

Lunenburg Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes: October 23, 2025

Attendees:

Tina Breault, Gary Briggs, Liz Benoit
Cathlin Lord, NVDA

Community Members: 3 in-person, 1 zoom

1) Items to add to the agenda

None

2) Future Land Use Mapping & Act 181

Cathlin Lord, Regional Planner for NVDA gave an overview of Act 181 and then presented Lunenburg's Future Land Use map.

Goal of Act 181 is to promote housing in dense areas and protect sensitive areas through Act250 exemption - can get permanent or partial exemptions to Act250 in communities that have zoning.

Cathlin handed out a subset of what is in the NVDA Act181 Handout. It can be used to better explain the colors on the FLU map.

- Yellow is Rural General and that is where you have medium to low housing density and where open fields are.
- Teal is rural ag and forestry that's forest blocks and active farms.
- Green is rural conservative, river corridors, floodplains, elevations over 2,000 feet, wetlands class 1 over 5 acres in size.
- Orange is transition and infill areas. Really wherever there is town water or sewer available, but there isn't high density of development
- Purple is enterprise, areas that have large areas of earth extractions, gravel pits, solar array.
- Pink-purple is village centers. This is where your densest development is. We have two of them (Lunenburg Village and Gilman Village).

Review of the Tiers that come with Act 181.

- Tier 1A and 1B, this is where Act 250 exemptions come into play. Lunenburg doesn't have any areas that quality.
- Tier 2 is status quo tier and that's all the rural land categories (rural general, rural ag and forestry; and rural conservation).
- Tier 3 is the most vulnerable environmental areas and that is still being defined by the Land Use Review Board (LURB).

Question on how the map was developed, was it using "Current Use" information?: No, NVDA developed the map using various data sources available from the state; looking at elevation, wetlands, aerial footage, etc.

Question on resource based recreation: This is for areas with large outdoor recreation area, like Jay Peak or Lake Willoughby. The area around Neal Pond would not be large enough to be categorized as that.

Review of changes to Vermont's Designation Programs:

- Transition of the 5 designations to 2 (center and neighborhood).
- Lunenburg Village and Gilman Village will automatically transition to Step 2 Centers.

NVDA is requesting feedback by November 21. Primarily on village centers and if any of the rural general is actively being farmed, then that can be switched to ag and forestry. The materials will be placed on the website. The printed map will be available in the Town Clerk's Office. People are encouraged to give their feedback. Questions can be sent to the Planning Committee (lunenburgtownplan@gmail.com) and they will work with NVDA to get answers.

Comment: The documents that you provided, the overview PDF, and even the training, those things would be very helpful as background information for people before they look at those maps.

3) Approve the minutes of last meeting:

Liz made a motion, Tina seconded. No discussion. All in favor.

4) Housing Sub-Committee

Anyone interested on being on the Housing Sub-committee should let the Selectboard know by the next Selectboard meeting, November 3.

5) Grants

We are applying for the Better Connections Grant for the Gilman Village Revitalization Project. Outcome would be a comprehensive plan for dealing with all of the challenges and changes that Gilman will be dealing with in the next few years:

- Return of rail into Ampersand Gilman in 2026. Future plans to expand rail into St. Johnsbury.
- Incorporating rail with trail.
- High likelihood of Ampersand renting out their warehouse/factory space, with an increase in truck traffic.
- Very large solar array field at Ampersand.
- Redesign of sidewalks/crosswalks for safety.
- Gilman Schoolhouse Reuse Project
- Revitalization of Fox Field & Forest Outdoor Recreation Area

6) Next Meeting

- November 19, 6pm: Tina will look into having HomeShare Vermont join.

7) Meeting Adjourned at 7:02pm