

LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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Lakes Region Planning Commission

Minutes of April 25, 2022 Commission Meeting Approved September 26, 2022

Tuftonboro Free Library
221 Middle Road
Center Tuftonboro, NH

PRESENT

Commissioners		Others	
Ashland:	Mardean Badger		
Bristol:	William Dowey		
Center Harbor:	Mark Hildebrand		
Gilford:	John Ayer		
Northfield:	Douglas Read		
Tamworth:	Patricia Farley	LRPC Staff	
	Kelly Goodson	Executive Director:	Jeff Hayes
	Wyatt Berrier, Alternate	Principal Planner:	Susan Slack
Tuftonboro:	Stephen Wingate	Regional Planner:	David Jeffers (via audio)
Wolfeboro:	Roger Murray, III	Solid Waste Planner/Asst. Grants Admin:	
		Assistant Planner:	
		Admin. Asst./Meeting Recorder:	Linda Waldron

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:04 PM by John Ayer, Chair.

2. New Business

An opening introduction and welcome message were delivered by the Chair, John Ayer. John noted that there was a lack of quorum so the minutes of October 25, 2021 and March 28, 2022 could not be approved.

3. Lakes Region Housing Needs Assessment Updates

Executive Director, Jeff Hayes thanked everyone for coming and stated that we expect the housing needs assessment to be done by December. He then introduced Dave Jeffers, Regional Planner, who was present via audio to begin the updates.

Dave started by stating that we are working on the Housing Needs Assessment Survey and that affordability is a real issue. The purpose of the survey is to obtain feedback from municipalities and the community generally as to what areas they feel need addressing and to formulate a plan to assist them in meeting the new requirements

of RSA 674:58-61. This project will also meet the requirements of RSA 36 which requires RPCs to complete regional housing needs assessments approximately every 5 years.

Susan Slack, Principal Planner, then took the floor to explain the workforce housing statute RSA 674:58-61. She explained that municipalities must be certain not to exclude the moderate/low income workforce if they plan to exercise power to adopt land use ordinances and regulations. They must also provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for development of this type of housing.

Dave indicated that we are also working with other RPCs and agencies doing research and data gathering. This data will be processed and put into understandable formats. He mentioned the survey current out for public input as well as another one that recently went out to employers. Other surveys will be routed soon targeting social service providers, property owners/managers, real estate developers, and other focus groups. Unfortunately, as of this meeting, the quantity of surveys that have been responded to are relatively minimal. About 70% of the public responses have been from those in single-family homes and of the 100+ responses from employers, most have been made up of the construction and retail industries indicating that housing needs is a big reason for them being unable to find employees. Employers feel there needs to be more variety on multi-family housing as well.

We are looking to formulate a 'toolkit' of strategies which can be adopted by our cities/towns to assist them in their attempts to resolve housing needs in their communities. Not every community's needs will be the same, so we are hopeful that the LRPC will be able to provide the tools/resources that will be useful to them. A slide presentation was reviewed showing some of the examples of how data is expected to be presented in a dashboard or infographic format.

Jeff interjected and stressed that we need to get input from everyone and asked commissioners to spread the word throughout their communities. He explained that it was a great opportunity for each community to get regional, as well as town specific, results tallied up for them. The data we receive can be used in so many ways, including extrapolating data specific to individual municipalities so they have a picture of the needs in their own communities and in the Lakes Region as a whole.

Susan returned to go over some of the sample tools that have been developed for potential use and she is looking for some feedback on these items:

1. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) – restrictions need to be more flexible
2. Mixed Use Development – allowing 2 or more uses in the same building
3. Dimensional requirements – allow reductions of these requirements
4. Form-Based Code – focus more on exteriors than interiors (i.e., streetscaping, neighborhood aesthetics)
5. Cluster development – open space subdivisions and why is this not done more often
6. Housing Commission – encourage diverse housing supply
7. Allowing small homes on smaller lots, design standards
8. Converting and reusing existing buildings – less restrictive
9. Inclusionary zoning – providing incentives to allow for increased density
10. Transfer of development rights – sending/receiving zones
11. Public water/sewer – expanding and/or installing in village centers
12. Workforce Housing Ordinance
13. Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive – establish housing opportunity zones
14. Eliminate or reduce parking requirements

Susan mentioned that the UNH Cooperative Extension has published an article on Community Outreach and Engagement that may be worth viewing here: [Community Planning New Hampshire](#). She again stressed that we need our commissioners to get the word out in their municipalities and urge government, businesses, and citizens to complete the survey.

