



TOWN OF WELLS, MAINE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 20, 2020, 6:00 P.M.
Wells Town Hall
208 Sanford Road

6:00 PM CALL TO ORDER & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

The meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) commenced at 6:00 p.m. on February 20, 2020, in the Town Meeting Room at Wells Town Hall.

Those present were Committee Members Jason Vennard, Martin Morse, Tim Gowen, Ina Toth, Dave Mackenzi, Chris Chase, Steve Koeninger, Jonathan Moody, Linda Littlefield Grenfell, Robert Sullivan and Carol DesJardins. Also in attendance were Jon Carter, Town Manager; Mike Livingston of the Planning and Development Department; Sean Roche, Selectman Liaison; John MacLeod, Selectman Liaison; and Jodine Adams from the Code Enforcement Department.

Quorum: There was a discussion on how many Committee members should consist for a quorum. Linda Littlefield Grenfell asked if there would be an advantage to have more than six members to make up a quorum. Steve Koeninger noted that a larger number could be a disadvantage rather than an advantage, due to losing people for illness, etc. and there always needs to be a majority.

MOTION

Motion made for a quorum to be made up of six Committee members by Chris Chase. Motion seconded by Jon Moody. **PASSED** unanimously.

MINUTES

January 30, 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes:

Ina Toth asked for clarification of a "Public Hearing" and "Open To The Public", which allows input. There was a spelling error on Page Two, Line 18 which needed to be corrected.

MOTION

Motion made to accept the January 30, 2020 minutes as amended by Robert Sullivan. Motion seconded by Jason Vennard. **PASSED** unanimously.

1
2 **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
3

4 Handouts were distributed by Ed Pare'. Both Chris Chase and Dave Mackenzie suggested that
5 handouts be received prior to the time of the meeting for review and set on the agenda.
6

7 Ed Pare' explained the information in the handouts was the result of previous surveys on the
8 most important issues facing the Town of Wells. He broke down the number of responses into
9 the different categories of questions. The responses of the most concern were Planning, Tax
10 Assessment and Law Enforcement. The information he was presenting gives the Committee
11 more of an idea of what the people are concerned about.
12

13 When discussing accessing this information, Mike Livingston noted that the numbers on
14 handwritten surveys had to be manually put into Survey Monkey.
15

16 **CPUC BUSINESS**
17

18 **I. Policy Issue to Determine: Communications – Freedom of Information Act**
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20 Jon Carter explained that all communications need to be limited to the Committee meetings.
21 Email is a public issue with the Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), and there is a problem as well
22 with computer use. Communications are to be limited to staff. If the Chair or Vice Chair wishes
23 to communicate, it should come from Town Hall.
24

25 Jason Vennard asked about establishing Town emails for official use. Or possibly use of the
26 website. Mike Livingston said the website was more for public use. Town email is the safest
27 route. He offered for his office to make that happen.
28

29 Chris Chase said the information on the internet is for everyone to see. He prefers sending
30 information out as a group. Mike Livingston indicated anyone can go to the email online.
31 Agenda materials will be online. Jason Vennard indicated he was fine with that as far as no
32 correspondence beyond that. Linda Littlefield Grenfell wanted recommendations of who to go to
33 for further information. She was told Staff or reaching out to the Chair could assist with that.
34

35 Bob Sullivan reminded that Committee members are not allowed to have discussions amongst
36 themselves in public.
37

38 **II. Policy Issue to Determine: Public Meeting Law – Chris Chase Request & Answer**
39

40 Chris Chase had previously asked about meeting in public. Attorney has said that is not a
41 problem as long as not a majority of the members. Jon Carter noted it is common sense. If
42 members run into each other they should stop a conversation, the number of members not being
43 relevant.
44

45 **III. Policy Issue to Determine: Committee Procedures**

- 46 • Review and Adopt Meeting Calendar
- 47 • Meeting deadline for materials – Friday before the meeting? (6 days
- 48 prior to meeting)

- Material distribution –e-mails, email with link to agenda/materials? Hard copies? Pick up at Town manager’s Office or PD?
- Policy on no additional materials after Friday except for public comments? Public comments could be e-mailed when they come in and hard copies provided at the meeting.
- Policy on requests for information from the public
- Other related policies

MOTION

Motion made to approve the Meeting Calendar by Jason Vennard. Motion seconded by Dave Mackenzi. **PASSED** unanimously.

