

**Planning Commission
Preliminary Minutes
February 21, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Terry Carter, Chair, Ted Stryhas, Ryan Silvestri, Andrea Goldman, Judith Pullinen

STAFF PRESENT:

Ian Bard, Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jean Strong, Eric Alden, Martha Harrison, MARC, Allison Hopkins, MARC, Paul Alcorn, Patty Greenwood, Steve Myers, George Tucker

I. Call to Order

A. Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Terry Carter.

II. Roll Call

A. All members present.

III. Opening statement by chair

A. Terry Carter made an opening statement welcoming everyone to the meeting. She let the citizens know their comments are welcome before and after the work agenda items, **VII** and **VIII**, as well as before votes and after discussions during those items. She asked that comments are not repetitious and that after they are made the board may move on. She encouraged all board members to voice their opinions.

IV. Consideration of any changes, additions, or removals to the agenda

A. ***Terry added X to other business

V. Approval of Minutes

A. January 17, 2023

1. Judith Pullinen made a motion to approve the minutes

a) Andrea Goldman asked to amend page 3, line 24, the last word should be “or,” not “of.”

b) Ryan Silvestri seconded the motion with the proposed amendments,

c) The minutes were accepted.

VI. Comments from Citizens (5 minutes)

- A. Eric Alden stated the importance of the planning commission, calling it the most important board in any town. He stated that the commission only meets for 18 hours a year, and asks that the board focuses on what is important, housing. He states that a quarter of Vermonters spend more than 50% of their income on housing, Vermont ranks second, behind California, in its homelessness by population percentage. He asks the board to not get bogged down in the minor details.
- B. Paul Alcorn encouraged the definitions of dormitory and hotel in the January 17 commission minutes. He mentioned the February 13 Development Review Board meeting where there was discussion over a house on prospect street being bought by Okemo and turned into transient housing. He connects this to the Pettigrew Inn near his house which has been operating under a similar structure, with the lack of a definition for that type of housing it stays as an inn, which provides little recourse for homeowners being disturbed in the area. He expressed his concern for how these properties will affect the characteristics of the neighborhoods around them, referencing music and noise at 3 a.m. and dumpsters on the property. He thanked the board for the work they do.
1. Terry Carter responds that this is what the board has been working on, and Inns will now be limited by bedrooms. She also mentions that all the proposed changes being worked on now for the municipal planning grant won't go before the Village Trustees until 2024, as they requested everything at once rather than small pieces.
 2. Paul responds that he knows how long the process usually takes, but he references the increase in transient housing in the past 12 months and states his worry that waiting another 18 months will be too long. He references the lack of recourse he currently has against the Pettigrew Inn and that more properties like that can still occur until this is changed.
 3. Andrea Goldman thanks Paul for his comments and says that while the inn may operate as such, there should be nuisance ordinances preventing the current problems that are occurring. She mentions that noise ordinances in the village have been discussed. She tells the board that perhaps they should go to the Village Trustees to ask that some changes are approved before 2024.
 4. Ryan Silvestri says that the inn is still being run as an inn since it is still housing, that it simply has no vacancy now when before it did.

He says that it is acting as an inn and housing for workers, and it is the type of housing they are trying to create. He says that keeping workers from the mountain in Ludlow brings a sense of community. He says that changing the definition of an inn is not likely to fix the problems Paul mentioned, and that there are likely other ordinances around things such as dumpsters.

