

SELECT BOARD NEWS

The newsletter of the Lincoln, Massachusetts Select Board

Together, We Are Town Government!

Lincoln's residents, students, business owners, employees, and visitors are all part of our community and are bound together by the work of the Town and our Schools. The policies we create, the votes we take at Town Meeting, and the decisions we make about how we deploy our financial and human resources shape Lincoln and are expressions of our collective values. Who are we? Who do we want to be? How do we achieve those goals? These questions lie at the heart of every discussion we have as a community. *As we look ahead to the work of the coming year, we hope you will engage with the work of the Select Board and of the many other committees making decisions that impact our Town. We need YOUR voice and YOUR ideas!*

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Anti-Racism Committee (IDEA)

IDEA's work is focused on understanding the role Town government plays in developing policies and practices that support a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community. In the coming months, we hope to conduct an "equity audit" to understand the experiences of community members and their vision for Lincoln. As reported at the March Town Meeting, the Select Board dedicated up to \$100,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to IDEA to hire an outside consultant to help us identify a set of goals and a plan of action. All meetings are open to the public, and more information can be found at <http://www.lincolntown.org/1221/IDEA>



Council on Aging & Human Services staff participated in Lincoln's first ever Pride celebration on June 8 at the Pierce House.

The Pride event was organized by the students and families of SAGA (Sexuality & Gender Alliance).

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Liaison Assignments

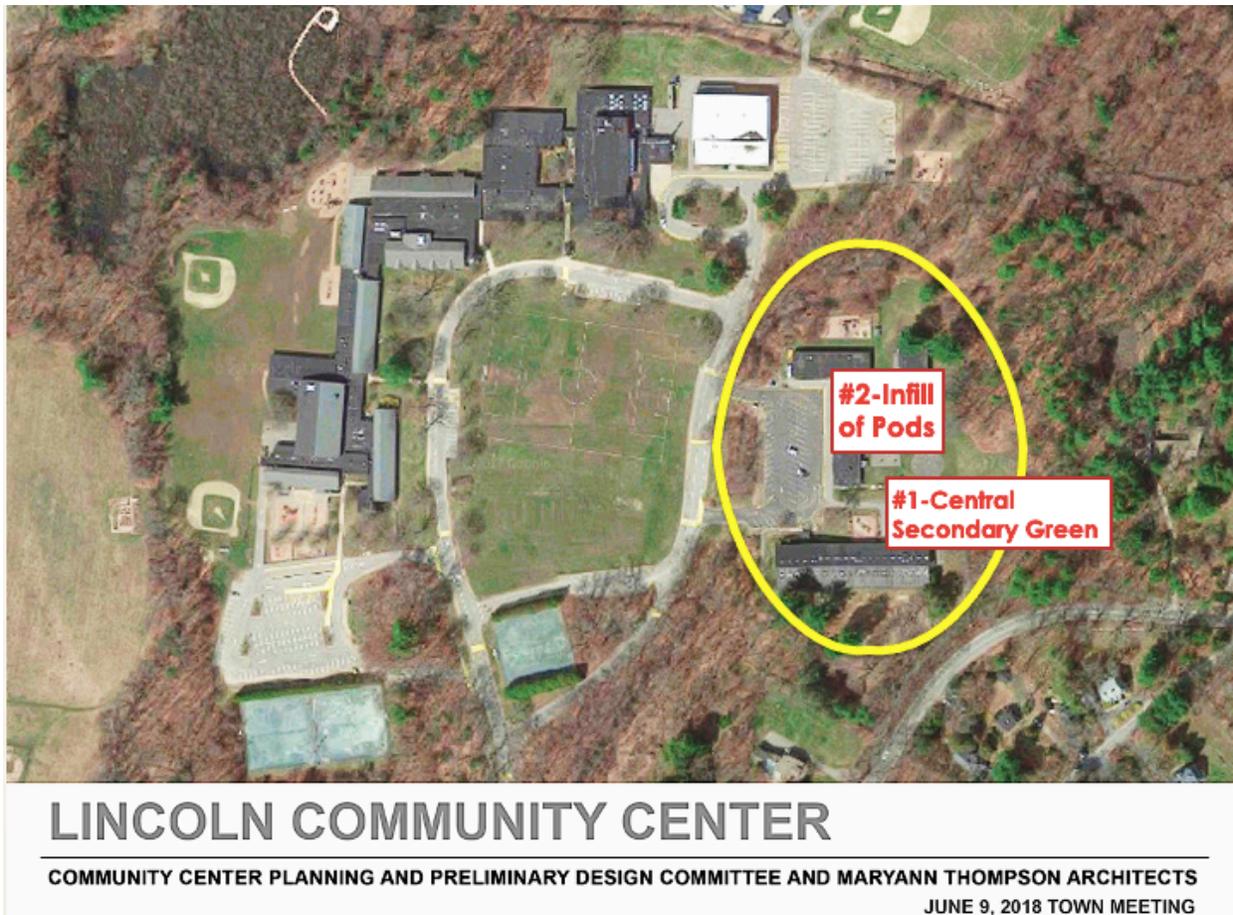
Lincoln’s Town government functions because we have a talented professional team led by Town Administrator, Tim Higgins, and a dedicated group of about 150 volunteers who serve on boards and committees. Much of the work of the Town is interconnected, and to help cross-communication, each Select Board member serves as a liaison to multiple boards and committees. For the coming year, these are the liaison assignments:

