

Roxbury Planning Commission  
September 13, 2018  
Roxbury Town Office  
Meeting Minutes

Lucinda called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Present: Gloria Danforth, Mike French, Lucinda Sullivan, Kate Jackson

Lucinda moved to approve minutes from last meeting, they were approved 4,0,0.

Cell Quality and Internet Speed was discussed as necessary for town residents. Questions raised were who are our providers and how do we get better service here in Roxbury?

It was agreed Mike French will do research on how to update the Town Plan in regards to Air Quality.

**Gloria reported on Employment/Unemployment found on page 17 & 18 of the Town Plan. As well as Local Farms & Businesses.**

- She found the current Town Plan is deficient in employment & business trends.
- Unfortunately, as of 2017 the Department of Labor will no longer collect stats on labor in communities under 1000 residents. Latest stats we have are 2016. Gloria will have to continue her search for statistics on Roxbury employment trends.
- When referencing the Secretary of State website, Gloria found that Roxbury has a lot of small businesses within the town.
- Place of work is not included in trends but we are limited to 2010 census information. Will not have new information until 2020.
- We can speculate from what was found on the Secretary of State website that we do have more small business in town. Especially in regards to small farms. We will have to follow up with data.
- Will look at the Secretary of State website to compare businesses in 2014 to business in 2018 to see if we can find how many new businesses have.
- We will inquire with the Roxbury Town Clerk to find out what percentage of our population is now retired?
- Gloria will look into how to find unemployment statistics outside of the Department of Labor.

Brookfield and Roxbury are at the bottom of the list for access to internet where as the current Town Report states that it is sufficient.

**Kate reported on Accessory Dwelling Units which are currently not included in the Town Plan.**

- Taxing of accessory dwelling:  
Vermont property tax system includes two education tax rates,
- Homestead (residential) and non residential
- Non residential rate which may be higher or lower than residential rate applies to the part of homestead that is rented
- Overriding state law says homeowner must be allowed to add **one** Accessory Dwelling Unit as a permitted use as long as these conditions are met:
- The property has the capacity to handle the additional demand for septic (wastewater) disposal.
- The size of the Accessory Dwelling Unit equals no more than 30% of the total habitable square footage of the house. Towns may adopt a less restrictive bylaw (ie. Allow a larger sized unit)
- The property meets any applicable setback, coverage, and parking requirements contained in the town zoning by-laws.
- A town may prohibit ADU's in flood and fluvial erosion hazard areas.
- Landlord Tenant Laws for the State of Vermont apply.
- Rental Housing Health Code applies to all rented dwelling units used as a regular residence.
- Benefits...Increase the supply of housing without using up more land, within locally controlled, community based guidelines.
- Lead Paint Laws apply
- Race discrimination is illegal

**Lucinda reported on Forest Integrity which currently needs updating I the Town Plan.**

- Questions raised were- Do we want to take chunks of private forest and connect and protect them? Would there be ramifications thru Act 250 and property taxes? What is the will of the people/town?
- We agreed this topic should be included on the new survey.
- The last survey states that town wants to preserve rural integrity.

- There is the potential to get really detailed about how we preserve and manage our forests.
- Roxbury is already in a good position because we have state forest within the town as well as established town forest.
- Chapter 171 forest integrity act, suggests we designate a committee to make changes about forest integrity. This has been done in the past but no decisions could be made because too many interests were on the table.
- Roxbury could do something to connect and protect preserved forests and make this an important piece of the town.

**Lucinda reported on Village Center Designation.**

- It is a huge and quite detailed process of an application to designate a village center.
- It would give Roxbury access to grants to help businesses, town store fronts, and historical buildings. Before we embark on it we need to have a discussion in regards to; is this something the town will want to do?
- If we find it is worth and the town wants it, we then have to go to the select board.

To end, it was agreed that implementation of this new updated Town Plan imperative. Without implementation of the updated Town Plan, all this work we are doing to update it is wasted.

Each member of the Planning Committee will research this month what other town plans throughout Vermont include in for our area of research.

Lucinda adjourned the meeting at 7:36pm.

Next meeting will be held October 4th @ 6:30pm at the Roxbury Town Office.