

TOWN OF BAR HARBOR  
Comprehensive Planning Committee  
February 8, 2023 -Hybrid meeting  
MINUTES

Comprehensive Planning Committee members present were Elissa Chesler, Jacquie Colburn, Greg Cox, Kevin DesVeaux, Cali Martinez, Cherie Galyean, John Kelly, Misha Mytar, Val Peacock, Allison Sasner, Kyle Shank and David Woodside. Participating remotely via Zoom were Michael McKernan and Jim Mahoney. Absent was Kristin Murphy.

Staff present were Planning Director Michele Gagnon and Deputy Code Enforcement Officer Mike Gurtler.

Participating remotely via Zoom were consultants Steve Whitman, Liz Kelly, Eric Halvorsen, and Erik Woyciesjes.

1. Call to Order  
Chairperson Kyle Shank called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. Excused Absences  
Kristin Murphy was excused.
3. Zoom logistic, review/adoption of meeting agenda  
On a motion by David Woodside, seconded by John Kelly, the agenda was adopted on a rollcall vote (14-0).
4. January 11, 2023 minutes  
On a motion by John Kelly, seconded by David Woodside, the January 11, 2023 minutes were adopted, as amended to correct the spelling of John Kelly's name, on a rollcall vote (14-0).
5. Public comment period  
There were no comments.
6. Other efforts relating to the Comprehensive Plan  
It was announced that on Friday, February 10, the Acadia Senior College will hold a Coffee Clash Focused on Congestion.

It was also announced that invitations were being sent for the MDI Housing Solutions Summit scheduled for March 24 at the MDI Bio Lab.

There was a discussion about how to take the RKG Housing Report on the road.

7. Draft Outreach Report -Questions and Comments  
Consultant Liz Kelly asked for feedback on the Phase I Outreach Report. There were concerns that some groups may not be represented in the process. This led to a discussion

about who was represented and under-represented in the various outreach efforts so far and the challenge of tracking the information. Efforts to reach a diversity of participants should continue. It was said that the reporting can only reflect those that participate and the input they provide.

## 8 Part 2-Housing Analysis Report-Questions and Discussion

Staff from RKG Associates attended the meeting to answer questions and collect feedback on the draft report presented in January. The report suggests a need for additional housing. Policy changes are needed in order to help create new units. It was asked where should this new housing happen. The consultant said that these questions were not part of this initial analysis.

Committee comments and questions included:

- What is the impact of short-term rentals and seasonal employee housing on the overall housing stock.
- More employee housing could likely free up existing dwelling units.
- What type of dwelling units are needed most?
- There is a need to raise awareness of the housing options in the Land Use Ordinance.
- The idea of a data dashboard was discussed including the type of data that could be monitored and how it might inform the community overtime as housing needs are addressed. The State of Maine maintains a dashboard by town. This could be a good place to start. The committee was reminded that the town does not want to be too specific in the Comprehensive Plan when talking about the dashboard idea and what to monitor.
- The next step will be for the committee to work together in March and think about where new units could be created and what types could be accommodated in various parts of town.
- Infrastructure investments must also be considered, and Public Works Director Leavitt has been invited to the March work session.
- Housing is an issue that is impacting other coastal communities.

## 9. Preview of March Work Session

Consultant Steve Whitman explained the three-part workshop scheduled for the committee on March 8. He explained that a series of maps will be provided. The entire consulting team will be present to support the committee as it identifies existing land use areas, reviews available land area for future development, and works to identify the future land use plan that will guide the comprehensive plan.

Specific questions and edits on the maps included:

- Was the Acadia National Park "legislative boundary" used?
- Should we show the new parcel in Town Hill designated for housing.
- Is the source of the wetland data the national inventory? Are vernal pools included?
- Northeast Creek Watershed needs to be identified as a sensitive resource but should not be blacked out as part of the watershed is buildable.
- Show agricultural soils within the developable areas.
- Should slopes over 25% be shown?

- Consider showing the sea level rise layer.
- If this is too much information for one map, alternatives should be considered. For example, digital maps could be created or we could bring maps from the Forum that show these additional items.
- Will the downtown inset map be large enough to inform the discussion?
- It was suggested that a table of data be provided to explain the total area of the community in acres, the acres conserved and not available for development, the land that remains, and how much of that is potentially constrained to development or is already developed.

10. Public comment period

Ruth Eveland suggested that the public be allowed to observe the work session, and to comment on it later once the concepts are refined. She also suggested that future meetings could be held at the VIS in Town Hill. Ms. Eveland also said that agriculture and food production need to be considered and supported.

11. Adjourn.

On a motion from John Kelly, seconded by Kevin DesVeaux, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM on a rollcall vote (14-0).

**Minutes approved by the Comprehensive Planning Committee on April 12, 2023.**

  
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**Kyle Shank**  
**Chair, Comprehensive Planning Committee**

4/12/23  
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**Date**