**Town of Lexington Special Town Board Meeting**

**with The Planning Board & Zoning Board**

**Comprehensive Plan Up Date**

**April 27, 2022**

Supervisor JoEllen Schermerhorn called the Special Meeting to order at 6:08 followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. The Special Meeting was held to talk about up dating the comprehensive plan.

**Present:** Supervisor JoEllen Schermerhorn

Council Members Bradley Jenkins

Bennett Wine

William Pushman

Town Clerk Charlotte Jaeger

Planning Board Members Jen Cawein

Beverly Dezan via zoom

Nancy Orr

Beth Martin, PB Secretary

Zoning Board Sarah Pellizzari

Kim McGalliard, ZBA Secretary

**Absent:** Town Attorney Tal Rappleyea

Superintendent of Highways Kevin Simmons

**Others Present:** Nan Stolzenburg, Lynn Byrne, Peggy Rappleyea, Kathy Jordan, Devon Russ, Barry Olsen, & Helen Kerr via zoom

Supervisor Schermerhorn said that this meeting is a kick start for brain storming to update the Comprehensive Plan which has not been up dated since 2003 and it is recommended that they are updated every 10 years. The Town of Lexington received a $10,000.00 grant from Greenway and that it is a matching grant which means the Town is responsible for $10,000.00 too. Nan Stolzenburg will be the consultant for this project.

Nan Stolzenburg said that she is familiar with Lexington as she helped with the recovery plan from 2016 after Tropical Storm Irene. She said that the Comprehensive Plan can be considered a road map or a guideline. The Plan covers 3 main questions.

**1 What are the current conditions or characteristics?**

**2. Where does the community want to be in 10 years?**

**3. How do we get there?** Programs, grants, capital improvements, up dating local laws such as zoning for example

Nan said that things are changing very quickly these days in rural communities. We will involve the community with a survey & possibly with a mailing. According to the legal requirements there needs to be a public hearing for the committee and then a public hearing with the Town Board within 90 days from when the committee submits the plan. The Town needs to do a SEQR(environmental review) and send it to Greene County Planning Board before the Town Board can adopt it. Then the Town Board can make a Resolution to adopt the plan. Nan will facilitate the process and offer technical help. She wanted to hear from the local government to start with. Nancy said that she believes that the Comprehensive Plan can affect our zoning in the future and the Planning Board and does have some legal bearing. Nan said that all land use regulations have a direct result from the Comprehensive Plan.

The plan comes from the consensus and the support from the community. Bennett asked if someone wants to have a wind farm and erect wind mills does the Comprehensive Plan have to speak to that one way or the other? Nan said if the zoning allows it then it would have to go through the process. There can be a problem if it is not addressed in either the Comprehensive Plan or Zoning. Details are very important in the plan. Jen said that it is important to get the communities input for the plan and then work on the zoning. Brad asked if we would be stuck with this plan when the Resolution is passed?

Nan said that the Town should be able to change it when needed and it should be responsive to the community. She used solar as an example. Sarah said that a project can be turned down if it does not go along with the Comprehensive Plan. Nancy mentioned the Mountain Clove Scenic Byway and she thought that would be a great resource to use. Nan said that there will be a long list of issues and suggestions from the boards and the community. Then they will need to be prioritized.

**Brainstorming**

**1**. **What do you think is a strength of the Town?**

Bill limited growth (rural) & hiking. Brad natural surroundings. Nancy streams, rivers, waterfalls, & waterways. Bennett the spirit of the town & we have great broad band. Peggy community oriented. Beth open spaces. Jen agriculture, small community farms, flower farm, Newton farm, the farmers market Sarah simplicity, quality of life JoEllen friendliness Kim variation in natural beauty Lynn our history recreational opportunities like fishing, hiking, hunting, bird watching, skiing, swimming, snowshoeing, quality of our wild life, nature conservancy, native brook trout in West Kill Kim great business that are unique to the area Nancy artisan community is very strong Bev great people, caring community

**2.** **What are the issues or concerns or problems**

Charlotte First responders are a strength but trying to get volunteers is getting more difficult Lynn senior care, senior housing, affordable housing Kim no available housing JoEllen no affordable or available housing and a lot of young people have to travel far for work or they move away Jen need people to work here but for them to find housing is difficult Sarah worries about emergency services

and that hospitals are far away, land acquisition, erosion/ slope failures Beth balancing housing for seniors without overgrowth, disconnect with Town and County Bennett lack of cell service, no gas station, no recreation or art center Jen decaying buildings are unsafe Peggy can use a new Town Building Charlotte new highway garage because we have several different places for the highway crew rather than one central location Jen short term rentals affecting lack of housing and a strain on First Responders Nancy DEP acquisition of land can be extremely harmful, following the rules of DEP,

they buy land and they don’t do any stewardship Brad tax base how long can we afford to keep going we have a large number of Town roads to maintain and the relationship between county & town has degraded Bev falling short on enforcement in the Town and Brad said that falls back on not having enough money JoEllen pandemic was harmful and the sense of community as a whole town is lacking, not knowing your neighbors Nancy thinks there is a big disconnect between County Legislator and Lynn said that goes along with social services tooBill said it was a shame when they did away with the home nursing services.

**3. Wish List of programs, projects, activities, changes, things you would like to see**

Bill general store, gas station Brad stream side maintenance-NY City funding JoEllen ease up on the DEP /DEC rules for streams Nancy would like to see the community hall used more and to have the kitchen up graded so that it could be certified for local people to use to make jelly, pickles, baked goods, etc this would help the local agriculture as well. Peggy likes the idea of a building for kids to use and where they can be taught about nature, have programs, do hikes, have guest speakers, health & fitness Beth any kind of connected trail ways for horseback riding, snow mobiles, atvs Jen to take the old dilapidated buildings and turn them into housing and a place for people to share tools Sarah community center and having control in our own area in regards to streams etc. JoEllen walking paths connecting the pocket parks to fishing access, swimming pool Kim knot weed eradication Jen get rid of ash borers Lynn emergency response preparedness Charlotte medical transportation for folks that don’t drive that is guaranteed and at low or no cost, mountain top medical center, local blood draw, cell service, play ground/swing set at Municipal building JoEllen new highway garage Charlotte new fire house Jen community owned power, maybe solar or maybe a charging station Kim making sure commercial businesses don’t affect quality of life Brad businesses are allowed in the Hamlets

**4. What do you consider a threat**

Jen short term rentals Sarah short term rentals the speed in which they came about and lack of enforcement, quality of life, and seeing solar and wind fields JoEllen the loss of community because there aren’t many locals here, floods Bill New York State saying that they are going to put up solar panels or wind turbines on the land they own in Lexington

The committee for the Comprehensive Plan are Jen, Lynn, & Kim with Nan as the consultant.

Nan said that the commercial kitchen could probably get grant money from Ag & Markets. She said that the next step would be to get this information organized and also doing the survey. Using events like the Farmers Market or the Car Show to get people to participate in the survey will help get more results. We could use post it notes or use a big poster to get feed back from people. Kim thought maybe we could use a raffle as an incentive but Nan said that a lot of people are suspicious of giving out their information. Nan said that now a days you only get about 15% of people to do surveys. JoEllen said that we need to go out and knock on doors. The survey would be on the Town website and there might be a post card mailing. Bill said maybe we could use the store when it opens for the survey.

Nan said she would go over the survey questions when they are sent to her and make recommendations if needed. The questions on the survey would be optional.

**Adjourn**The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlotte Jaeger, Town Clerk