Ina Toth expressed that six days prior to the meeting to receive materials seems appropriate. Chris Chase added any material handed out at a meeting shall not be brought up and discussed until the following meeting. Bob Sullivan suggested the word “may” instead of “shall”. Wants to be careful a rule isn’t created to prohibit discussions. Linda Littlefield Grenfell wants to distinguish between interpretation, and not delving into the information. Tim Gowen asked if it made sense that the Committee will listen to the three minute description and deal with it later. Steve Koeninger wants to look at the context with no urgency to review it at the meeting, and get it on the agenda. If a lot of material is to be reviewed, the individual should have it put on the agenda. Ina Toth agreed with Tim Gowen, giving the Committee time to review the material and have as an agenda item. She stated the Committee will accept handouts, but cannot review them at the meeting. Jon Carter added that Ed Pare's distribution was a handout that can be used later. Linda Littlefield Grenfell noted she doesn’t have a problem with the 58 page handout. It was offered as help to the Committee, if needed, and she thanked Ed Pare' for offering the material.

MOTION

Motion made to accept any handout material, but reserve the right to review it at a later date if time doesn’t permit to review it at the current meeting. Meeting deadline for materials is six days prior to the next meeting. Motion seconded by Jason Vennard. **PASSED** unanimously.

Mike Livingston explained that copies of materials may not be accessible to some online, so there is a need for hard copies. He asked who would want to pick up hard copies at the Police Department rather than obtain from private computers. All indicated they would access from their computers except for Martin Morse and Carol DesJardins, who requested to pick up packets at the Police Department.

Jon Carter reminded Committee that documents can be provided at every meeting on the screen.

Public comments will come in from the website and be provided to the Committee. The Public can go online for materials and print them out themselves. Town Hall will charge for hardcopies.

Mike Livingston had a question on language of current agenda. The language of the ordinance has the ten minute and three minute limitation. There was a vote of the Committee to extend that time if needed. Is the question of terminology to stay? Chris Chase noted the Chairperson can deviate if need more time.

1 **MOTION**

2 Motion made to leave at Chair’s discretion for three minutes maximum during public comment,
3 but a group vote to extend the ten minute maximum by Jason Vennard. Seconded by Jon
4 Moody. **PASSED** unanimously.

5
6 **REVIEW & WORKSHOP**
7

8 **I.** CPUC member comments on assignment of reading both the 2005 Comprehensive
9 Plan Update and the 2016 Strategic Plan.

10
11 Tim Gowen stated he just has the 2005 Plan, and asked what the follow through is. Have to take
12 into consideration to have part of this separated to form Committees for different items. Jon
13 Carter asked if Mike Livingston did an analysis of what was completed and what wasn’t with last
14 plan. Mike will have a table of what was voted on and ordinance changes and will produce at
15 next meeting.

16
17 Linda Littlefield Grenfell asked where the accountability is. She feels it raises a question on how
18 often the Plan is drawn upon. Jon Carter explained the two phases to the Plan. After the
19 strategies, policies and objectives are written, it goes to the State, which determines if it is
20 consistent with the growth management laws. It is then given to the Board of Selectmen to go
21 forward for the voters to adopt the Plan. After adopted, a Committee is formed to implement the
22 Comprehensive Plan. Last time the Committee wrote the amended ordinances to comply with
23 the Comprehensive Plan. There is a list of what did and did not get done. What didn’t get done
24 was sometimes not supported by Selectmen and/or town. Everything needs to comply with the
25 Comprehensive Plan before putting it on a ballot. Martin Morse gave an example of the turnpike
26 exits complying with the Plan but not supported by the people. Jon Carter noted large projects
27 have already been done in compliance with the Plan.

