

Strafford Selectboard
Public Hearing for the Town Plan
Wednesday, September 29, 2021, at 6:00pm
Justin Morrill Education Center and ZOOM

Members participating: Toni Pippy, Mary Linehan, Rett Emerson Jeff Solsaa

Others participating: Victoria Littlefield of TRORC, Lisa Bragg, Martha Walke, Chrissy Jamieson, Stephen Willbanks, Donald Graham, Jason Schumacher, Steve Dycus, Dorian Yates

Hearing called to order at 6:04 pm

The hearing for the Town Plan was opened by Toni Pippy. Per guidance from TRORC, the Select board will not be voting on whether to approve the Town Plan at this meeting but will wait at least until the next Selectboard meeting to hold a vote to allow for integration of changes and feedback.

Tory Littlefield explained the changes (the edits are visible in the draft plan). Highlights of the changes by the Planning Commission to the previous Town Plan are as follows:

- Chapter 3: Housing
 - Established goals related to housing being safe and sanitary.
- Chapter 5: Utilities and Facilities
 - Added language on Strafford's cultural resources.
 - Clarified information on town owned buildings.
- Chapter 7: Transportation
 - Added a section on air and rail access for residents.
- Chapter 8: Natural Resources
 - Added information, goals, policies and implementation actions on Basin Planning for the Ompompanoosuc and White Rivers.
 - Added language on forest blocks and habitat connectors.
 - Added a section on air quality.
 - Clarified information about the Elizabeth Mine.
- Chapter 9: Land Use
 - Added an implementation action to develop historic districts in Strafford.
- Chapter 10: Energy
 - Developed and incorporated an Enhanced Energy Plan in accordance with standards set by the Department of Public Service.
- Chapter 12: Implementation

Comments and discussion:

The Strafford Energy & Climate Committee requested adding to the paragraph on Page 77, X. Energy, Goal of current Town Plan draft the following:

“as well as options for reducing our carbon emissions through best practices, sustainability planning, and the sequestration and storage of carbon through soil, plants, and forests.”

Mary requested clarification that creation of a historical district would not increase the burden on homeowners to adhere to regulations. Steve Willbanks reconfirmed that the Plan is an aspirational document and the intent in this section is to encourage town residents to maintain the historic beauty of the villages. Tori confirmed that the Plan is not an enforceable document but rather lays out the town’s vision for the next 8 years and does not over-ride town zoning or other ordinances.

Rett inquired about the Forestry and Farming Goals policies 1-6 added to the town plan. There was significant discussion to clarify the proposed change. Tori clarified that these additions are state mandated for all town plans due to the passing of Act 171 and reiterated that the Town Plan does not have enforcement authority.

Steve Dycus would like to see less salt used on the roads and to see more done to prevent cell towers from being installed on the ridge lines.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan
Recording Clerk