

**Town of Lexington  
Vision for Lexington Committee Meeting  
April 26, 2024  
Remote Meeting  
7:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.**

**Draft Minutes**

**Members Present:** Sara del Nido Budish, Margaret Coppe, Marian Cohen, Andrew Dixon, John Giudice, Jill Hai, Dan Joyner, Carol Marine, Shannon Murtagh, Bob Peters, Ambilu Sivabalan, Min Zou

**Absent:** Bhumip Khasnabish, Kathleen Lenihan,

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**The meeting was called to order:** 7:49 am

The Remote Meeting Script was read by Margaret Coppe

Roll Call Vote: Budish, Aye; Coppe, Aye; Cohen, Aye; Dixon, Aye; Giudice, Aye; Hai, Aye, Joyner, Aye; Marine, Aye; Murtagh, Aye, Peters, Aye; Sivabalan, Aye; Zou, Aye.

**Minutes:**

- The approval of minutes from March 22, 2024, was moved by Bob Peters and seconded by John Giudice.

Roll Call Vote: Budish, Aye; Coppe, Aye; Cohen, Aye; Dixon, Aye; Giudice, Aye; Hai, Abstain, Joyner, Aye; Marine, Aye; Murtagh, Aye, Peters, Aye; Sivabalan, Abstain; Zou, Abstain.

The vote was unanimous.

**Meeting Highlights:**

VFL Website Report on Emails

Dan Joyner reported no emails this month.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

Equity Workshop Report will be released in June

A Town Manager search firm will be hired by the Select Board. Current Town Manager, James Malloy, is retiring on September 30, 2024. The search committee should be as diverse as possible. Credible females should be considered as candidates. The goal is to offer a contract by mid-August.

Update on Subcommittee on Voter Participation in Lexington

Marian Cohen reported from the subcommittee.

Suggestions to increase voter participation included town wide reminder mailings and urging the elected state delegation to help with publicity.

It was noted that the Town Meeting recently defeated a warrant article that would have asked the state to authorize voting by pre-registered 16 and 17 years-old. It was suggested that if the proponent were to bring it to the next Town Meeting it might be more successful if limited to 17 year olds. There was discussion at Town Meeting over concerns about privacy issues for 16 years old.

Discussion on new study, report, or recommendations (thanks to John Giudice for this summary)

- **Housing Demand:** There's a significant demand for low-cost housing across the region, and a shortage of resources to meet this demand. This demand spans across Lexington and neighboring towns like Waltham, Arlington, and Winchester.
- **Affordable Housing Challenges:** The transcript identifies that while affordable housing is needed, there are conflicting opinions. Some prioritize preserving neighborhood character and resisting increased density, while others recognize the need for affordable housing at different price points.
- **Education and Collaboration:** The discussion highlights the need for educating the public about zoning and affordable housing, suggesting collaboration with various groups like the Lexington Lyceum and League of Women Voters.

#### Ideas

- **Community Forum:** Organize a forum or education piece to discuss zoning, housing financing, and the implications of increased housing density. This would be aimed at fostering understanding without a political agenda.
- **Testing Assumptions:** Conduct a general survey to gauge public opinion on housing. The transcript indicates a division between those who want more housing and those who resist changes to neighborhood character.
- **Clarifying Terms:** Differentiating between workforce housing, affordable housing, and low-income housing can help combat misconceptions that affordable housing is synonymous with undesirable or poor people.
- **Retaining Lexington Residents:** Address the need for housing options that allow residents to stay in Lexington. This involves creating opportunities for downsizing and starter homes for younger individuals.

#### Action Items

- **Ongoing Discussion on Town Vision:** Establish a continuous conversation within the Vision for Lexington Committee to explore what the town might look like in 10–15 years in terms of density and inclusivity.
- **Regional Collaboration:** Address housing issues collaboratively across multiple towns, recognizing that these challenges are not confined to Lexington. Ideas like regional transportation solutions could be considered.
- **Proposals for New Housing Solutions:** Consider creative housing solutions, such as building mini-houses or other small-scale housing options, to provide housing for the local workforce.

Overall, the discussion underscores the importance of balancing the need for affordable housing with the desire to maintain the character of the community, while also recognizing that housing issues extend beyond Lexington and require collaborative solutions.

New Business

The next town wide survey will be in 2027 (done every five years). The committee needs to submit a budget request for the FY2026 budget.

**Next Meeting:** May 31, 2024, 7:45am by Zoom

Motion to adjourn:

Roll Call Vote:

Roll Call Vote: Budish, Aye; Coppe, Aye; Cohen, Aye; Dixon, Aye; Giudice, Aye; Hai, Aye, Joyner, Aye; Marine, Aye; Murtagh, Aye, Peters, Aye; Sivabalan, Aye; Zou, Aye.

**Adjourn:** 9:00 am