

TOWN OF LYNDON
PLANNING COMMISSION
August 8, 2018 Meeting Minutes
Approved 8/15/18

Planning Commissioners: Mike Schlesinger, Sean McFeeley, Evan Carlson, Sylvia Dodge, Susan Hanus, Tammy Martel

Public Official(s): Annie McLean

Press: Amy Nixon

Public: Kathleen Walsh, Barbara Irwin, Abigail Long

Mike Schlesinger chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

Mr. Schlesinger commented on the recent article in the Caledonian Record in which Lyndon Development Review Board (DRB) Chair Jon Prue was quoted as saying that “Lyndon’s floodplain regulations are black and white on fill”. Mr. Schlesinger noted that the Planning Commission had spent nearly two years developing the Town’s flood plain regulations was pleased that that DRB felt the regulations were clear and specific. Mr. Schlesinger further emphasized the need for thoughtful and thorough development of any proposed regulation changes in order to ensure that they have the intended affect and are implementable.

Sean McFeeley made a **motion to approve the minutes of July 25, 2018 as amended**. Susan Hanus **seconded the motion**. The Commission **voted 6-0**.

Kathleen Walsh and Barbara Irwin gave a presentation on Zoning for Scenic Protection, which highlighted information from *View to the Mountains: A Scenic Protection Manual*, which was developed for the towns of Essex and Jericho and includes a detailed description of how to conduct a full scenic assessment. The presentation along with documents cited in the presentation may be viewed online via the following DropBox link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/k9dzvw01e69avi1/AABPyiMENn75GiouXKbawDkIa?dl=0>. Ms. Irwin also shared copies of the Town of Woodstock’s scenic overlay district, which had been recommended to her as another good example by the Vermont Council on Natural Recourse (VNRC).

The Commission thanked Ms. Walsh and Ms. Irwin for their work, noting that embarking on this type of project would be a big undertaking and discussion ensued. Annie McLean noted that many of the guidelines and regulatory requirements discussed in the presentation may be appropriate for rural area subdivision regulations in general and may not necessitate development of a special overlay zone, which may be more difficult to justify as it could be considered somewhat subjective. Evan Carlson noted that the Commission was already working to create some similar design guidelines for commercial areas. Commissioners asked how the implementation of a scenic overlay zone might affect property values. Ms. McLean noted that Larry Willey, the Town’s most senior Lister had indicated that property values could change based on comparable sales in the area, and thus may be indirectly affected by any type of zoning regulation that restricted development in order to protect scenic resources. Ms. McLean then emphasized that she was not a Lister and that Mr. Willey should attend a meeting to answer more specific questions concerning property values. Sean McFeeley noted the need for clarity and simplicity in any new regulations. Sylvia Dodge requested that the Commission revisit the Kirby Highland Zoning District model, which is based on elevation rather than identified viewsheds. Mr. Carlson offered to invite Matt Reeve, a former Kirby Planning Commissioner who spearheaded the creation of the Highlands District, to the next meeting. Commissioners agreed that they would like to hear more about the Kirby Highlands model.

Commissioners continued review and consolidation of allowed uses in the bylaws.

The next Planning Commission meeting is August 15, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.