Jonathan Dwyer	Jennifer Glass	Jim Hutchinson
Library Trustees	Planning Board	Finance Committee
Council on Aging & Human Services	Zoning Board	Capital Planning Committee
Historical Commission & Historic District Commission	MAGIC Regional Planning Committee representative	Community Preservation Act Committee
Agricultural Commission	Housing Commission; Housing Trust	Board of Water Commissioners
Lincoln Cultural Council	Conservation Commission	Pierce House Committee
250th Anniversary of Lexington/Concord Battle Committee	Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Anti-Racism Committee (IDEA)	Solar @ Landfill
Hanscom Area Towns Committee	Schools - preK to 12	Solar @ Lincoln Schools
Disabilities Commission	School Building Committee	Town Electricity Aggregation Contract (<i>Lincoln Green Energy Choice</i>)
Parks & Recreation	Green Energy Committee	
Roads & Traffic; Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee	Property Tax Circuit Breaker Program	
Public Safety & Dept. of Public Works		

Community Center Building Committee

At the Annual Town Meeting last March, residents voted to move forward with planning for a Community Center. The Select Board appointed nine members to the Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) in late May, and its first meeting was held on June 1st. The initial meeting focused on a review of prior studies (*image is from a June 2018 presentation*) and

organization of the CCBC. Major public projects require both an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) and a Project Architect. Over the summer, the CCBC will draft Requests for Proposals for each that outline the expected scope of work. ***There will be a Special Town Meeting in the Fall*** to ask residents whether they will appropriate funds for the Schematic Design and Design Development phases of the project (visit <https://lincolnsbc.org/what-is-schematic-design-what-is-value-engineering/> to learn more about the phases of a building process). Visit the CCBC's web page to stay up to date about the work of the current Committee: <http://lincolntown.org/1346/Community-Center-Building-Committee>



Developing a *Climate Action Plan*

The *Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy Act of 2021* set specific deadlines for reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with the goal of state-wide net zero GHG emissions by 2050. To meet this goal, the state must reduce its GHG emissions by 50% by 2030 (compared with 1990 emissions), and by at least 75% by 2040. Spurred by the urgency of the law and inspired by residents' long history of supporting green initiatives, Climate Action Lincoln, a subcommittee of the Green Energy Committee, has been laying the groundwork for a Lincoln Climate Action Plan (CAP).

What is a Climate Action Plan? A CAP identifies and prioritizes specific actions that residents and the Town will need to take to significantly reduce GHG emissions. Actions focus on :

- **Mitigation:** Reducing the flow of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere (e.g. switch to renewable, low-carbon energy sources)
- **Adaptation:** Preparing for the current and future impacts of climate change (e.g. improve infrastructure to withstand drought, storm damage, etc.)
- **Resilience:** The ability to deal with and recover from the effects of climate change (The more Lincoln does to mitigate and adapt to climate change, the more resilient our community.)

Work to Date & Next Steps:

- Fall 2021: Climate Action Lincoln met with fourteen Lincoln boards and committees to talk about the ways their work intersects with climate change.
- May 2022: Grant application submitted to secure funding for a consultant who would bring expertise and capacity to plan development.
- Summer 2022: Grant awards announced. If Lincoln is selected, Climate Action Lincoln will spend the next year working with the consultant, Assistant Town Planner Jennifer Curtin, residents, and Town committees to create the CAP. Plan would be finalized by the summer of 2023.

