

FINAL AS APPROVED

Town of Lenox  
Planning Board  
Lenox Town Hall  
October 22, 2019

**Members present:** Chair Pam Kueber (PK); Tom Delasco (TD); Kate McNulty-Vaughan (KMV); Jim Harwood (JH)

**Absent with Notification:**

**Absent without Notification:** Kameron Spaulding (KS)

**Others present:** Clarence Fanto, Berkshire Eagle

**List of documents provided for this meeting:**

- October 22, 2019 agenda
- September 24, 2019 minutes for approval
- October 10, 2019 minutes for approval
- Public Hearing PowerPoint presentation
- Special Town Meeting (STM) PowerPoints presentation draft
- Land Use draft of Master Plan

PK opened the meeting at 6:00pm. The meeting was recorded by the Planning Board and Clarence Fanto.

**1. Approve minutes for September 24, 2019 and October 10, 2019**

- JH moves to accept September 24, 2019 meeting minutes as amended. PK seconds. Passed (3-0).
- KMV moves to accept October 10, 2019 meeting minutes. TD seconds. Passed (3-0).

**2. Discuss presentation to Town Meeting**

- Board discussed who should present bylaw. PK suggested JH present the bylaw as he brings a fresh perspective to the way the Board approached the STR bylaw for the second time. JH is open to presenting at the Special Town Meeting. KMV suggested possibly two Board members, JH and PK, presenting. It was agreed that Pam and Jim would co-present and work to split the slides.
- Board discussed how they will handle questions and comments from the audience during the Special Town Meeting.
- Board worked through the Special Town Meeting draft PowerPoint and finalized what will be shown at the STM.

**3. Review/Discuss Land Use section of Master Plan**

- PK shared with the board her updates to the Land Use section of the Master Plan.
- JH asked if the format of the Master Plan is important to help with grants because PK has made major changes to the format of the Master Plan. PK explained that there is no specific way to write a master plan.
- JH likes that the Land Use section has a specific goal and how to get to that goal.

- JH believes there are things that can be incorporate into the zoning code to help accommodate new families in the town when they come.
- PK stated that the same goal is in different sections and the different chapters and those members of the Master Plan Steering Committee are working together.
- PK explained that the Planning Board is the core assessment team for the Land Use chapter of the Master Plan and that this chapter is a discussion document that will go in front of citizens of the town for feedback.
- The Board continued discussion of the different chapters of the Master Plan and how certain goals go beyond the Land Use section and the key role of the PB is to look at the needs of the town and determine the future needs of the land which is in the Master Plan.
- The board discussed one specific example of bringing new families to town and a way Land Use can help with that would be updating zoning for the wireless overlay district. JH asked how that would help and stated “you can change the zoning but then what happens?” If the zoning changes, other groups within town need to be on board as well to make change.
- PK stated that the Master Plan committee has heard from residents the following three things: 1. Don’t mess up what we have. 2. Bring new families. 3. Market what we have.
- PK asked how the Board would like to proceed with the Land Use section of the Master Plan. The Board is going to work diligently on the Land Use section after the STM.
- PK stated that the Master Plan is the Planning Board’s Master Plan. It is commissioned and created by the Planning Board. They are the only ones that vote on the document.
- KMV stated that there needs to be four big things that are meaningful and do them no matter how difficult they are.
- The Board discussed the focus of the Land Use draft and what the priorities are for the town.
- JH suggested that the Board take the laundry list of ideas for the town and create a spreadsheet to prioritize the ideas and determine the top ideas.
- PK believes that Board needs to tackle the cell service availability within the town in regards to the Wireless Overlay District. The Board will reach out to Town Planner, Gwen Miller, to help with wireless service bylaws.
- PK will make the matrix spreadsheet with the list of ideas and how each idea fits into the four priorities.
- Relative to potential housing goals, PK probed whether it was really possible to build new “market rate” housing affordable at prevailing local wages. PK told the Board that Economic Development data indicated 1,100 family households (two or more people) in Lenox with a median income of \$122,000. Based on her recollection, this means those families could buy an approx. \$350,000 house. PK asked if you can build a home in Lenox for that amount, and JH stated that for \$350,000 you could build a 1,000 s.f. house - not including the land. Ariel Smith, citizen in attendance, said she thought that would be a stretch for a couple earning that amount of money
- JH believes if the Town wants to create affordable housing the Town will need to look at big projects that gets state funding in the form of Tax Credits or the Town needs to look at one-off projects with private fundraising.

**Meeting closed @ 7:26pm JH motioned and PK seconded. Passed unanimously 4-0.**