



# TOWN OF WELLS, MAINE

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE

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Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 17, 2022, 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, February 17, 2022, from the Littlefield Room at Town Hall.

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

Steve Whitman and Rich Brerton were present representing Resilience Planning and Design.

### **MINUTES**

January 20, 2022 – Review and consider for approval.

Jon Moody stated it was not noted in the minutes that he was present at the January 20, 2022, meeting.

### **MOTION**

Motion made by Martin Morse to approve the amended January 20, 2022, minutes, seconded by Tim Gowen. Motion accepted.

Jim Smith noted that a roll call vote of those in attendance needs to be held when there are participants via zoom. Chris Chase indicated the mistake will be corrected going forward.

### **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Ed Pare spoke on Part 2: Population Policies and Strategies. He presented handouts on the Statement of Findings, Purpose and Goals Statute from the Growth Management Program, and has the opinion that the State goal should be shown with its precise wording intact, and the Growth Management Act should be retained, referenced in parentheses, and the same should apply to all State goals listed in the Comprehensive Plan. The State's Growth Management

1 Act's requirement for devising growth management standards and implementation strategies  
2 should be the responsibility of the standing CPUC, and not the responsibility of the Planning  
3 Board and BOS. He added it was his opinion, based on the proposed updated Chapter 2 alone,  
4 that the townspeople will not vote in favor of this plan. Relevant documents were included with  
5 the handouts. Ed Pare asked that the handouts be available in the town offices.

6  
7 John Lillibridge of the Energy Committee introduced himself as a new member of the  
8 Committee and noted that they had most recently gone through the plan section by section, with  
9 each member given a section to go on, and there are additional comments and more detail with  
10 up-to-date evidence on these topics to come forth.

## 11 **CPUC BUSINESS**

### 12 • Update on the Planning Process, Remaining Tasks, and Timeline

13  
14 Steve Whitman told the Committee that it is working with a constrained timeline.

### 15 • Update on Focus Groups

16 Steve Whitman noted the members of the focus groups were very generous with their time, and  
17 once all the sessions are done the notes will be put into one package for the Committee members  
18 to review.

19  
20 Jim Smith asked if the members of the focus groups were averse to having the meetings open to  
21 the public, and Steve Whitman indicated the members preferred a private exchange, and did not  
22 want to have their names attached. Jim feels the meetings taking place behind closed doors is  
23 not good and he didn't like it. They are not following the open process, and he doesn't accept  
24 the idea of not knowing who is in the groups.

### 25 • Feedback on Drafts and Discussion of Edits/Additions

#### 26 ○ Part 1: Introduction

27  
28 Carol DesJardins questioned the wording of the Committee not approving the 2016 efforts to  
29 update the 2005 plan. She thought it was the Select Board who did not approve. There was a  
30 discussion on the process and the wording as presented in the draft is correct.

31  
32 Steve Whitman asked if the selectmen decided if there would be an Implementation Committee,  
33 and Mike Livingston answered not as yet. Mike proceeded to explain the process of going  
34 through the different committees.

#### 35 ○ Part 2: Chapter 1 The Vision for Wells

36  
37 With regard to the five key topics listed which are facing the town, Steve Whitman indicated that  
38 more detail on each topic will be added.

1 Linda Grenfell stated she would like more time to work on the Vision Statement. Steve  
2 Whitman reiterated the time restraint, that the entire document has to be done by May.  
3 Modifications from input were made last month.

4  
5 Martin Morse questioned the wording of “scenic vistas”, as there aren’t many scenic vistas left.

6  
7 ○ Part 2: Chapter 2 Population

8  
9 Linda Grenfell noted that under “Standards” there is no mention of a growth cap and there will  
10 be some challenges to that among the community. Chris Chase reminded the Committee that a  
11 growth ordinance can increase property taxes and the value of housing. Do we want higher taxes  
12 and less housing? As for affordable housing, he doesn’t think there is anything in Wells that he  
13 considers as affordable. We don’t need an ordinance of number of houses, but rather we need a  
14 change in lot size requirements.

15  
16 Steve Whitman stated the goal is to identify the issues, not pick a one and only resolution.