Example of Resilience in Lincoln

- We've installed an electric heat pump system in the Lincoln School and are building a solar panel system to MITIGATE our carbon footprint.
- The system provides air conditioning and dehumidification that help ADAPT to hotter weather
- Higher intensity storms frequently result in power outages
- The electric lines into the school were buried and a storage battery will be installed to ADAPT
- The School will be more RESILIENT to climate change.



The more actions taken to adapt, the more resilient the we become.

Solar Array @ the Landfill

A 2015 feasibility study conducted by the Town's Green Energy Committee identified the landfill as an ideal location for a solar array, and also recognized that significant procedural impediments would have to be overcome in order to move forward. The report was prophetically titled *A Hill Too Far?* Seven years later, we are pleased to report that progress has been made. All necessary local and state approvals and authorizations have now been granted. Significant discussions have taken place with the National Park Service to discuss site access route options and the necessary permitting requirements. The Town's project www.lincolntown.org

team has studied and is now familiar with the technical and financial challenges and requirements of the project. Next, there will be a virtual meeting to provide neighbors the opportunity to become familiar with the project, and to review and ask questions about our preferred site access route via Mill Street. The meeting will explain the rationale for access via Mill Street and plans for minimizing any impacts on the landscape. Mill Street neighbors should anticipate receiving an invitation to participate in the virtual meeting, including a link to project materials.

As envisioned by the early landfill solar project planners, this is an exciting opportunity for the Town to take advantage of an underutilized public asset to expand local renewable energy production, and to create economic benefit to the Town in the form of reduced electricity budgets.

We are in the process of setting up a dedicated page for the project on the Town's website – stay tuned!

Property Tax Senior Circuit Breaker Program

At the 2021 Town Meeting, residents voted to petition the State Legislature to allow Lincoln to create a local Extended Circuit Breaker property tax assistance program for seniors whose incomes and property assessments fall within certain limits. *The basic premise of the program is that most who pay property taxes would pay a bit more to provide assistance to those with demonstrated financial need.* For eligible residents, this would provide tax relief in addition to the State Circuit Breaker program. The Town expects the Legislature to approve our request in the coming months, and the Property Tax Study Committee hopes to come back for final approval of the program at this Fall's Special Town Meeting.

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED EXTENDED CIRCUIT BREAKER PROGRAM

(AS SUBMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE IN 2021)

- For homeowners aged 65+
- Must have been a Lincoln resident for 5+ years
- Uses the State Circuit Breaker income limit to determine eligibility
- Uses Lincoln's average single-family property value + 10% as the property asset limit
- Funded by shifting up to 0.5% of the total tax levy in year 1; up to 1.0% in years 2 & 3 - no additional revenue raised
- Must be reauthorized at Town Meeting every 3 years

Housing Commission: Updated Mission Statement

At its June 1 meeting, the Housing Commission voted to adopt an updated Mission Statement. The new statement clarifies the role of the Housing Commission and also reflects work that members of the Commission did as part of Community Antiracist Advocate Training (CARAT) last year. The CARAT training was sponsored by the community group WIDE (Welcome, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity: <https://widelincoln.org>).

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Lincoln Housing Commission is a welcoming and inclusive group that works to fulfill the town's mission and ensure a range of diverse housing options are available in town to meet the current and future needs of Lincoln's residents. We fulfill this mission by: developing and promoting policies, programs, and regulations that preserve and/or increase housing that addresses such needs; maintaining Lincoln's inventory of housing affordable for low- and moderate-income households in compliance with state policy; and supporting town, regional, and state housing goals. The Housing Commission also administers Lincoln's town-owned rental housing units.

Updated Trail Use Regulations Coming this Summer



The Lincoln Conservation Commission (LCC) and the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust (LLCT) have completed a comprehensive review of the multiple uses of Lincoln's trails and how best to manage them for the protection of open space and overall public benefit. Over the last year, LCC and LLCT have received numerous comments regarding ways people use and enjoy our open spaces and trails. Public Forums were held in November 2021 and May 2022. Copies of the draft Conservation Land Use Regulations are on the Conservation Website: <https://www.lincolntown.org/245/Conservation>.

