

MEMORANDUM

TO: Amanda Lessard, Planner

CC: Tony Plante, Town Manager
Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC)

From: Ben Smith, AICP, North Star Planning *BWS*

RE: LRPC Recommendations – Comprehensive Plan Implementation

Date: September 6, 2018

The LRPC is requesting authorization to proceed with work to implement portions of the Comprehensive Plan Update by undertaking a zoning map and ordinance update for the Farm and Farm Residential Zoning District and to develop a district plan for South Windham to look at zoning, transportation and infrastructure issues in South Windham.

Overview

In late 2017 and early 2018, the LRPC reviewed all of the implementation items in the Comprehensive Plan Update approved in 2017 that identified the LRPC as the responsible entity to carry out that work. At that time, the LRPC recommended focusing on two major projects. The first was to make amendments to the Zoning Map to reflect the Vision Statement and Future Land Use Map and Plan in the Comprehensive Plan update. The second was to draft an Open Space Plan that would focus on identifying significant parcels of land in Windham that are significantly contribute to the town's rural character, have high scenic or environmental value, could provide water access or could be developed for recreational purposes. Proactive efforts should be made to secure the future of identified properties.

Without a clear directive from the Council on how to proceed with either of these major efforts and due to staffing changes in the Planning Department, the LRPC opted to address a growth issue in rural Windham by making suggested changes to the Cluster Subdivision Standards included in a separate memo for Council consideration.

The LRPC would like to request authorization from the Council to commence work on the following projects in light of another more recent review of Comprehensive Plan recommendations in the context of recent community issues. Authorization would mean agreement on the need for this work and to further develop timelines, public participation plans and expected outcomes and deliverables for Council consideration, the authorization to convene public meetings on behalf of the town and ultimately it would mean a reasonable commitment on the Council's part to discuss and implement key recommendations of this work and direct other responsible parties to do the same.

Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map amendments for the Farm and Farm Residential Zoning Districts.

A focus on these two specific zoning districts is recommended over the previous approach of looking at the Zoning Map only for a couple of reasons. First, it will allow the LRPC to consider changes to the Zoning Map as well as the Zoning standards at the same time, so that permitted uses and lot dimensional standards will be looked at in concert with where those standards apply in the community. Second, these two zoning districts generally correspond to the Rural Area of Windham identified in the Future Land Use Map. Allowing the LRPC to focus on Rural areas and Rural issues will help clarify discussions and resulting recommendations.

District plan focusing on land use, transportation and economic development for South Windham.

This effort could be thought of as a 21st Century Plan for South Windham. A district plan for this important Growth Area from the Comprehensive Plan would represent the first focused planning effort for this part of town since the Revitalization Plan for South Windham and Little Falls in 1998. The expected outcomes of this district plan would be specific zoning recommendations along with transportation and other infrastructure improvements to improve the quality of place, increase the number of jobs based in the area and increase and diversify the number of housing options available in South Windham. Other individual ongoing town efforts, like sewer and road improvements, reuse of public structures and properties and setting the stage for the eventual redevelopment of the Keddy Mill site would be wrapped into the integrated planning effort.