOWN OF LYNDON
PLANNING COMMISSION
May 29, 2019 Meeting Minutes
Approved 6/12/19

Planning Commissioners: Sean McFeeley, Sylvia Dodge, Evan Carlson, Susan Hanus, Emily Irwin, Tammy Martel, Ken Mason

Public Official(s): Annie McLean

Press: None

Public: Sarah Lafferty, Steve Gray, Curtis Carpenter, Paul Glenn, Martha Elmes, Joe Buzzi, Dan Daley, Brian Pickard, Darlene Wilson

Sean McFeeley chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 6:02 p.m. and introduced the Envision Lyndon 2020 Town Plan Economic Development Community Planning Workshop. Annie McLean provided some background information on the structure of the Town Plan and facilitated a series of breakout activities designed to capture community input for the Town Plan Update (*see attached community input from workshop*).

Ken Mason made a **motion to approve the minutes of May 22, 2019**. Susan Hanus **seconded the motion**. The Commission **voted 7-0**.

Annie McLean thanked Evan Carlson for designing the Envision Lyndon – 2020 Town Plan Update town-wide mailing, noting the mailer would go out as soon as possible, pending edits from Mr. Carlson. The Commission discussed how best to work on the background/existing conditions text for the Town Plan, with each member selecting a section to draft. Ms. McLean will provide language from the 2015 Town Plan as a starting point. Mr. Carlson suggested that the text for each topic area be shared with community members familiar with that topic area for edits/revisions. Ken Mason suggested that the compilation of community input from each Community Planning Workshop be attached to the meeting minutes and made available on the Town website and inquired about the applicability of developing a tax increment financing (TIF) district in the Village. Discussion about TIFs and other potential tax incentives followed.

Ms. McLean also noted that she had shared a letter from the Agency of Natural Resources addressed to the Town Selectboard detailing proposed updates to the Statewide River Corridor Map. Emily Irwin asked about general information on flood terminology. Ms. McLean offered to share some online resources from Flood Ready Vermont with the Commission.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for June 12th at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: AMclean

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Statewide Economic Development Goal:

To provide a strong and diverse economy that provides satisfying and rewarding job opportunities and that maintains high environmental standards, and to expand economic opportunities in areas with high unemployment or low per capita incomes.

Goals, Objectives, and Actions: What's the Difference?

Our Town Plan is required to provide: A statement of objectives of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services, and facilities, and to protect the environment.

It is helpful to think of goals, objectives, and actions as a hierarchy with the broadest goals at the top, and each subsequent category having increasing levels of specificity, with actions being the most specific. Aim to use clear language with active verbs like study, adopt, enforce, and create.

Goals state a purpose and destination, reflecting the shared vision for the community. They articulate an overarching principle that guides decision-making, providing a framework for the more detailed action statements. The goals within a plan must be internally consistent. Achieving one goal should not prevent or hinder achieving another goal. They should also not be so vague that their meaning is open to many interpretations. They should be both challenging and attainable.

Objectives provide targets for the accomplishment of goals. They should be specific enough that the municipality can determine when the objectives have been met. Effective objectives are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. The time frame (long term, intermediate term, and short term) for the objective should be clear.

Actions are the next steps needed to move toward the objectives. These are concrete activities that can be described in specific terms. Actions should identify the responsible party, the time frame for accomplishment and any necessary resources to get the job done. Actions also include “programs.”

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Current Town Plan Goals, Objectives, and Actions

The Current Town Plan identifies the development of a viable economic base, along with the fostering a business-friendly environment, as a top priority. The Town Plan identifies the following objectives and actions for achieving appropriate economic development in Lyndon (see reverse):

GOALS & ACTIONS – TOWN PLAN 2015

OBJECTIVE: Enhance telecommunications technology to improve broadband access and cell phone coverage.

ACTIONS:

- a) Work with the Vermont Telecommunications Authority to identify appropriate siting areas to serve the portions of Town that are lacking high speed internet and cell service.

OBJECTIVE: Improve the traffic flow on major routes including access and egress from parking areas and side roads.