28
29 Mike Livingston stated a new ordinance has to be compliant with the Comprehensive Plan before
30 it goes on the ballot. Jon Carter reminded the Committee it is not working in a vacuum. The
31 surrounding towns are all working on this as well. Kennebunk has filed with the state and the
32 state has asked our Town to comment on impacts we may see from their Comprehensive Plan; if
33 there is any complication we see with their plan. It is important to see what the neighbors have
34 been spending five years on. The abutting towns need to make comments within 30 days. Will
35 want to look into issues such as Kennebunk’s commercial light industrial going beyond St.
36 David’s. The surrounding towns will have the same opportunity to comment on our plan.

37
38 **II.** CPUC to consider what approach to updating the 2005 Plan is to be followed:

- 39
- 40 • Create a potential list of information which is desired?
 - 41 • Perform a page by page review of the 2005 Plan or take Committee
 - 42 comments section by section?
 - 43 • Consider what sections of the 2016 Plan might be able to be
 - 44 incorporated?

45 It all starts with the 2005 Mission Statement, and that’s what the Consultant will look at. Carol
46 DesJardins would like to have identified the controversial items that were part of the prior plan
47 that led to the Plan not going forward. There are sixteen sections in the 2016 Plan. Chris Chase
48 feels the survey for this plan update should be different from the last survey; the survey needs to

1 be redone. The Committee should start on the first section and then continue on following
2 sections. It may take two meetings to review just one section.

3
4 Tim Gowen asked if it should be done with a Consultant. Jon Carter feels it is important to
5 figure out if the information in the 2016 document should be utilized. If the Committee does
6 want to use that then it should start looking at it and decide what it wants to do. The 2005
7 previous document was used and built on. Only thing different was structure design of the
8 document. Goals and objectives are first place to start, and are the goals still relevant based on
9 the survey. Jason Vennard asked what basis can be pulled from the last plan. Where did the
10 2016 Plan go wrong and what can be used from that to move forward. Dave Mackenzi asked if
11 the prior minutes say why the last Plan was turned down. Mike Livingston will look for that
12 information. Chris Chase suggests there may be more things on the 2016 Plan that aren't liked.
13 Looking back doesn't get us forward. Ina Toth wants to understand why the 2016 Plan failed.

14 15 **III. Survey Consideration and Process.**

- 16 • Copy of previous survey questions
- 17 • Nonbinding ballot questions at Town Meeting in June?
- 18 • Survey Monkey? Hard copy survey results

19
20 The Committee has to think about questions on the survey. Steve Koeninger wants to review the
21 questions and project them in a different format. The responses are all over the board so need a
22 better way to ask the questions to get specific answers. We should come up with a list of
23 questions that should be on that survey and look at the list after next meeting and discuss at the
24 following meeting. Ina Toth suggests it's important to know what the Mission Statement was in
25 2005 and how it changed in 2016, and take a look at the questions on the survey and add or
26 delete, all in same framework. Jon Moody feels the goal is to release a survey.

27
28 Ina Toth reiterated that at some point in the future the Comprehensive Plan, as it's finished, goes
29 in front of the voters after it comes back from the state. Jon Carter said it can be done the other
30 way; go to the voters first and run the risk that the state won't stamp it. It has to be tied to timing
31 it to the Town Meeting, 60 days prior. For instance, April for June. Ina will do the math for
32 two and a half to three years and work it backwards for length of time for a survey.

