

**TOWN OF LYNDON**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**September 13, 2017 Meeting Minutes**  
*Approved 9/27/17*

**Planning Commissioners:** Chris Thompson, Jack Berube, Evan Carlson, Sylvia Dodge, Sean McFeeley, Mike Schlesinger

**Public Official(s):** Annie McLean

**Public:** Patricia LeDuc, Karen Gammell, Angela Wheeler, Bob Morgan, Luanne Cantor, Marcia Davis, Rick Davis, Tonya Jardine, Annette Pittman, Tasha Gaboriault, Heidi Choiniere, Jessica Ledo, Erica Donaghy, Trisha Eckhardt, Michelle French, Jelena Gervais, Dennis Bouffard, Martha Feltus, Ken Burchesky, Otto Wurtzburg, Lynn Wurtzburg, Amelia Wurtzburg, Linda Toborg, Mary Beausoleil, Larry Willey

Chris Thompson chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

Chris Thompson made a **motion to approve the minutes of August 23, 2017 as written**. Mike Schlesinger **seconded the motion**. The Commission **voted 6-0**.

Chris Thompson opened the **public hearing on the proposed zoning amendment to re-zone the 0.23 acre parcel of land located at 155 South Street from the Residential Neighborhood (RNH) Zoning District to the Village Commercial (VCOM) Zoning District**.

Annie McLean gave an overview of the process for amending a municipal zoning bylaw as outlined in 24 V.S.A. § 4441.

Bob Morgan, CEO of North Country Federal Credit Union (NCFCU) spoke about NCFCU's commitment to Lyndonville.

Linda Toborg, a resident of South Street, stated that the proposal would change the nature of the neighborhood and that there were at least 5 or 6 single-family homes left on the South Street. She also stated that an expanded parking lot would change the nature of the small park in front of the credit union as well as bring down property values on the South Street. She felt strongly that the existing house at 155 South Street should not be demolished.

Luanne Cantor, Director of Special Projects for NCFCU, explained that NCFCU planned to expand their existing green space and that the house at 155 South Street was built in 1918 and had fallen into disrepair. NCFCU will make efforts to salvage usable material from the house if they demolish it. Additionally there was very little interest in the home when it was on the market.

Chris Thompson explained that the proposal before the Planning Commission was a change in the zoning of the 155 South Street parcel not to judge a specific development project. He noted that it can be hard to separate changing a zoning district from a specific development project but asked that the discussion take a broader view and try to focus on the potential long-term effects a zoning change could have.

Angela Wheeler, a NCFCU employee, stated that past high turnover in residents at 155 South Street had prevented upkeep and beautification of the property.

Mary Beausoleil, a Lyndon resident and NCFCU member, stated that it was sad to see the decline of the South Street neighborhood, however South Street still has some nice houses left including one of the only

Craftsman style homes in the Town (155 South Street). She suggested that the existing park be used to expand NCFCU's parking as it is too small to be a functional park.

Chris Thompson again clarified the change that was being requested and explained that if would change the uses that would be allowed (permitted or conditional) on the parcel. He provided examples of uses currently allowed on the parcel as it was zoned (RNH) as well as uses allowed in the VCOM District.

Dennis Bouffard, a Lyndon resident, praised NCFCU for wanting to invest in the Town. He added that allowing NCFCU to expand would add to the Grand List and was an opportunity for good change and progress.

Tasha Gaboriault stated that she agreed with Mr. Bouffard.

Patty Leduc, a resident of Lyndon and on the NCFCU Board of Directors stated that the South Street neighborhood is already evolving and the change of use of this parcel was a natural progression.

Linda Toborg stated again that there were at least 5 single-family homes on her end of South Street. She also stated that the NCFCU property looks nice and that they do a great job of maintaining it. Additionally she agreed with Mary Beausoleil that the house located at 155 South Street was a lovely Craftsman style home.

Dennis Bouffard stated that renovating older homes was just not economically feasible.

Annette Pittman, a Lyndon resident and former employee of NCFCU when it was located on Depot Street, stated that it was great that NCFCU was growing and that past zoning changes were approved to accommodate similar growth and have turned out wonderfully.

Otto Wurtzburg, owner of a two-family apartment building located at 55 South Street, stated that the new Cumberland Farms on Broad Street has degraded property values and created high speed traffic on South Street. He voiced concerns with taking down another house and further deteriorating the residential nature of the downtown.

Dennis Bouffard stated that the cumulative effect of town wide development, not Cumberland Farms, was the cause of increased traffic.

Amelia Wurtzburg, resident of 55 South Street and NCFCU member, stated that South Street has become louder than downtown Burlington due to increased traffic.

Angela Wheeler noted that a 9-5 business would mitigate noise issues.

Lynn Wurtzburg, owner of a two-family apartment building located at 55 South Street, stated that she was not anti-growth and mentioned that Lyndonville was going to be featured in an upcoming issue of Yankee Magazine as a quiet little town. She stated that nicer architecture adds character to the town and would like to see more long-range planning address traffic patterns as opposed to the slow creep of incremental changes, which can undermine the neighborhood.

Luanne Cantor reiterated NCFCU's long-term commitment to Lyndonville and clarified that NCFU did not have specific plans in place yet as to what they would do with the property if the zoning change was approved. The zoning change was the first step.

Bob Morgan stated NCFCU did not have the ability to expand at all in their current location due to the physical constraints on the lot.

Mary Beausoleil noted that the NCFCU filled the gap for a banking location in the Village, however the management isn't located in Lyndon. She suggested that NCFCU renovate the house at 155 South Street and use it for office space.

Annie McLean explained that the proposed zoning change would be necessary in order for them to do that as offices are not a permitted use in the RNH District.

Mary Beausoleil stated that she realized the zoning change request was separate from a proposed project but would be inclined to support it if the house could be saved.

Mike Schlesinger clarified that as the property owner NCFCU could still tear down the house if the proposed zoning change were denied by the Selectboard. A zoning permit is not required for demolition.

Linda Toborg thanked NCFCU for their courtesy and noted that she appreciated their presence in Town. She also thanked the Planning Commission for allowing everyone who wished to speak provide their input.

Mike Schlesinger made a **motion to close the public hearing**. Jack Berube **seconded the motion**. The Commission **voted 6-0**.

Planning Commissioners discussed the input from the public hearing. Evan Carlson asked if proximate commercial development affected residential property values. Jack Berube said in general it did not. It was noted that public input on the proposed change seems pretty evenly split. The five Commissioners that had originally voted on the proposed zoning change all stated that the public hearing did not change their view on the proposed zoning change.

Sean McFeeley made a **motion to forward the written report as written with the addition of the comment “*Public input from the September 13, 2017 public hearing reflected the contents of the report and the evenly divided opinions of the Planning Commissioners*” to the Town Selectboard**. Jack Berube **seconded the motion**. The Commission **voted 6-0**.

Next Planning Commission meeting will be September 27, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.