

Isle La Motte Town Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

11 March, 2024 (as amended 3/28/24)

7:00 PM

Via Zoom

In Attendance: Commission Members Carmine Centrala, Neil Chaffee, Sylvia Jensen, Laura Miraldi, Steven Reeve and Michael Simanskas. Emily Klofft of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission

1. **Call to Order:** The Meeting was called to order at 7:01 by Chair Carmine Centrala

2. **Administrative Work:**

- **Approve 1/23/24 meeting minutes:** Motion to approve by Michael Simanskas seconded by Steven Reeve. All in favor with one abstention (Sylvia Jensen did not attend the January meeting)

3. **Planning**

- **Review/discuss initial draft section:**

- **Land Use Map.**

Discussion of village center. Carmine had distributed a rough map to start discussion of a possible Village Center extending North/South, East/West from the intersection of Main, Church, and School Streets.

Sylvia mentioned that Scott Newman started work several years ago on an Historic designation for the ILM village center. She will look into any information that may be available from that effort.

Emily indicated that a Village Center designation usually follows lot parcel lines. She will submit our thoughts to the State Program Mgr., Richard Amore for guidance.

It was suggested and generally agreed that, in order to maintain flexibility and support our goal of preserving the rural character of the island, the remainder of the island outside the Village Center should be designated as "Rural/Agricultural"

Lakeshore: Lakeshore is defined as 100' from the mean high-water mark. State regulations generally pertain to development on the lake side of town roads. Any further restrictions on lakeshore development would be municipal, not state regulations.

- **Transportation Draft:**

Michael, referencing Page 9 "Maintenance", asked if we should mention the town's effort to allow residents to submit road complaints. The attendees generally agreed that we should hold off until the effectiveness of this effort is determined.

Bicycles, etc. It was agreed that the town does not have resources for major road expansion. We feel that adding signage could be accomplished.

Transportation Links: It was agreed that we should add Plattsburg & Montreal as nearby air links and Rouses Point as a rail link.

Policies: It was suggested that we change "wide" to "wider" in reference to road shoulders.

Housing:

Michael pointed out that the demographic numbers on this draft do not agree with the January Draft. Emily advised that two major sources were used to provide the desired

accuracy and detail. Data from the American Community Service Survey do not necessarily agree with the Census numbers. We should state in the document that multiple sources are used. Emily will provide the data source references where appropriate.

Michael asked what constitutes “Owner-Occupied” housing. Emily indicated that it refers to legal residents. This should be clarified in the document.

Goals & Policies: It was generally agreed that the document should indicate that we support statewide housing goals.

Economy:

References to the quarries should be corrected to acknowledge that one quarry is still in operation and that the Fisk Quarry is now part of the Preservation Trust.

Workforce: It was generally agreed that our stated Goals & Policies should support goals supported by the majority of respondents in the town wide survey.

Sylvia suggested that the document should address the growing # of remote workers on the island.

- **Utilities, Facilities, Services**

.Education: Sylvia pointed out that the Elementary School closed in **2023** (The school ceased classes in 2019 and transferred ownership of the building to the town in 2023.) and that our students currently attend school in Grand Isle and North Hero through 6th grade. Sylvia will provide additional detail for the education section.

Emergency Services: Carmine will follow up with the ILM Fire Chief regarding any current need. Carmine will clarify that the island has a contract with the North Hero Sheriff.

Water, etc.: Carmine indicated that he had heard that the town at some point had data regarding an aquifer under the island. The question was also asked if the town has access to a failure rate for septic systems. Carmine will check with Complete Septic Systems to see if they have any data for the island.

Communications: Cell and 5G access was discussed. Neil indicated that reception is generally poor on the southeastern shore and Michael expressed difficulty obtaining high speed internet. Construction of communications infrastructure on the island is likely to be a sensitive topic so it was agreed that it should be raised at a public forum. Emily pointed out that, If you don’t have a policy, you leave the location of any such infrastructure open to anywhere on the island.

Broadband: It was generally agreed that broadband access is an acute need on the island. The broadband access discussion could also be linked to attracting remote workers and benefiting home schooling efforts.

4. Other Business

Emily suggested that we schedule and begin planning for a public outreach in late April and that it would be advisable to schedule a second March meeting to plan for the outreach. It was agreed that we need the second March meeting and Carmine indicated that he would reach out for availability.

Motion to Adjourn: Steven Reeve motioned to adjourn and Michael Simanskas seconded, all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.