

TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD INCLUSION COMMITTEE
Meeting Tuesday, October 22, 2024, 5:00 p.m.
Springfield Town Library • 43 Main Street

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83498337249>

Meeting ID: 834 9833 7249

Dial by your location

• +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

1. Call to Order - pattrice called to order at 5:01

In attendance: pattrice jones, Caroline Comley, Carol-Lynn Knight, Tara Chase, Traci Price, Char Osterlund, Dan Bannan

Absent: Charis Boke

2. Additions / Subtractions to the Agenda - no

3. Public Comment - no

4. Announcements

- Saturday 10/26 11am candidates forum at Town Library
- Monday 10/28 6pm - Hartness Park ordinance, public hearing at Town Hall
- Wednesday 10/30 6pm Just Getting By - Bess O'Brien at Nolin Murray
- Vine Sanctuary Award - pictured in paper

5. Approval of Minutes of September meeting

No recommended changes

Motion to approve made by Char; Tara seconded; unanimous with Dan abstaining because he was not present

6. Q&A with Planning & Zoning Administrator Chuck Wise

Chuck offered the following comments:

- Engagement is critical at all levels
- Gap between where we want to be and where we are
- Inclusion has a seat at the table
- Town Plan has places where inclusion is clear, arguing over engineering might not be able to be argued
- Land Use Ordinance / Zoning - issues of inclusion
- Talked about social justice in the 90's - redlining, urban removal (instead of renewal) - not new to me, marginalizing people and the environment
- Housing is definitely an issue, you can see where your voice can be heard
- Took ourselves out of the town and into the community - coffee store, co-op, barn

- If I want to talk agriculture, meet them in a barn
- Housing at state level seismic shift - statue quo unequal to task of modern challenges
- Expecting same solutions to get us out is folly
- State is telling us what to do
- Vulnerable populations...development going in, drainage...who decides to live in a space; we try to pull who is going to live there out of the review
- You want to control density, control parking, control density - can't have those kinds of standards
- Zoning is what we're doing, every month, not doing anything else
- Hoping to get done in 12-14 months
- Town Plan will have to come back
- Approval process has to be done in a certain way - has to be done with the energy chapter, anything else can go in over the next year or two
- All committee recommendations were included
- Opportunity to add more changes

Q&A with committee

- Char - when will you be going over energy chapter
- Chuck - waiting for state data models
- Char - does the town have any data
- Chuck - that's all we have, waiting for processing
- pattrice - chaos would have been avoided if we knew earlier. Brian lets us know if he's working on something that would be of interest. If you're updating statutes, Dan will want to look at it on our behalf. Even road widths might have inclusion overlap. Err on the side that there might be inclusion recommendations.
- Chuck - I learned a lot. Indigenous populations...planners like me, that's not going to affect us. What you all did, you freshened it up, more relevant. What else in the Town Plan?
- Char - some requirements like parking impact low income; a lot of zoning was based on infrastructure
- Chuck - waste processing sets density, we've got awesome infrastructure in Springfield
- Char - zoning for 5 acre plots might not be available for low income
- Tara - we'll add the energy chapter, housing Act 181. This will impact zoning and Town Plan.
- pattrice - warming hut or similar amenity, concerned about lack of shelter in the cold for unhoused people, most likely to come from marginalized groups. Long standing wish on our end. Social determinants of health felt vague.
- Chuck - Select Board is ultimate authority. Energy will take about a year. Will let us know when it's happening.
- pattrice - we don't mind (Dan doesn't mind) reading through ordinance, policies, documents with our equity tool
- Dan - tiny houses, density in general was the biggest issue. As inflation has increased, greater density can reduce housing costs.

- Chuck - why are we discussing density in areas that can handle it. Brattleboro doesn't deal with density, focus on impacts. Pull back density, that makes sense.
- pattrice - we're here at 5pm, anything that you're overhauling or starting new...will send you equity tool

7. New Business

a. Town website – accessibility tool

pattrice - Brian added a new widget currently installed on our town website, blue person on middle of right side of screen can highlight, make text bigger and more
Unanimously supported by committee

b. Town website – proposed form for PD complaints

- Char - on 2nd page “are you able to read, write, speak English language” - move to 1st page
- Tara - add options to first page (do you need this to be read to you, do you language assistance, etc) *will email pattrice
- Traci - change “intimate” to “intimidate” on pg2
- pattrice - move “Please describe” above text lines on pg2
- Char - add checkbox to 2nd page
- Caroline - pdf or create google form?
- pattrice - include link to policy about what police do when they get a report
- pattrice will send to Brian and report back

c. Draft write-up for Town Report

All in support

8. Old Business

a. Hate speech incident at Riverside Middle School

- pattrice wrote to Matthew Alden, Assistant Principal - contacted through website. He didn't know about the incident and said he couldn't disclose any details because of FERPA. Shared that the procedures would be followed as written in school policy. Have there been any incidents where a student was racially harassed and nothing was done?
- Tara - you might have to ask further out, over the last 5 years, how many reports have you received
- pattrice - how many did you respond to, how many did you not. I'll write a follow-up
- Caroline - response was different from Sherri, made it sound like action would be taken, encouraged us to reach out to the parent and have them contact her directly
- pattrice - will pass this along

b. SSD Inclusion Committee update

- Char - they want us to bring something that represents how we engage in this work
- Caroline - felt a little scattered, no revisiting anything we talked about last year.
- pattrice - critiques of it last year, maybe good to start over
- Caroline - how to define goals, outcomes, look at equity audit and follow up on recommendations; look at “parents & community” with this committee? Will share this at tomorrow’s meeting

c. Form for public to report incidents to committee

- pattrice - hold discussion until next meeting
- Caroline - will resend to committee

d. Budget Advisory Committee

- Char - the town realizes they have to think long-term, list of about 20 items to determine long-term planning priorities.

e. Visits to other town committees

- Char - reached out to Rails, Trails...asked to wait until Nov meeting
- pattrice - reached out to Conservation Committee - on agenda for Nov 2nd
- Dan - went to the Springfield Housing Authority Board meeting, they’re familiar with the Inclusion Committee. Described 18 single family housing units planned next to high school. Peter Andrews shared that they are interested in affordable, not subsidized housing.
- pattrice - how are people appointed to the committee? Will ask Jeff

f. Welcome packet for new members

Moved to pending agenda items & will be brought back in Jan

g. HR department practices

Caroline - scoured handbook draft, didn’t find anything

pattrice - can bring this to Jeff; what would he like our praxis to be?

h. Subcommittee reports

i. Youth

Traci - nothing yet and will reach out again

ii. Stigma reduction

No updates

i. Review of selected town policies and procedures

i. health officer

- Caroline - much is determined by state policy. Connection to housing codes and rental policies. Suggestion to shift to rental policies.
- Tara - generally looking at structure

- pattice - opportunity to investigate required and optional statutes
- ii. police department – report back from Tara on follow-up inquiry
- Tara - shared printed report
 - Caroline - will scan and share

9. Potential Recommendations to Selectboard

Nothing at this time

10. Set date and place of next regular meeting: library will be closed on usual day

Library will be closed Nov 26th

Committee recommendation to **move meeting to Thursday, November 21st** and keep it at the library.

pattice will follow-up with Sue

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Tara; Caroline seconded; unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 6:35