5. Paul says that he is still figuring out the different boards, having been to a Development Review Board previously. He states that he is not against Okemo housing, but is against residents out and being loud late at night and leaving trash out.
 6. Ryan asks if he has reached out to the owner.
 7. Paul says the owner is in Brooklyn and cannot be contacted.
 8. Judith says they should move things along, but that Paul should go to a Village Trustees meeting.
 9. Terry mentions complaints of noise from businesses at a recent selectboard meeting
 10. Ryan tells Paul that if there are problems going on such as noise at night they should call the police.
 11. Paul said they have called and they were told if it is not an emergency they cannot respond.
 12. Terry says the noise problems should be brought to the Village Trustees.
 13. Andrea thanks Paul for his comments.
- C. Patti Greenwood references page 23 of the Ludlow Municipal Plan where Okemo seasonal worker housing was mentioned to be located at 2 Pleasant Street and 80 Pond Street and that there is a need for more. She asked the board if there will be a definition for employee housing and a seasonal worker. She brings up that the definition for an inn references the housing of transients. She states that transient can have a wide definition, but it is not the same as a seasonal worker. She expresses the need to ensure that the living conditions of these people are met. She mentions that 57 Depot Street is employee housing along with the Pettigrew Inn, and that it is operating as an inn. She said that Cherry from the planning department told her that because there is no suitable definition for that type of housing and they are already permitted as an inn, they can continue on in that manner. She mentions seeing coolers on the roofs of buildings, and the difference in accommodations for someone on an extended stay.

1. Patty asks if the board will create definitions for words such as transient.
2. Terry says that the board recently came up with the following definition, yet to be approved, “A guest or boarder who stays for a short time only and whose permanent address for legal purposes is not the lodging facility where they are staying.”
3. Ryan asks for an example for an amenity or service that isn’t being provided,
4. Patty says that she has no sure idea of what is going on in the houses, but sees garbage outside and coolers on the roof. She says she does not know the conditions, and does not know who to contact about it.
5. Patty mentions the previous Development Review Board meeting where the proposed employee housing on prospect street does not fit any of the definitions of use. She asks how employee housing can exist with the limit to 8 bedrooms for boarding houses and rooming houses.

D. Steve Myers stated that this is the Ludlow Vermont Planning Board and not the Okemo Housing Planning Board. He says that he feels as a citizen of Ludlow any time spent building housing for or helping Okemo is a waste of time. He says that Vail has plenty of land to build their employee housing on.

VII. Municipal Planning Grant

A. Review Village Survey

1. Martha Harrison says that they spent time looking for surveys that were similar to what the board was looking for. She said they gathered the questions they brought from surveys of people looking for housing.
 - a) Ryan asks if this is a requirement.
 - (1) Terry says it is.
 - b) Martha says that they added 2 parking questions as the board mentioned.
2. Terry asks Allison if she has anything to add.
3. Allison says it is a looking for housing survey and they really wanted to get it to local employers to give to employees, the town website, and local places.

- a) Terry says they had the idea to keep this to village employees and employers.
- b) Ryan asks why that would be done.
- c) Terry says because it is part of the grant to look at where housing is needed.
- d) Andrea asks why they would confine it to just the village.
- e) Terry says because they are working on a village municipal planning grant.
- f) Andrea asks if the grant is limited to housing, as she expected a more broad survey, that if perhaps someone checks off housing on the survey they then get this deeper survey.
- g) Terry says it is primarily housing.
- h) Andrea asks if they can also add more in, while focusing on housing. She expresses the desire to ask more questions about what people want.
- i) Terry says that she agrees they should ask what people like about Ludlow, and that she thinks question 6 covers that aspect.
- j) Andrea says the survey will be too select.
- k) Terry expresses that they will make it a point to get to every employer, and that they can always get more data.
- l) Andrea says she feels it is too limiting to go on the small area only. She says that they may know what the people around them are thinking, but they need to open a wide net to find out what others are.
- m) Judith agrees with Andy and says that the proposed question is too specific to housing and employees that work. She brings up that there are many different factions of people, and that there is a need for parking questions.
- n) Martha says that she had emailed parking questions separately.
- o) Ryan says the answers to these questions are already known. He agrees with Andy but says they do not want to get too broad, perhaps giving more questions around housing. He proposes asking questions such as “do people think they should increase building height in the village?” or “do the residents of the village think that a parking garage is a good

idea?" He says that questions such as these can better guide future zoning policy.

(1) Terry asks what Martha thinks,

(a) She agrees with getting a larger audience.