Dave wrapped up the presentation stating that in addition to the surveys, we will be doing individual focus groups by Fall. He also urged everyone to complete the surveys if they have not done so already and to tell other to do so as well.

Jeff asked if anyone had any ideas on how we can solicit more responses to the survey and a few suggestions were to put a copy of the survey in the Laconia Sun (and possibly other community papers) containing the QR code to the survey for responding. This is a widely viewed, free newspaper, possible public service announcements on radio stations, and forwarding to school districts for administrative and teach input. An additional suggestion was to post the survey on community bulletin board/local newsletter websites.

4. Commissioner Roundtable

John Ayer/Gilford

John applauds the new building inspector. He has been making great strides in bringing enforcement up to par. The town has approved a new Italian restaurant to be located at the former Cherrystone restaurant on Weirs Road. Due to limited parking at that site, they will be offering valet parking from a lot at the nearby Sawyer's Dairy Bar. Additionally, due to the inability to obtain responses to job postings, the owners have applied for a variance to use a building they have also purchased as a dormitory so they can offer housing to exchange-type employees. Patrick's Pub has applied for a variance to offer permanent outdoor dining. Beans & Greens will be adding an outdoor playground for their patrons.

Bill Dowey/Bristol

Bill spoke about looking into EV charging stations for Bristol. He indicated that the utility demand charges are so high that it makes it economically impossible to sustain. The USDA has a renewable energy pilot program available for which the town has put together a 3-phase plan which they plan to send in with a letter of interest.

Mark Hildebrand/Center Harbor

Mark commented on the ongoing contentious issue about the proposed 60 high-end unit development in Moultonborough on the Center Harbor town line and how the town feels the additional population so close to Center Harbor will put a strain on their resources.

Roger Murray, III/Wolfeboro

Roger said voters approved the funding to take down the old ice skating rink and to build a new facility utilizing private donations.

Mardean Badger/Ashland

Mardean stated that the Lakes Region Community Developers and Lakes Region Community Services have proposed to renovate the St. Agnes Catholic Church property and create 10 units to be used for supportive housing (clients with disabilities). There is a group trying to round up the public's disapproval. The project in which a B&B on Main Street was being converted to transitional housing has been completed. They had their own funding, so this was completed fairly quickly.

Steve Wingate/Tuftsboro

Steve didn't have anything to report. Said things are pretty much status quo.

Pat Farley/Tamworth

Pat advised that they had a visitor from Consolidated Communications to inform them about their intentions to offer fiber plans to the smaller communities and that they were looking for individual towns to support this plan. They have a federal grant money which will provide the funding so there will be little to not cost to the communities who join.

Wyatt Berrier (alternate)/Tamworth

Wyatt said that they presentation was very useful not only from a municipality prospective but also from a real estate prospective. He very briefly mentioned a proposal for a gentleman's club which he feels is quite unlikely to succeed.

Kelly Goodson/Tamworth

Kelly spoke on the village's sewer problem being a big concern. It does not allow for any growth in the village due to its limitations. It can't be expanded because the location is landlocked. A subcommittee has been formed to work on finding a solution.

Doug Reed/Northfield

Doug stated that construction of the new cell tower will begin this week by Exit 19. There has been a proposal submitted for a 300 site campground, and the Spaulding Youth Center is preparing plans to make the school larger.

5. Adjournment

Chairman Ayer thanked the Town for the use of their library for this meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2022 and will be held at the Gilford Public Library.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55 PM.