

TOWN OF LINCOLN
MINUTES OF COMPREHENSIVE LONG RANGE PLAN COMMITTEE
December 14, 2006

ATTENDANCE:

Sarah Cannon Holden	Board of Selectmen
Anita Scheipers	Assistant Town Administrator
Ken Hurd	Planning Board
Mark Whitehead	Town Planner
Paul Giese	Finance Committee
Ben Horne	Conservation Commission
Astrid Glynn	Member at large
Peter Von Mertens	Conservation Commission
Angela Seaborg	Conservation Planner
Noah Eckhouse	Recreation Committee
Anna Hardman	Zoning Board of Appeals
B.J.Scheff	Housing Commission
Bob Sutherland	Council on Aging
Chris Klem	Member at large
Catherine Perry	Planning Admin.

INTRODUCTION

Sarah Cannon Holden introduced the meeting, which was aimed at giving further consideration to the ‘issues and elements’ exercise begun last time.

ISSUES CONFIRMATION AND FEEDBACK

Mrs. Cannon Holden began with some suggested additional issues from the Selectmen:

- Education – broad issues including regionalization
- Functions – the ‘personality’ of the Town

Peter Von Mertens brought two ideas from the Conservation Commission:

- Staff development and retention (excluding schools)
- Non profit organizations and their impact – mainly Sec.3 exempt uses

Anna Hardman brought an issue from the ZBA:

- Tear downs and what is allowed as reconstruction (relevant to non-conforming lots)

Anna explained that sometimes the rules surrounding non-conforming lots make it difficult to allow a better solution when an applicant wishes to replace an old building. The Conservation Commission supported this issue and wondered if it could be widened to address other cases such as when conservation considerations would suggest a different site layout than the zoning setbacks allow.

Paul Giese said that the Finance Committee had expected there to be more emphasis on community services as opposed to land use issues. They had originally hoped for enough detail in the plan for it to feed into financial models but were scaling back their

expectations in this respect to having an indication of major expenditures or revenue streams anticipated over a 2-5 year period to inform broad planning. In terms of shaping the property tax base, the committee was looking towards improving the residential base more than towards industrial or commercial development. Specific issue suggestions are:

Under the Governance element:

- Centralized maintenance of town buildings including the library
- Water department – review of relationships and responsibilities
- Permanent town-wide planning group

Under economic development:

- Way of measuring tax burden/revenues associated with proposals
- Town revenue/build out projections
- Expense planning
- Budgeting process – how far should FinCom be involved in bundling proposals?

Other issues:

- Library – development as gathering center for teens and seniors; question of a North Lincoln branch; collaboration with schools and Town
- Pierce house – use and expansion of role (teaching etc.)
- Water supply issues

For the Planning Board, Ken Hurd brought the following additional issues:

- Privatization
- How to hold the line on taxes
- Administration of Title V – current leeway to allow big houses with few bedrooms with no real means of enforcement
- Emergency vehicle access around Town
- Route 2A historic corridor – how can the town reinforce other initiatives?
- Train station issues
- DPW location
- Outdoor lighting – more comprehensive approach to ‘dark sky’?

Noah Eckhouse said he thought it was important that the committee did not miss the ‘big picture’ issues and he welcomed the Finance Committee’s input in this regard. From the Recreation Committee he brought the following:

- Playing fields
- Participation rates in recreation – loss of numbers to private facilities, affecting program viability
- Economic development – possible case for one big development to boost finances

There was some discussion on the participation rate issue and its connection to affluence, specialization of interests and the small size of the town.

Bob Sutherland raised the following issues, on behalf of the COA:

- Library expansion
- Facilities planning – the COA will need more space
- Affordable housing
- Potential closure of Hanscom– is there a teachers’ pension issue?

From the Housing Commission, B.J.Scheff brought the following:

- Affordability problems for people close to median income – how to avoid polarization
- Hanscom – could its facilities be used more?
- Lack of a social place for teenagers
- Housing governance – better list maintenance and collaboration

Peter Von Mertens commented that the future for affordable housing is rental units, with a structure that allows for a variety of income levels; an appropriate vehicle needs to be worked out.

ELEMENTS AND SUBGROUPS

Mr. Whitehead distributed copies of a list of recommendations for subcommittee elements. He explained that he and Anita Scheipers had discussed which elements related together functionally and which would work together in terms of a balanced workload. They proposed five subcommittees (subgroups) addressing pairs of elements, including the existing group working on Natural Resources/ Open Space and Recreation. The remaining two elements, Implementation and Goals and Policies, will be kept separate as they will involve input from all the other elements.

The Governance element was discussed. It was agreed that the subgroup could discuss known issues but that this element will also to some extent emerge from all the other work. The ‘town personality’ idea could also be addressed by this subgroup as part of the Cultural Resources element. It may also usefully feed into the Goals and Policies statement.

The Committee proceeded to consider the membership of the five subgroups and the following was agreed as a start:

<u>Subgroup</u>	<u>Members</u>
1	Chris Klem, Anna Hardman
2	Ken Hurd, Sarah Cannon Holden
3	Paul Giese, Astrid Glynn, Ben Horne
4	Noah Eckhouse, Bob Sutherland, B.J.Scheff
5	Peter Von Mertens, Angela Seaborg

The list will be emailed. There will be a need to attract extra members to the subgroups. It was agreed that while this could partly be through recruitment by existing members, a joint publicity drive would be beneficial. Peter Von Mertens and Noah Eckhouse agreed to give some creative thought to this.

It was agreed that in order to address all the issues, subgroups may need to work with other groups at times. The subgroups may find it helpful to break down their workloads and give portions to specific people, if this helps to attract members who can only make a limited time commitment. They can also consider their need for consultant assistance.

STEERING COMMITTEE

It was agreed that the small group that has been meeting to keep the process going should continue to plan for the next two meetings on January 11 and February 8 when

Judy Barrett will attend. There will also be a need to prepare for Town Meeting, when it is proposed to request funding for a consultant.

JANUARY MEETING

This has been scheduled for getting some feedback from Ms. Barrett on the Committee's work so far on issues and elements. It could also be an opportunity to ask for suggestions on recruitment to subgroups and on the need to write a charge for them (beyond the allocation of topics) or to provide guidance on the expected product(s). Some members also suggested that it may be useful to set meeting protocols and to coordinate any questionnaires or solicitations of interest. The meeting will also be an opportunity to ask any further questions about the use of consultants.

OTHER BUSINESS

The longer term timeline was discussed. The aim is to present a plan in Fall, 2008. It was agreed that after 6-9 months work by the subgroups, a report will be made to the Fall, 2007 State of the Town Meeting. If a consultant is approved at the March, 2007 Town Meeting, this assistance will be available from the beginning of July.

Angela Seaborg described the work done so far by the Open Space Committee. There are a total of twenty people and they have set up three sub groups, with the main committee meeting once a month and the others at least once in between. They have worked on goals and objectives, sorting priorities and delegating written work. They found that an early brainstorming session, together with an examination of other towns' plans, helped to generate discussion. Their first public forum will be in late January. In terms of the level of detail, they may stop at setting criteria for assessing parcels. A need for consultancy help is not anticipated as Angela effectively fills this role for the Open Space topic.

B.J. Scheff mentioned that when the Housing Commission was working on a plan, members found it useful have a consultant to access and analyze data and also to write documents, allowing them to focus on the more creative policy work.

Sarah Cannon Holden asked members to think about the questions mentioned above for the next meeting and come prepared for a discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35pm.

Submitted by Catherine Perry