

MINUTES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

May 10, 2017

7:00 p.m. Town Hall

Present: Timothy Thompson, Chair
Peter Curry
Elizabeth Goodspeed
Kevin Guimond
Harvey Rosenfeld
Penelope A. Jordan
Sara W. Lennon
Susana Measelle Hubbs
Victoria Volent

Also present: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner, Judy Colby George, Public Participation Consultant

Public Comment

Mr. Thompson opened the meeting and called for public comment.

Paul Seidman asked how many questions would be asked in the survey? How many minutes per question?

Several Committee members provided a response with no decision at this time.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 3, 2017 meeting were approved as presented, 9-0.

Review Draft Participation Plan

Mr. Curry said he thinks the challenge will be to keep the public's interest up as they go along.

Ms. Colby George said she wants to hear from the Committee about what they have in mind and what parts to the Plan that they feel are the most important. She has provided her input and now wants to hear from them.

Ms. Jordan wants it dynamic, interactive and iterative. She noted places in town where they can continually engage people, the Strawberry Festival, the Buzz, C Salt, the IGA. She suggests they put our post cards for people's thoughts, keep it on the website to keep it alive.

Ms. Volent said she cares about housing, infrastructure, biking, etc. She feels they need to educate the public about affordable housing- what is it, what income do you need to afford a house in Cape Elizabeth, what is the average salary of the workforce (police, fire etc) in the town?

Mr. Curry said they have a new library in town. Can it help with publicity, meeting space etc?

Mr. Rosenfeld said they need to listen what people say, and ask; do you want affordable housing? Do you want economic development?

Mr. Guimond agreed that you ask the question before you put out the answer.

Ms. Jordan wants synergy between the survey and the public participation in order not to duplicate efforts.

Ms. Colby George said the survey is for the broad brush, her job is to get more in depth opinions.

Ms. Lennon said once you ask the questions you have already led the discussion. Maybe we should not ask questions at all.

Ms. Colby George said the first public meeting in September is on values and vision. That is when we will try to get to that kind of response. She has found a low response rate when people are asked totally open questions.

Ms. Measelle Hubbs was asking about the timeline, and noting that the Strawberry Festival is really the kickoff of the process. It is the time to get the goal of the process out and get people engaged in thinking about the Town's future.

Ms. Goodspeed was concerned with how the public may define affordable housing, or open space. It may not be specific enough to answer in a survey. There needs to be education.

Mr. Curry thinks the best way to reach people is on the website.

Ms. Colby George talked about getting people to engage in the discussion. She said you need to make sure that each meeting is good. If you say you are going to report back, you need to do it. You should get a link on the home page to the comp plan. Make an online forum, and you can post a discussion question every other week. You can do a poll of opinions on each topic. She will post the questions. Committee members then take turns responding to the discussions.

There was criticism of the town website and whether they might set up a new website, and it was noted that would be outside the budget.

Ms. Jordan said we could have a Facebook and Twitter page.

Ms. Volent said the Cape Courier is an easy way to reach people. She thinks it is necessary to educate people about some of the issues.

Mr. Thompson spoke about the idea that they were going to have a power point presentation to take out into the community.

Ms. O'Meara said she would try to get a neighborhood list and the contacts in each neighborhood. She said the powerpoint would be for committee members to go out and present the materials.

Ms. Colby George will make the power point after the committee says what they want to put out there. She suggested they have a survey for the participants after they have seen the presentation, and note cards for suggestions. They can run the presentation on the cable channel. She also noted that the presentation will change over time.

The committee members then discussed their presence at the Strawberry Fest on June 24. What are they going to do there? They want to have information about the Comp Plan. What is it? How has it helped the Town? The Committee members will need to take turns staffing the table. Ms. Goodspeed said she will take care of getting the table. Ms. Colby George said she will make posters and a one page pamphlet of information about a comp plan. She also said they need to have something the public can vote on and suggested using strawberry candies to drop into a jar. The posters etc. will be ready in draft for the next meeting for the committee to edit into what they want. There were many ideas floated, and not all were taken up.

The discussion then turned to the procedure of how they were going to work on the plan. Ms. O'Meara outlined how they will approach the chapters. She said she will prepare a draft of a chapter and bring it to the Committee to change as they want, and then she will rewrite it and bring it back the next month for further revision. She suggests they not revisit that chapter again until the end, so they do not get bogged down in one issue.

Ms. Colby George said she sees the Comp Plan process as being two stages. The first is information and data gathering. The second is, how that will shape the policies. She said the public, and specific groups, will be more engaged in the policies and ideas.

Ms. Lennon said she is sure that there are only a few specific issues that will engage the town.

Mr. Curry is concerned about the economics of the Town and how that will affect other parts of the plan.

Other members of the Committee agreed and spoke of the impact of those issues on schools, housing, affordable housing, etc.

Discuss Public Opinion Survey

Since Mr. Myers was unable to attend tonight's meeting, the Committee used that time to continue discussion of the Public Participation Plan.

Ms. O'Meara reminded the Committee that if even two committee members get together to work on something, it needs to be publicly noticed.

Next Meeting

The next Meeting is June 14, 2017.

Ms. Colby George will send materials for the Strawberry Fest.
Population and Demographics Chapter
Public Opinion Survey: Kelly Myers

Committee Member Items

None were presented

Public Comment

Paul Seidman asked if there could be something on the wall to publicize the comp plan at the election on June 13.

The committee adjourned at 8:45p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hiromi Dolliver
Minutes Secretary