



TOWN OF WELLS, MAINE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 18, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
Town Hall
208 Sanford Road

6:00 PM CALL TO ORDER & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 18, 2021, from the Littlefield Room at Town Hall.

Those present were Committee Members Chris Chase, Carol DesJardins, Hunter Edwards, Tim Gowen, Linda Grenfell, Jon Moody, Martin Morse, Chris Pugsley, James Smith and Jason Vennard. Also in attendance were Larissa Crockett, Town Manager; Jodine Adams, Code Enforcement Officer; Mike Livingston, Town Engineer; John McLeod, Selectman Liaison; and Sean Roche, Selectman Liaison.

Liz Kelly was present representing Resilience Planning and Design.

MINUTES

October 21, 2021 – Review and consider for approval.

MOTION

Motion made by Jason Vennard to approve the October 21, 2021, minutes, seconded by Martin Morse. Motion approved.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Joe Hardy deferred comments to second Open To The Public session.

CPUC BUSINESS

- Introductions of the Participants

1 • Overview of the Planning Process for the Comprehensive Plan Update

2
3 Liz Kelly gave an overview of the planning process. It is coming toward the end of the
4 inventory phase, with fiscal capacity being the last draft to review. Next step is to look into
5 goals, strategies and policies. The aim is to have a completed draft by May or June of 2022, with
6 an educational plan for the public being coordinated for the summer.

7
8 • Feedback on Forum 2 and Discussion of Online Options

9
10 Liz Kelly guessed there were about 100 people at the forum. The online tool is getting good
11 responses, and once that tool closes around 12/15 they hope to have all the information gathered
12 and will have a full transcript of all the comments from both the forum and the online tool.

13
14 Linda Grenfell asked if there were any concerns expressed. Liz Kelly responded that they can't
15 tell until they delve into the comments received. Larissa Crockett stated that transportation and
16 housing seemed to be the more visited. All the boxes had a good number of comments in them.

17
18 • Feedback on New Draft: *Fiscal Capacity*

19
20 Liz Kelly discussed a comment on impact fees. Larissa Crockett explained that the town had
21 adopted the impact fees, but it has chosen not to implement those fees. The State of Maine is
22 working through ideas on creating affordable housing, and there is a lot of interest at the state
23 level in eliminating impact fees.

24
25 Larissa Crockett noted that impact fees are for infrastructure, not for operations, and they go into
26 a reserve account and can later be used to invest in construction or capital expenditures. It raises
27 housing costs, which affects affordable housing. Chris Chase added if an impact fee account is
28 set up, that money can be moved from account to account, which he doesn't approve of.

29
30 Linda Grenfell noted under fiscal policies that there was no mention of the need to adapt to
31 climate change, and there should be something about climate change in the plan. Larissa
32 Crockett said there is data available from SMPDC on what the financial impact on the
33 community would be on different levels of climate impact. Chris Chase suggests a small
34 committee should be formed to look into this matter. It should be put in the plan that we are
35 trying to do something. Larissa Crockett added that impact doesn't mean loss. Parcels show
36 impact from rise, but not a loss. Work that's already been done should be mentioned in the plan
37 regarding impact.

38
39 Liz Kelly and Larissa Crockett gave educational discussions on comments and questions that
40 were sent through the matrix.

41
42 • Discussion of Focus Groups

43
44 Liz Kelley explained these are small group conversations to talk about specific topics. It is part
45 of the outreach portion of the study. There should be various representation as part of the group.

1 The goal is to collect information to help with the understanding of an update study, and it allows
2 for some potential action and solutions to be presented.

3
4 She proposes the focus groups take place in January or February. The topics suggested for these
5 focus groups are housing, commercial development, coastal impact and natural hazards, and
6 conservation, open space and recreation. It was suggested that “commercial development” be
7 changed to “economic development”.

8
9 In discussion of other areas as topics for the focus groups, Liz Kelly noted there will be overlap,
10 as there should be, in the focus groups. Maps will be at the group sessions for discussions.
11 Martin Morse suggested there be maps of growth areas since the last comprehensive plan; what
12 is out there to be developed, as well as how many transitional areas have been developed. He
13 asked about manufactured homes districts being mandated by the state. The maps should show
14 where they are and are they still being built. Linda Grenfell expressed there is an opportunity of
15 creating a healthy community, with people walking to work, car free areas, or a town center. She
16 would like to build the climate issue into all the factors being looked into. Liz Kelly
17 suggested a future land use workshop for the committee.

18
19 Liz Kelly will be asking committee members to provide names of potential participants for these
20 focus groups. She would like names by December 5th. A fifth focus group could be on land use.
21 Chris Chase suggests groups of new people as well as those that have been here a long time, in
22 order to have a good representation of the community.

23
24 Six to twelve is a good number for a focus group. They are typically held in the evenings and
25 Saturdays. They will be somewhat coordinated with the town calendar. They usually last 1.5 to
26 2 hours. Resilience has two or three representatives at the focus groups to capture all the ideas
27 being presented. There typically is one session.

28
29 • Feedback on Earlier Drafts: *Housing; Demographics and Economics*

30
31 Larissa Crockett noted that the State is requiring communities to allow accessory units. The
32 Town of Wells does not support this change, and it should be reflected somewhere in this
33 section.

34
35 Manufactured and mobile homes and campgrounds were discussed, as well as seasonal cottages.
36 New seasonal cottages are no longer allowed to be built.

37
38 The remainder of discussion points was tabled until the next meeting.

39
40 **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

41
42 Ed Pare spoke regarding the majority of the townspeople wanting to see something happen
43 regarding growth, such as with zoning or a rate of growth ordinance. Nothing has been done
44 with the impact fees. If the townspeople don't see a rate of growth ordinance in the plan, they
45 will not vote for the plan. The rate of growth ordinance should have a difference in rate between
46 rural and commercial.

1 **ADJOURN**

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MOTION

4 Motion made to adjourn by Jason Vennard, seconded by Martin Morse. Motion approved.

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6 Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

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9 MINUTES APPROVED _____, 2021

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11 ACCEPTED BY:

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16 _____
Carol DesJardins, Recording Secretary

Chris Chase, Chairman

DRAFT