

## **Minutes January 2, 2024 Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting**

Present: John Maltais, Toni Small, Leticia VanVuuren, Alison Fongemie, Bill Farkas, Jim Balano, Jane Conrad

Via Zoom: Van Thompson, Jenny Slaveck, Betsy Johnson, Dianne Oelberger

John Maltais moved, Jim Balano seconded, approval of the minutes of the December 5 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

We introduced ourselves to Jenny Slaveck, a Colby student who will be working with the committee until May, and she introduced herself to us.

The Committee agreed to give Jenny Slaveck editorial rights to our Google Drive to assist in the work of the committee. John will send her a link.

### **Updating info on town website re Comprehensive Plan**

There was a discussion of language on the town website about the Comprehensive Plan process and a faulty link. John fixed the link after Superintendent Mike Felton brought that to our attention. John will draft updated language for the website about the work of the committee.

### **Postcard/Survey discussion**

As of today, 64 hard-copy postcards/paper survey responses have been received and 30 people have filled out the Google Form survey online.

We discussed this 5% response rate and our desire for community members to provide input and not complain later that they were unaware of opportunities to provide input into the plan.

This is only the first opportunity for input and the town website will be updated to include where we are in this process. In addition to these survey responses, there will be a more detailed survey about high-priority issues, public hearings, and committees will be asked for input. Hopefully all of these steps will ensure that the public is aware of the timeline and will take advantage of opportunities to provide input.

We discussed the December 31 deadline for postcard/survey responses. Mike Felton expressed an interest in sending the online link to all parents in the school district. The committee decided to accept responses to the survey until the end of January 2024.

John Maltais and Jane Conrad described their visit to the school to encourage students to respond to the survey. They visited the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes. The fourth graders were very engaged; the 8<sup>th</sup> graders were quiet. Jane picked up the school dropbox at the end of December and there were a number of responses from students.

Jane will ask town staff to scan in the 64 hard copy survey responses so we can put those in the Raw Data section of our Google Drive.

### **Interviews of key town residents**

Most of us have completed our interviews, but not all of us have uploaded our summaries into the Google Drive. Those who have done so have put the summaries in the folder called “committee” under “interviews”. Leticia noted that we can move this into the Raw Data section later. We should all complete interviews and post summaries by the workshop on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Budget for Comprehensive Plan process**

Jane conveyed to the Select Board this committee’s request for up to \$20,000 for the comprehensive planning process. We are hopeful that we will not need to spend this full amount, given help from Colby students and the possibility of an Island Institute Fellow, but it is best to have the funding set aside, just in case.

Bill Farkas reported that he is working on the town’s application for an Island Fellow, which must be submitted by the end of January. Decisions about Fellow assignments will be made by the end of February. If we are assigned a Fellow, the town will need to provide housing for the Fellow or an award of \$15,000 to spend on housing. Several committee members have offered housing opportunities and Herring Gut might have a housing possibility. We will address that once we know if we will have the assistance of a Fellow (for 2 years starting in September 2024).

### **Information from State Planning Office**

Jane reported on her conversation with Tom Miragliulo at the Maine State Office of Municipal Planning. (Detailed summary posted in our Google Drive in the Committee Minutes file.) He was very helpful and open to talking to our team at any time, including our student assistant. Contrary to our prior understanding, we have 10 years from the approval of our 2018 Plan before we must adopt a new plan. The Committee does not intend to

deviate from our goal of having a new plan to the voters in May of 2025, but it was good to know that we are not required to get State approval by then.

He did recommend that we obtain State approval prior to submitting the Plan to the voters. He stated that, on average, plans are reviewed and municipalities notified of any issues or approval within 60 days.

He confirmed that we need not follow the outline provided by the State Checklist; what matters is covering those topics, not the order in which they are addressed.

Mr. Miragliulo said that the Hallowell and York plans (on the State website) were very well done. Van Thompson said that he had looked at the Hallowell plan and was impressed by it. He liked that the narrative discussion was descriptive and interesting to read, and the detailed information supporting the plan was in appendices.

### **Planning for January 20<sup>th</sup> Workshop**

Bill Farkas will bring white board easels and Sharpies to the workshop. Toni and Bill will bring post-it notes.

Goals for the workshop:

1. Determine general organization for the Plan; groupings and subgroupings of topics;
2. Discuss data collected thus far and where it will be stored;
3. Re-visit outline of the process and our town line;
4. Discuss sources of data and information that will support the plan and what information we should request from town committees, for example.

### **Homework for committee members in preparation for the workshop:**

Review the town's 2018 Plan (in our Google Drive);

Review the annotated State Checklist for a Comprehensive Plan (in the folder called 2025 Plan);

Review the Hallowell and Stonington Plans (see State comprehensive plans online). (Stonington is a town similar to ours in its emphasis on working waterfront economy, so it will be useful to see how they addressed that.)

The workshop will be posted on the town website, and like all committee meetings, the public is welcome to attend, but this is a working meeting and the public will be expected to observe only.

Toni Small moved, Leticia VanVuuren seconded adjourning the meeting at 8:10 p.m. ; the motion passed unanimously.