LCC and LLCT anticipate voting on the updated Conservation Land Regulations shortly. This summer, you will see new signage installed along the trails educating trail users about these updated regulations, especially in regard to dog walking rules and where trail biking is allowed. In addition, new wayfinding signage and trail etiquette signs are being developed.

If you have questions or comments regarding the Conservation Land Regulations, please contact the Conservation Department via email conservation@lincolntown.org or call 781-259-2612.

News from the Planning Department

After the Town elections in March, the Planning Board welcomed its newest member Ephraim Flint. The Board has kicked off its 2022-2023 work plan discussions to establish its goals and a work plan for the coming year:

- When the South Lincoln Planning & Advisory Committee (SLPAC, a subcommittee of the Planning Board) surveyed the Lincoln community in 2021, respondents overwhelmingly said they want to ensure a **viable business area at Lincoln Station** (<http://lincolntown.org/DocumentCenter/View/65636/Survey-Result-Charts>). Currently, the area around the train station is governed by two business districts that each have different rules for the types of businesses that can operate and how they are approved. The Planning Board is beginning to discuss options for simplifying the zoning.

- The Board is exploring further amendments to the *Accessory Apartment Bylaw*.
- South Lincoln planning continues including a review of the *Wastewater Treatment Facility at Lincoln Woods*. Next steps will be to bring all stakeholders together to take advantage of a \$400,000 Rural & Small Town grant awarded to the Town for design of a new wastewater treatment plant.
- Jennifer Curtin, the Assistant Director of Planning and Land Use, will be working with Climate Action Lincoln to develop a town wide *Climate Action Plan*. The Town has submitted an extensive grant application to the State, and will be hearing about funding by the end of the summer. If funding is granted, this work will begin in September.
- The Planning Department will be leading a *Complete Streets Prioritization Plan* process to establish the Town's new five year plan. The Complete Streets Funding Program awards cities and towns up to \$400,000 for multi-modal improvements over a five year period. The Town just completed Magnolia Path that runs from Lincoln Station to the Public Safety building. This summer, the Complete Streets Working Group will review past studies, collect data, and establish the framework for the public process which will begin in September. This work will align closely with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and Roadway & Traffic Committee's work on a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

The Board will provide updates at the Fall State of the Town meeting and opportunities for community input before any proposed zoning changes are brought for a vote at a future Town Meeting. All Planning Board meetings are open to the public and are recorded. Information about the Planning Board, including agendas and minutes, is available at <http://lincolntown.org/147/Planning-Board>.

Fiscal Year 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets

At the request of the Capital Planning Committee (CapCom), Town Departments have recently updated their 5-year capital plans. This helps the Town anticipate and plan for likely upcoming capital needs, and provides a useful review of maintenance procedures for and warranty coverage of Town assets.

- ➔ **Summer - early Fall:** Town departments flesh out the details of their capital budget requests for the next fiscal year (FY24).
- ➔ **October - December:** Departments discuss and refine proposals.
- ➔ **December - January:** CapCom presents approved projects to the Finance Committee (FinCom) in budget hearings. Funding sources for projects are discussed, particularly for items that are outside of CapCom's budget for the upcoming fiscal year.
- ➔ **March:** Vote on capital projects at the Annual Town Meeting.

Operating budgets follow a similar although slightly delayed schedule. Town Departments develop rough budget plans in late summer and early fall. In early October, after reviewing the state of the Town's expected revenues and fixed expenses, FinCom issues its guidance for the upcoming fiscal year (e.g., to limit base budget requests to a 2.5% increase over last www.lincolntown.org

year's budget), as well as what the appetite is for "preferred" budget items. Departments then use this guidance to fine tune their operating budget proposals, which they present at the FinCom budget hearings in December and January. FinCom presents the proposed budget at the Annual Town Meeting in March.

Welcome Jim!



Town walk in September 2019. Jim is in the middle of the group.

Jim Hutchinson was elected to the Select Board this past March. Although new to this Board, Jim has volunteered in Lincoln for many years. He has served as a member of the Green Energy Committee, Finance Committee, and on the Board of Water Commissioners. Prior to the COVID pandemic, Jim organized "Town walks" as an opportunity for volunteers and Town staff members to get out on the trails together. We know he will continue to bring thoughtful analysis, creativity, and a collaborative spirit to the work of the Board.

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