- p) Ted Stryhas says that while people are saying things that all make sense, parking and housing are still the main problem.
- q) Judith brings up that a survey like this was done with the Municipal Plan and that they were supposed to get some specifics on that. She says that if they are to ask specific questions such as about building height and a parking garage they should ask if people would like to see more multi unit housing.
- r) Terry says that there is already a question on multi-unit housing.
 - (1) Judith says that question is asking people if they are looking for it, but they are asking the population if they are in favor of it. She mentions parking meters as a possibility as well.
- s) Andrea says it is only by reaching out to everyone that the issue is solved in a way the town wants. She volunteers to put a survey together.
- t) Steve Myers asks if the grant is for long term housing or short term.
 - (1) Martha says that it is for changes to zoning regulations to try and benefit housing.
 - (2) Steve says he comes to these meetings and hears different things. He says creating seasonal housing is a waste of the municipality's time.
 - (3) Ryan says they can't control what people do with their properties.
 - (4) Terry says they can.
 - (5) Ryan mentions that Burlington is being sued for trying to stop short term rentals.
 - (6) Terry says the grant is for housing in Ludlow
 - (7) Steve asks for Ludlow residents or Okemo employees.
 - (8) Many people respond both

(9) Judith says it can be for people who just work in Ludlow, not at Okemo.

(10) Steve says that land in the village is valuable and it should not be given to a corporation. He mentions a grant that requires landlords to rent to local families for 5 years.

4. Martha says that this survey could have an initial question such as are you an employer, an employee, etc., then give each group different questions. She says it should not be too broad, as this was probably done in the town plan.
 - a) Ryan says the town plan said housing, now they can ask specific questions on how.
5. Patty asks if the survey will be paper or online.
 - a) Terry says it will be online, and was planned to be solicited to employers.
6. Terry asks if the board wants to go through the questions one by one
 - a) Judith says it should be an open survey to anyone, not just employers and employees. Ryan agrees. She recommends to save time they set up a sub-committee to meet and come up with survey questions.
 - b) Andrea volunteers to meet with Terry, Martha, and Allison before the next meeting.
7. Allison says that the Municipal Planning Grant is mainly meant to focus on housing and parking.
 - a) Andrea suggests they finalize who the target audience is before questions are made.
 - b) Judith suggests residents, renters, employees, and business owners, and the first question could be “what describes you?”
 - c) Ryan says the survey should be available to everyone that has a stake in Ludlow and the first question should be “What best describes you?” He says this will allow the board to sort all of their data right away. He also mentions the logistics of targeting specific people versus sending it out mass.
8. Ryan asks the board how long they would want to have the survey available.
 - a) Andrea says it should be longer than a month, 45-60 days.

b) Martha says the grant is due by January 2024 and in a perfect world by then they would have gone through the public hearing process.

(1) Ryan asks how long she recommends if they were to start next month.

(2) Martha says not less than a month.

(3) Allison recommended 45 days.

B. Finalize Village Survey

C. Village Trustees Meeting Plan

1. Terry mentions that before the survey is sent out it must be approved by the village trustees.

a) Martha says it sounds unlikely that they would get through the public hearing and adoption process in time.

2. Terry asks if the board wants to run through the questions

a) Ryan says he is good with the questions.

VIII. Next Month's Agenda Planning

A. Finalize Village Survey

B. Village discussion of definitions for employee housing, seasonal workers, extended stay, etc.

C. Health Presentation from Regional Planning

1. Judith asked to push off until April.

IX. Other Business

A. Board member comments (5 minutes)

B. Citizen Comments (5 minutes)

1. Jean Strong says how she's seen the planning commission's hard work get lost by the village trustees before. She urges people to support the planning commission when they present to the village trustees.

2. George Tucker asks the planning commission to take a hard look ahead to how they envision Ludlow in 10 years. He mentions lot sizes and mountainside development. He asks for updated definitions for change of uses.

3. Eric Alden thanks the previous two comments. He encourages the board to think about the town plan and the goals and timelines that it has already set in place. He said that the town has changed but people want the same things. He states the need for plans of what

comes after the changes go through. He mentioned combining the town and village together.