ACTIONS:

- b) Facilitate traffic flow through downtown Lyndonville to allow downtown businesses to be seen, provide efficient ingress-egress and provide for pedestrian safety.

OBJECTIVE: Preserve rail access and maintain commercial transportation access within the Town.

ACTIONS:

- a) Continue to encourage the redevelopment of the former rail yard with a rail-supported use.

OBJECTIVE: Enhance the relationship among the Town, Village and the academic institutions.

ACTIONS:

- a) Facilitate discussions with LSC on how to better involve college students in the community, with possible mentorships, business internships and student-led initiatives or community projects.
- b) Encourage LSC's Ski Resort Management students to assist the Lyndon Outing Club.
- c) Involve local employers in communicating with local high school students on the key career skills that employers are looking for, the variety of local career options available and the possible career paths to get there.
- d) Encourage local businesses to work with LSC on providing special after hour events and local activities geared to summer conference/workshop attendees.
- e) Improve access for LSC and LI students to downtown Lyndonville businesses and services.

OBJECTIVE: Support the development of retail offerings that are attractive and provide a diverse array of goods and services.

ACTIONS:

- a) Be a tourist friendly community by providing the tourist amenities, publicizing community events and attracting travel groups/organizations.

OBJECTIVE: Identify and support the infrastructure needed for economic growth.

ACTIONS:

- b) Direct new industrial development in and around existing industrial areas, where supporting infrastructure is already located, such as the St. Johnsbury-Lyndon Industrial Park, portions of VT Route 122, U.S. Route 5 and Commercial Lane.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOALS/OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS – PUBLIC INPUT 5/29/19

- Capitalize on existing assets, rec., edu. Opportunities, etc., and move towards working together.
 - Outing link to ed. Institutions, recreational opportunities w/town ...KT is in Lyndon!
 - Work based learning coordinator @ LI to match kids with community and existing businesses.
- Work to attract investment in downtown, i.e. REAP Zone, econ. dev. orgs. (NVDA), downtown designation.
 - Utilization of existing buildings.
 - Attract investment in downtown.
 - *attract high tech and green businesses that would fill existing buildings which are empty.*
 - Take advantage of REAP Zone, econ. dev. orgs. More closely (example NVDA).
 - *Adaptive reuse of Tap & Die building - attract businesses that would use the building for office space or co-ops for working couples moving to the area (example: revitalization of the mill areas in Manchester, NH and Winooski, VT and even more recently, Montpelier). The Tap & Die building is attractive because it offers a downtown location, is close to the park, and is walking distance to stores and businesses.*
- Create a more inviting downtown, beautify entrances & exits, village center design guidelines, bike racks, bike, paths, sidewalks holding building owners accountable.
 - Design, aesthetics (VHB design guidelines) – drive through town.
 - Tap into artist community (example: plein air festival in Crested Butte), performing arts.
 - Design/aesthetics accountability in zoning.
- Engage in regionwide partnerships and branding, gateway to the Kingdom.
 - Getting people to move to the area that like to play here, attracting people to live here.
 - Ed. Institutions – how kids can stay in this area.
 - Entrepreneurial skills.
 - Focus on attracting former students here.
 - Traffic flow – White's Plaza area., gateway businesses feel heard and included, industrial park.
- Keep broadband goal.
- Support development of businesses that attract and provide a diverse array of goods.
 - Review all infrastructure that can address traffic flow and walkability.
- Repair, maintain, and promote covered bridges.
- Promote the Town & its community offerings.
 - Town logo contest.
 - New Town website for all community events, town info, recreation, other.
- Bar or brewery & dancehall in Village Center.
 - *Attracting a Microbrewery to downtown? Recently, Littleton, NH and Bethlehem, NH have done so successfully.*
- Town to take a more active role in recruiting businesses & entrepreneurs.
 - Catalogue all vacant buildings & storefronts.
 - Running inventory of spaces with contact info for each space.
- *Study the possibility of how we can increase flood resilience and increase economic development by increasing flood storage capacity.*