

The Town of Lancaster has begun their efforts to develop new zoning standards for Main Street to include the development of Form Base Codes and increased dwelling unit density. The project is a follow-up to the land use regulation and ordinance audit funded by the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund which was completed earlier this year. The rezoning project is mostly funded by New Hampshire Housing's Community Planning Grant program with some matching funds contributed by the Town, most in volunteer and staff time.

After a request for qualified consultants was advertised, Jeffery H. Taylor and Associates was chosen to provide consulting services to the Town for this project. They are the same firm who conducted the audit previously mentioned and have extensive experience working with NH towns and cities on land use matters.

The area under consideration for review is the commercially zoned areas of Main Street from the southern junction of Routes 2 & 3 to the northern junction and the adjoining side streets where also zoned commercial. Letters to those property owners along the project route will soon be sent explaining the project's goals and objectives more specifically.

The project team has already walked the designated area with Town staff to become familiar with the existing conditions. A more detailed review was recently completed and included taking measurements of existing road and sidewalk widths, building setbacks, heights and lot coverage. Roadside landscaping and green area was also noted. All of this was in an effort to document the more attractive elements of Main Street so any proposed zoning amendments can encourage this type of development.

Two high school classes comprised of juniors and seniors were recently engaged in a public input session to gather the input of a younger generation. The opportunity to engage them for this project was very important and a lot of thanks and credit goes to the high school administration and teachers Jonathan Going and Zach Babcock for making it happen.

More public meetings are already scheduled to gather input. The first one will be Wednesday, June 12 at 6:30 PM at the Lancaster Town Hall with a second one following on August 14 at the same time and place. A design charrette has also been scheduled for Saturday, June 29.

The charrette will begin in the morning, exact time has not been set yet, with a public discussion about elements of Main Street people would like to retain and encourage. The input session will adjourn for the early afternoon to give the project team the opportunity to take the thoughts gathered during the morning session and turn them into actual design drawings of properties along the project route that could be developed based on the possible zoning changes. A reveal of those drawings will take place later in the afternoon for the public to review.

Additional meetings will be planned throughout the summer and early fall to update the Town's Land Use Boards and public on the project's progress as well as provide opportunity for continual input. Some will be during regular planning or zoning board meetings but others may be held with particular groups who are often not engaged or are unable to attend regularly scheduled meetings.

Of particular importance is the feedback received from property owners along the project route as they are the ones to be most directly affected by any changes adopted by the Town. Efforts to engage them in a more personal, one-on-one environment will

be made. Town Department Heads will be encouraged to express their thoughts and concerns as well.

Further reports of the project's progress will be written to be published in local papers. Notice of public input meetings will be posted at the Lancaster Town Office and Weeks Memorial Library. Also look for information on the Town's website at [www.lancasternh.org](http://www.lancasternh.org). You can sign up to get announcements of meetings and information emailed to you as they are posted. An online survey may also be developed. Anyone not able to attend the scheduled meetings but desiring to offer comment can submit their thoughts to Planning/Zoning Coordinator, Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson by phone: 603-788-3391, email: [planning@lancasternh.org](mailto:planning@lancasternh.org), or mail: 25 Main Street, Lancaster, NH 03584