

TOWN OF BAR HARBOR
Comprehensive Planning Committee
August 10, 2022 — 6:00 PM — Hybrid meeting
MINUTES

Comprehensive Planning Committee members present were Elissa Chesler, Jacquie Colburn, Greg Cox, Cherie Galyean, Jim Mahoney, Calistra Martinez, Misha Mytar, Michael McKernan and participating remotely via Zoom were David Woodside, Kevin DesVeaux, Kristin Murphy

Absent was John Kelley. Excused absences were Val Peacock, Allison Sassner, and Kyle Shank.

Staff present were Planning Director Michele Gagnon and Assistant Planner Steve Fuller.

Consultants present were Steve Whitman, and participating remotely via zoom was Liz Kelly.

1. Call to order

In the absence of Chairperson Kyle Shank, Vice-chair Misha Mytar called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Excused absences

Val Peacock, Allison Sassner, and Kyle Shank were excused.

3. Zoom logistics, review of meeting agenda and adoption

On a motion by Elissa Chesler, seconded by Calistra Martinez, the agenda was adopted on a roll-call vote (11-0).

4. Adoption of August 10, 2022 minutes

On a motion by Jim Mahoney, seconded by Calistra Martinez, the July 13, 2022 minutes were adopted on a roll-call vote (11-0).

5. Public comment period

No one from the public offered any comments.

6. Other Related Efforts

Planning Director Michele Gagnon and Consultant Steve Whitman updated the Committee on the Development Review project underway. This is a partnership between the town and chamber to gain an understanding of what is working well and where there are challenges. An effort will be made to identify and share items that relate to the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Gagnon then explained the parallel housing survey effort that is underway with RKG Associates and that two surveys are pending. Calistra Martinez asked if the housing survey could be shared with the Comprehensive Planning Committee for informational purposes. Ms. Gagnon agreed to do so recognizing that this is a parallel process with its

own marketing and outreach effort. Misha Mytar added that the survey results will help the town understand if different people/populations are engaged.

Ms. Gagnon also explained that the town has been boosting Facebook posts and has seen visible results. A Communications Coordinator and a Sustainability Coordinator are being hired by the town and will be available to assist with the Comprehensive Plan.

7. Public Engagement

Liz Kelly provided updates on the outreach and engagement activities completed since the July meeting. The primary activities include the Social Media Campaign, preparing for Pop-Up Engagement at Community Events (tabling), and the Polco Questionnaire Series (digital and print). Other tasks relate to advertising for Community Forum #1, scheduling events, tracking feedback, and creating an updated outreach timeline.

Polco Questionnaire #1 was focused on visioning. A full survey report was posted to the project website, and snapshots of results will be posted to social media. Polco Questionnaire #2 is focused on understanding community challenges and received 201 responses as of August 9, 2022. Additional advertising was included in the July/August newsletter and on social media. Ms. Kelley offered to send a link to the Comprehensive Planning Committee after the meeting. Physical copies are also available at the Municipal Building, and it closes in mid-September.

Ms. Kelley then explained the Facebook ads and posts that Ms. Gagnon referred to earlier in the meeting. A Facebook ad was used to publicize the second Polco questionnaire. Another was used to share the first Polco questionnaire results, and to promote where to find full report of findings. Ad/posts will also be used to publicize events the Comprehensive Planning Committee will be tabling at over the coming weeks. Liz added that Comprehensive Planning Committee members should feel free to share any of these items on their own social media pages or within groups to increase views of this content.

Ms. Kelly mentioned that tabling kit was delivered to the town staff for use at community events in August and September. Steve Fuller is in the process of confirming space at each event location. The preliminary event schedule identifies which volunteers have agreed to table at the following events: Jesup Library Book Sale – August 20, Open Table MDI Community Suppers – September 6 and 13, and Farmers Market - September 11 and September 18. Once confirmed these events will be advertised on social media and the project website so that community members can provide feedback and learn more about the plan at these upcoming events.

Ms. Kelly then provided an update on the planning for the community forums in October. These will be open house format. The locations and dates have just be secured and are as follows: October 25 at the High School from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM and October 26 at Connors Emerson from 4:00 to 6:00 PM.

Misha Mytar asked if childcare was an option, and Mike McKernan offered to check with the High School to see if students could provide childcare. Mr. Whitman explained that a “save the date” announcement will be created and circulated next week. Childcare can be

added later if it is secured. Ms. Kelley suggested that all boards and committees announce the forum dates, and that direct outreach be completed to organizations and businesses. Social media and print media will be part of this advertising as well. Ms. Martinez suggested that Instagram be added.

The event materials/set-up are being refined with help from the Outreach Subcommittee and staff. The plan for late August/early September is for the Outreach Subcommittee and consultant team to develop a refined draft list of materials, discussion questions, and table station activities. The Comprehensive Planning Committee, at its September meeting, can provide comments and direction on the draft list of materials. By the October meeting a fully formatted package of draft materials, maps, and posters will be ready.

Ms. Chesler also suggested sending something to the Islander to advertise the forums. Ms. Gagnon explained that packets are sent to them, but maybe an add could be paid for. Ms. Kelly agreed that an Islander article could be used to promote the Polco questionnaire and the forum dates. Kevin DesVeaux also suggested that a Podcast might be worth considering. Steve Fuller suggested another video could also be created.

Mr. Kelley then shared and solicited feedback on the updated outreach timeline provided in the meeting packet. Ms. Mytar commented on how helpful the timeline is and that having a poster of the timeline at the forum would be beneficial with a “you are here” icon. The community conversation series was discussed briefly and it was explained by Mr. Whitman that the committee members will have a role in the small group discussions. Jim Mahoney asked if additional tabling opportunities are possible, and the group agreed that they are if volunteers help organize and coordinate them.

8. Existing Conditions

Mr. Whitman provided an update on the status of the editing process for the Existing Conditions Analysis report. This month we are integrating the edits received, and additional materials provided by the other consultants in response to some of the submitted suggestions. These draft materials are still intended to be available ahead of the September meeting, and then for use during the lead up to the October forum. Ms. Gagnon reinforced what the Existing Conditions Analysis report is and how it is meant to be used in this process. It must satisfy the items identified by the state and we need to get to a place where we can “live with it”.

9. Next Steps

That step was skipped.

10. Public Comment Period

Ruth Eveland shared that the table location at the library book sale is highly visible. She then suggested the committee consider filming the introduction to the forum, making hard copies of materials available at the library, and suggested the library is a good location for small group discussions. The addition will also include a community room that can hold up to 150 people. Ms. Eveland then stated that the last Comprehensive Plan left things wide open and often contradictory. The small group discussions last time

provided pizza! Ms. Gagnon noted these suggestions and added that refreshments should be considered for the forums and the advertising.

11. Adjourn

On a motion by Elissa Chesler, seconded by Mike McKernan was adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Minutes approved by the Comprehensive Planning Committee on August 10, 2022:



Kyle Shank
Chair, Comprehensive Planning Committee

10/11/22
Date