

**Johnson Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Jan 12, 2016**

Planning Commission members in attendance: David Grozinsky, Kim Dunkley, Ben Waterman, David Bergh, Phil Wilson, Paul Warden. Other attendees: Seth Jensen (LCPC), Lea Kilvadyova

1. Call to order

Kim Dunkley called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

2. Review of minutes from meetings past

David Bergh moved and Paul Warden seconded the motion to approve the meeting minutes from Dec 8, 2015. David Grozinsky abstained. The motion passed.

3. Economic Development Chapter of the Plan

Lea reviewed the timeline for the completion of the plan. She said that there is one remaining chapter to discuss and that is Housing & Demographics. She said she is also waiting for feedback to the Natural Resources Section and the Recreation Section from the Conservation Commission and the Recreation Committee. In March and April, she would like to provide an opportunity for public input. In the ideal world, she would envision handing the plan over to the Trustees and the Selectboard in May.

Lea presented the draft of the economic development chapter. She pointed out that since the last plan review five years ago the number of in-town jobs went up by more than a hundred. This is a significant number for a community of our size. According to Seth's research, most of the jobs were added in the private educational services which in case of Johnson would primarily be at Laraway Youth and Family Services. David G. said that people now also tend to work two to three part time jobs and that may have an influence on the total number of jobs.

Lea also said while five years ago Johnson's in-town jobs had the highest average wages in the county this is no longer true. David Bergh said that the past five year planning period coincides with the time during which College employees experienced salary freezes due to ongoing contract negotiations and the stagnant wages may have a bearing on the fact that Johnson no longer has the highest paying jobs in the county.

Lea spoke about the income gap between Johnson residents and residents of other county towns, and how that gap has been increasing for the past 30 years. Phil Wilson said that he would like to know how the income figures are calculated. Do the figures incorporate the fact that we have college students who earn no a very little income? Seth will look into this.

Other modifications requested by the Planning Commission included the following:

- Adjust the unemployment figure in the "Johnson's Workforce" paragraph.
- In the policy section, cross reference the public transportation policy from the transportation section.
- State that even though main street businesses are coming and going, the vibrancy of the downtown remains strong.

- Change the language of the implementation task regarding the industrial park. Instead of “determine the feasibility” include a more defined language such as “determine the feasibility of implementing the project by the time the option agreement expires”.

4. Review of Community and Economic Development Coordinator’s work plan

Lea reviewed her proposed work plan and said there are two tasks in the plan that involve her assistance to the Planning Commission. One is the completion of the unified plan. The other one is the assistance with the public relations for the form based code effort. The Planning Commission did not add any additional tasks. Lea mentioned that at some point later this year, it may be good to think about new projects to take on. One example suggested at the meeting included the planning for pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

5. Form Based Code: follow up on Dec 12 public forum

Lea distributed copies of comments brought up by participants of the December public meeting. The Commission went through the list. Two issues that remain to be addressed are the glazing and the 14-foot ceiling height in the Storefront District. As for the rest of the suggestions, the commission agreed to either accept or not accept. The accepted changes include suggestions regarding typos, minor language adjustments such as using “applicant shall” rather than “you shall”. The Commission decided not to extend the jurisdiction of the code to Route 15 west.

6. Other business

David Grozinsky communicated Brian Boyden’s apology for not participating more frequently due to a variety of conflicts. Brian offered to resign should another person would be interested in taking his place. Kim said that Charles Gallanter is still waiting for a response to his letter of interest in serving on the Planning Commission and the Commission should address it at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Minutes taken by Lea Kilvadyova