33
34 Jon Carter reminded that windows will close, such as it's too late for an insert in the tax bill.
35 Maybe a link can be put into Survey Monkey. It can be put on the ballot, which is very
36 expensive to do, and there is not a lot of ability to get many questions on there. The Town Clerk
37 has received a cost from a computer company, 30 cents each ballot, and she could figure out a
38 way to isolate one machine, with a total cost being about \$2500. If use prior questions, there are
39 a lot of them. The Town Clerk could ask for a sample ballot for a survey. Another idea is to
40 stand at the polls with a manual survey document and ask the public to take it with them and fill
41 it out, or do it online on Survey Monkey. There could be a direct mailing to every box holder or
42 resident in town. Mike Livingston said last time the survey went out to 6300 addresses at a cost
43 of about \$3000. Steve Koeninger expressed that some questions are hard to understand and may
44 lead people in a certain direction. Need yes or no questions.

45
46 Ina Toth wants to look at the questions and be comfortable with the Mission Statement and work
47 on these at the next meeting. And how would we do the survey? Martin Morse remembers two
48 surveys, and he was told that it caused early on controversy. There was a survey in 2014 with a

1 large component of high school juniors and seniors taking the survey in civics class and getting it
2 out to the public. When it came back to the Review Board it was felt there was too much student
3 input. They said let's do another one and also said if you do vote this way it will cost you
4 money. Are you willing to spend money for that?

5
6 Ina Toth noted the 24 questions, five indicators of who you are and how long lived in Wells and
7 then three sections of comments. She suggests one page. 24 questions are a lot of questions.
8 Suggests condensing and also that there may be some duplicate questions. Six bullet points
9 strongly agree to no opinion. Jon Carter noted that Survey Monkey shows results of the
10 breakdown.

11
12 Linda Littlefield Grenfell has a sense of responses in different ways. Direct mail, ballot, handout
13 at ballots. Mike Livingston said there were almost 2000 responses from the last surveys. Chris
14 Chase feels it would be nice to have a basic ballot since this is a Presidential election year and
15 there will be the most input. Suggests having a way to say yes or no. Linda Littlefield Grenfell
16 added that when given out, it needs to be legible, and she likes the one page idea. She asks if it
17 is helpful to interpret the vision. She wonders if a one page Mission Statement at the top is
18 helpful. Jon Carter stated the Committee needs to form the vision.

19
20 Carol DesJardins asked if the questions on the survey, when originated, are relative to the
21 sections in the Plan. Bob Sullivan asks if the survey is valid enough to provide input for the
22 Plan. The Committee needs to inform itself of the Plan and become more knowledgeable. It
23 should spend time on one of the versions and be more comfortable with asking the questions in
24 the survey. Martin Morse would like to see the survey kicked off with a public meeting,
25 televised, telling what the Committee is going to do and how to give input on the survey, and
26 give people an idea of what we are trying to do and how we need their ideas. Sean Roche
27 informed the Committee that it can get guidance from other sources on how to write the survey;
28 such as those in the high school AP classes who can give valid advice.

29
30 Ina Toth needs to review the 2005 and 2016 Plans in order to do the best job in formulating the
31 work in the survey for public input, and the Committee needs to align itself in what it has in the
32 Comprehensive Plan. It could take many months to review parts of the Plan. Time for getting it
33 to voting in November is September. Need six meetings to do that. The Committee has to have
34 a Mission Statement and goals for the 2016 study and understand why it didn't come to fruition.
35 She will have a list of questions to staff for simple answers. Wants to have the ability to look at
36 the survey questions. These items need to be put on the agenda for next meeting.

37
38 Chris Chase wants the Committee to decide on agreeing on a Vision Statement. The Statement
39 was read. Jason Vennard feels the focus needs to be the survey. Jon Carter added in 2014 there
40 were two public hearings. One to capture summer people and one for year round people. It
41 started with the Mission Statement of 2005. At the end of the day, they came up with a Vision
42 Statement. Steve Koeninger expressed that he felt the Statement was too long. Linda Littlefield
43 Grenfell feels the Vision Statement should be one sentence, and it is the Committee's place to
44 write the Vision Statement. Steve Koeninger's vision is what the future should be. Chris Chase
45 stated that Wells has always been a tourist community, and that should be part of the vision.
46 Some tourists become residents. We offer nothing else but a place to eat and sleep.

