

Final as approved June 22, 2021

**TOWN OF LENOX
PLANNING BOARD
June 8, 2021 Minutes**

In attendance: Pam Kueber (PK), Tom Delasco (TD), Lauryn Franzoni (LF), Jim Harwood (JH)

Absent with notice: Kate McNulty-Vaughan (KMV).

Also in attendance: Jes Cote, Land Use Clerk; Marybeth Mitts (MM), Select Board; Phil Arnold (PA), Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Meeting was recorded on zoom.

Documents:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes April 14, May 11, and May 25, 2021 meeting minutes for approval
3. Draft timeline and document list – Wireless Communications work
4. Master Plan PPT and link to Master Plan online
5. Email from Town Planner re DLTA grant

Minutes:

- **April 14 minutes** – LF motion to approve, TD second, 4-0 approve.
- **May 11 minutes** – JH motion to approve, LF second; 4-0 approve.
- **May 25 minutes** – TD motion to approve, LF second, 4-0 approve.

Master Plan: MM, a member of the Select Board and of the Master Plan Steering Committee, reported that the Board of Selectmen endorsed the Master Plan at their meeting June 6. She was the presenter. She said that each Select Board Member reviewed in depth the sections of the plan that were linked to their liaison duties, and she recommended it as a useful resource particularly since it addresses short, medium, and long-range goals and is color-coded by goal.

She said that the benefits of the Master Plan are that it provides a road map to achieving the vision for Lenox well into the future and that it will help the town be more competitive in seeking funding when such monies are available. She also reported that Town Manager Chris Ketchen was very purposeful in how the staff will use the document and commented how well it will help guide the department heads in planning new initiatives, budgeting, and tracking key development issues. MM noted the BOS will be reviewing progress and relevance of the plan on a quarterly basis moving forward and will look for input from participants in the Master Planning effort. PK noted that she had committed to Steering Committee to work with Town Planner on a timely update of Population and Demographics chapter upon receipt of complete municipal-level data from 2020 Census. PA clarified that data used in the Plan reflects the

annual American Community Survey (ACS), also done by the Census Bureau, and that it would be surprising to see much change in the decennial Census given the constant ACS updates.

The Planning Board then discussed the plan. There was support that it was very complete. In particular, it was noted that the need for more affordably priced housing came up in many of the chapters – it was woven throughout the Master Plan. In positive news on this front, it was noted that there will be a presentation on a new mixed-market housing development at Brushwood Farm, proposal in very early stages, on Thursday, June 10; the meeting was just posted today. It was also noted that residents support the many things that make Lenox wonderful – our natural resources, historic assets, schools, infrastructure, etc. – and support preserving them. Other themes were to promote what we already have and to work to increase tourism in the off-season. TD moved for the Planning Board to endorse the Master Plan; JH second. 4-0 aye, with KMV absent. PK noted that she had spoken with KMV earlier in the day and that KMV heartily endorsed the Plan as well.

Next steps on Wireless Communications bylaw: Board reviewed the timeline to get to town meeting and the draft document list. It was agreed that PB needs to focus on three zoning related documents; creation of administrative documents will be purview of Town Hall staff stakeholders. LF to ask consultant to confirm comprehensive list of documents to be created as part of the contract so we can communicate appropriate responsibility. The Board discussed changes proposed by KMV. Some recommendations were factual in nature and definitely need to be correct, while others were structure-related and could be seen as optional. Town Planner had discussed the proposed edits with consultant, who said that if the changes are too extensive an amendment to the contract will be required. It was agreed we did not want to incur additional costs, as long as factual corrections were made. That said, LF will discuss with consultant and if some of the structural improvements can be made within the constraints of the current contract, that would be great. In regard to timing heading to November Town meeting, it was agreed that holding any public meetings in July and August should be avoided. After discussion of different scheduling approaches, the Board agreed it would aim for a Public Information Session in early September, with the Public Hearing on the bylaw the next week. This would allow adequate timing for any final changes to be made in advance of early-October filing deadlines for Town Meeting. Next step: Finalize 3 zoning documents at the June 22 meeting. Review and update timeline as necessary.

District Local Technical Assistance –PK reported that our grant for technical assistance from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to aid in an assessment of possible next steps regarding the Niagara Mill site was approved. Town Planner had let us know that BRPC to start doing the background work and do the more active component of the scope when she returns from leave. We have asked they not be top-heavy in how they use their hours (i.e. we don't want most of the hours spent on existing plan and material review but would prefer heavy use of hours toward public process, stakeholder engagement, and a useable tool at the end) and asked for a breakdown of how they intend to allocate their hours and how they plan to achieve

the tasks. PK to check with BRPC for these updates.

Institutional Bylaw draft: No update from Town Attorney Bard.

Process for recording minutes – PK to do minutes.

TD moved to adjourn the meeting; LF seconded; passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Kueber

June 18, 2021