- a) Terry says she worked on the town plan and feels the goals are being worked towards.
- 4. Jean says people need to step up and hold their elected officials accountable.
- 5. Steve Myers mentioned how short-term rentals have always existed in Ludlow. He has mentioned that since living in Ludlow, every year his taxes go up and services go down. He says the town should not be building housing or a parking garage for Okemo.
 - a) Andrea says that the board deals with the whole town, which can include Okemo, but they are not out to singly benefit them.
- 6. Patty says that without the regulations in place there is no recourse to be had when citizens have a problem.
 - a) Judith specified that when they are talking about employee housing, they are not only talking about Okemo employees.
 - b) Ryan agrees. He says how Ludlow is full of opportunity for the young worker.
 - c) Steve says that people don't move to Vermont to live in a 6-story apartment building.

X. Adjourn

- A. Theresa Carter entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:22 p.m. Andrea Goldman seconded. All accepted.

SURVEY QUESTIONS THAT WERE DISCUSSED DURING THE MEETING (Not Finalized yet)

1]	Were/are you looking for housing in Ludlow ? <i>(please check only one)</i>							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No						
2]	When were you looking for housing in Ludlow ?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Currently	<input type="checkbox"/> In the last 6 months						
	<input type="checkbox"/> In the last month	<input type="checkbox"/> In the last year						
	<input type="checkbox"/> In the last 3 months	<input type="checkbox"/> Over a year ago						
3]	What type of housing were/are you looking for?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> ownership (year-round)	<input type="checkbox"/> rental (year-round)						
	<input type="checkbox"/> ownership (second- home)	<input type="checkbox"/> rental (seasonal)						
4]	If you were/are looking for ownership housing, what type?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Single-family home (≤ 6 acres)	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-unit home						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Single-family home (> 6 acres)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lot/land						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Condo							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home							
5]	If you were/are looking for rental housing, what type?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual room/home share						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Condo							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Subsidized apartment							
6]	What factors are most important to you when choosing housing? <i>(select all that apply)</i>							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cost I can afford	<input type="checkbox"/> Low crime rate						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality schools	<input type="checkbox"/> Walk/bike-able to services						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Commute time to work	<input type="checkbox"/> Variety of stores/restaurants						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Close to health care providers	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational opportunities						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to friends/family	<input type="checkbox"/> Local taxes						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical quality of unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Other						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Job opportunities							
7]	Which of the following best describes strategies you used/are considering to find affordable housing in Ludlow ?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Live with a roommate	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept higher cost						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Live further away from village center	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept lower quality unit						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Live in a seasonal rental & move around	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Live in a smaller unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Other						
8]	Were you successful in finding housing in Ludlow ? <i>(select only one)</i>							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> I am still looking for housing in Ludlow					
9]	If you found housing in Ludlow, do you feel that it's affordable? <i>(select only one)</i>							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No						
10]	If you don't feel your current housing is affordable, what do you plan to do about it?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Find a different unit in Ludlow	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Move out of the area to find more affordable housing							
11]	If you were not successful in finding housing in Ludlow, why?							
	Too expensive	Could not find	Available units	Could not find	Not able to find	Not able to find a	Pets were a limiting factor	I decided not to move
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12]	If you were not successful in finding housing in Ludlow, what community did you/will you consider moving to instead?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rutland	<input type="checkbox"/> Cavendish/Baltimore						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Shrewsbury/Clarendon	<input type="checkbox"/> Weathersfield						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mt. Holly/Wallingford	<input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Plymouth						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Weston/Londonderry	<input type="checkbox"/> Bridgewater/Woodstock						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Chester/Andover	<input type="checkbox"/> Windsor/West Windsor						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Springfield	<input type="checkbox"/> I decided not to move						
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bellows Falls/Rockingham	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please provide Town & State)						
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please provide Town & State)						
13]	Based on your experience, do you feel there are adequate affordable housing options available in Ludlow?							
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No						
14]	What is your age? (optional)							
	<input type="checkbox"/> under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 to 34	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 59					
	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 39	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 years and older					
	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 29	<input type="checkbox"/> 40 to 49						
15]	Please feel free to provide additional detail about your search for housing that you think might be useful in planning for better access to affordable housing in Ludlow.							