1 Ina Toth would like to task the Committee on how to approach the process. Have surveys and
2 Committees for different sections. She would like the Committee to look at surveys and Mission
3 Statements and Vision Statements. To move forward from those as benchmarks. Bob Sullivan
4 wants more concrete preparation to move forward, to choose one plan, and go through that plan
5 rapidly and set goals. He proposes use of the 2016 Plan and wants to set a goal to approve and
6 essentially agree on wording in the first three chapters. There is input that led to the writing of
7 the 2016 update. And he asks for clarification as to why 2016 didn't move forward.

8
9 Mike Livingston stated the previous Committee was given the task of reviewing the draft plan
10 already prepared by Consultants and staff in town. After a year and a half review of the draft
11 plan 3 members of the committee wanted to see how it compared to the 2005 Plan regarding
12 items not addressed and brought in from the 2005 Plan. They wanted to compare more directly
13 to the 2005 Plan. Jason Vennard asked if the Committee focuses on the 2005 Plan. Jon Carter
14 added the data of that plan is 20 years old. The 2016 Plan has more up-to-date data on what the
15 community had developed into at that point. Staff and the Consultant put together the 2016
16 draft, from the survey and public input. It will be helpful to see what the staff and the
17 Consultant recommended. It was consistent with how the state reviews these documents. Tim
18 Gowen wants to go back to the 2016 Plan and read the first three chapters for discussion. Steve
19 Koeninger wanted on the next agenda a discussion on the Vision Statement and Mission
20 Statement.

21 22 **MOTION**

23 Bob Sullivan made a motion to use the 2016 Comprehensive Plan draft and come prepared to
24 discuss up to three chapters at the next meeting. Chris Chase seconded. **PASSED** unanimously.

25 26 **IV. Update on the RFP for Consultant Services**

27
28 Jon Carter gave an update on the RFP. He and Mike Livingston have had five contacts from
29 Consultants that they have talked to. Whether or not they do something with the discussions,
30 they were interesting companies. Some were turned off by the amount of money we have. Some
31 towns budgeted \$200,000 (Saco and York).

32 33 **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

34
35 Jim Smith:

36
37 He expressed that limiting the public speaking time didn't have good optics and the limitations
38 didn't look good. If somebody's watching and there are attempts to limit public comments, it
39 doesn't look good. Regarding handouts, the agenda comes out six days before the meeting. If
40 there was something a member of the public thought should be in front of you, the option would
41 be to come and hand it out at the meeting, or send something to go to the email address to be
42 added to the packet of material. Background material is important and he questions the process
43 of getting that material. This is a standing Committee with rotating terms. There's six to seven
44 years in between in interim years to have a Committee to follow through on implementation of
45 the Plan. The Committee should concentrate on background material. He suggests instead of
46 reviewing the 2016 Plan the Committee should be focusing on reviewing background materials
47 for the two most current plans to determine what it wants for the future. Need a plan to make a
48 plan. He offered to assist in developing the agenda.

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Ed Pare':

The 2016 was killed, and he was one who helped with killing it because the 2016 Plan had no sectioned pages, no structure. It was poorly written. There were things that were lost and things they wanted to bring into the 2016 Plan and couldn't. They decided to go back to the 2005 Plan. There were processing issues. There was public comment and 18 out of 19 people wanted to go back to the 2005 Plan. The Planning Board recommended going back to the 2005 Plan, and that's what the Selectmen did. They wrote an ordinance to go back to the 2005 Plan so by not doing that is not doing what the ordinance says.

ADJOURN

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Meeting Room at Town Hall.

MOTION

Chris Chase motioned for the meeting to be adjourned. Motion seconded by Dave Mackenzie. **PASSED** unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED _____, 2020.

ACCEPTED BY:

Carol DesJardins, Recording Secretary

Ina Toth, Chairperson