

LYME COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING WITH THE PLANNING BOARD
JANUARY 25, 2018
7 PM
TOWN OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM

Present: Nils Johnson, Chris Ramsden, David Shafer, Jon Voegele, Mike Smith, Rich Brown, SB Rep, Sue MacKenzie

Planning Board: John Stadler, Tim Cook, Vicki Smith, David Roby Jr, David Robbins, Eric Furstenberg, Amber Boland, SB Rep, Jay Smith.

Several members of the public.

Nils began the discussion by explaining the Community Development Committee, his background and why he joined the committee. For the last six months the committee has been meeting with various leaders in the state: Steve Schneider UVLSRPC, Julia Griffith, Hanover Town Manager, Tracy Hutchins, Executive Director of the Hanover Chamber of Commerce, Ann Duncan Cooley, Grafton County Planning Commission, UNH Extension. Several suggested a consultant Stuart Arnett of Concord.

94% of the land in Lyme is essentially untaxed (Conserved or in Current use) Taxes in Lyme have been increasing by 4.4% / year. Approx \$400,000/year. Part of our committees charge is to look at the tax base and find a way to broaden it. Areas for development in town are limited. Lack of services, sewer and water, cell service and Internet, mountainous terrain, limited Police and lack of public transportation.

Lyme has a reputation for being hostile to business. There are places in Lyme that could be developed now. The Planning Board recently unanimously approved a development and was immediately sued by two individuals in town. One developer that built the Village at Dartmouth College Highway faced a lot of resistance and would not be interested in coming back to Lyme as a result of that hostility. Many times these projects are approved by the Planning Board but are sued on the basis of zoning. The existing sites are really not enough.

Internet services are not sufficient. There is a committee working on solving this problem and are looking to 2019 to increase coverage.

Cell service: Is not deemed profitable enough for the current utilities to expand in Lyme.

Fixed income residents are being severely challenged by the property tax. Do we want to be an agricultural based Museum or do we support some responsible development.

How much is enough? We discussed the Pond View property for a condo development. No single development is going to solve all our problems. What is the demand? There is a need for 5000 new housing units in the Upper Valley.

We need to update the Master Plan. The Visioning process is a process and cannot be done overnight. School is a big driver of taxes.

The "Invisible Hand", regulation, zoning can prohibit new investments.

We have two sites that are zoned for business but are not being developed. Why?
Our zoning is geared toward agriculture and not any developments.
Why doesn't the Town buy the Purcell Property and the Strout property and develop it ourselves. There are people who do this but in Lyme they know they will be sued if they try.

Public Comments: The communications ordinance does not prohibit but it limits what can be done. This ordinance may be part of the problem. What can the Planning Board do that would make the Hostile impression go away? Existing local businesses have faced significant difficulties because of the way the ordinance is written. Housing Ordinance encourages single family developments as opposed to higher density projects. The Master Plan is a long difficult process to go through. It would take years to update.

The Community Development Committee has privately raised the funds to hire a consultant to help us with the visioning process. It is time to do this and it would be an ideal time to update the Master Plan at the same time. It would be great if the two committees could work together to do the "visioning" and update the Master Plan. This may be a 3 to 4 year process. The Planning Board would like to start with the Housing Chapter and then take on the commercial/business chapter. We need to try many different things and not just rely on one or two projects to solve all our problems. We need to be more creative.

Where do we go from here? Community Development Committee invited to send Planning Board any info that would inform progress. Community Development Committee would like to have 2 members of the Planning Board work with us to find a way forward.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Susan MacKenzie

Next meeting of the Community Development Committee February 21, 2018, 7 PM Town Office Conference Room. Planning Board members welcome.