17  
18 Martin Morse understood that the growth ordinance had to be approximately 105% of the  
19 average of the last ten years and suggests someone come up with what that average is. He is  
20 reluctant to put in a growth ordinance, but there should be a number and see how many people  
21 are happy with that number. The town needs to monitor a legal means to regulate growth.  
22 Jodine Adams stated permits are for new single family dwellings, not including replacements.

23  
24 Jim Smith, on Page 1, #1, questioned the replacing of the wording of “rural character” with  
25 “network of open spaces”. He didn’t know what that meant and suggested using the wording of  
26 “a network of open spaces and coastal character east of 95”. A conversation continued. Chris  
27 Chase noted the town is trying to make it a network, by connecting the open spaces. Steve  
28 Whitman added the intent is what has been focused on in the past.

29  
30 Martin Morse feels the town has become “rural residential”, as there no longer are many rural  
31 land uses left.

32  
33 **MOTION**

34 Motion made by Tim Gowen to leave the wording as is, seconded by Linda Grenfell.

35  
36 **ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT MOTION:**

37

Committee Member	Accept	Decline	Abstain
Chris Chase	x		
Carol DesJardins	x		
Tim Gowen	x		
Linda Grenfell	x		
Jon Moody	x		
Martin Morse	x		
Chris Pugsley	x		
James Smith	x		
Jason Vennard	x		

1 Motion accepted.

2  
3 Chris Chase noted that in addition to rural areas west of 95, there is a lot of undeveloped land  
4 east of 95. Steve Whitman will remove all geographic references.

- 5  
6 ○ Part 2: Chapter 3 Natural Resources, Policies and Strategies

7  
8 Martin Morse expressed concerns as a landowner of becoming a victim. By decreasing growth,  
9 the landowners could be afraid they will lose value and rights by an ordinance. If people know  
10 their values will increase in the future, they will hold on to their land into the future. The  
11 Committee needs to draft the plan in a way that it doesn't scare people. They need to know are  
12 they partners or victims. If partners, their rights and values will continue into the future and the  
13 landowners will hold onto their land. If victims, instead of decreasing growth there will be more  
14 land on the market. There needs to be new language in the Plan, so the landowners don't  
15 become victims of the Plan.

16  
17 Chris Chase feels owning land should not be a conflict. It shouldn't matter how much a person  
18 has. He understands wanting to protect what you have, but also the town landowners need to  
19 understand it could happen. Martin added he doesn't want to scare people into selling  
20 prematurely. Jason Vennard feels there is a fine line on how to write this and make everyone  
21 happy.

22  
23 Rich Brerton told the Committee that regarding lot size on Page 5, the Energy Committee wants  
24 a change from no lot size to be less than 20,000 square feet if not on town water and sewer to be  
25 changed to 40,000 square feet. Steve Whiteman disagrees with this. Mike Livingston added that  
26 currently the town won't allow a 20,000 square foot lot on town water and sewer. Tim Gowen  
27 suggested taking the wording on lot size out. Rich Brerton added that town policy should not be  
28 less strict than State code. After discussion the Committee decided to leave the wording as it is.

29  
30 Steve Whitman explained that there is a policy statement about establishing a committee relative  
31 to wetlands management. He asked if we should retain this implementation strategy. Martin  
32 Morse questioned the number of new committees, as to if they are practical. This should be  
33 assigned to an existing committee such as the Implementation Committee. The Conservation  
34 Committee could be the one to use. Rich said it was commented in the focus group that in  
35 cluster subdivisions the Wells wetland area is counted as part of open space toward the total  
36 acreage, and they felt this was unusual. Martin Morse supports counting wetlands in lot size as  
37 long as there is enough good land on which to put the homes. Chris Chase feels if one can't  
38 build on a piece of land, it should not be counted in footage. Tim Gowen added that counting  
39 wetlands in subdivisions has been allowed in the past.

40  
41 Mike Livingston gave a description of how wetlands are defined, and a long discussion ensued  
42 on the definitions of wetlands. Jim Smith feels wetlands should not be included in lot size for  
43 cluster or standard house lots when trying to restrict growth and protect environmental resources.

44  
45 Linda Grenfell would like this topic to go to the Conservation Committee and then to the  
46 Implementation Committee.

1 A discussion ensued and it was decided there needs to be a definition of wetlands for  
2 clarification. Jim Smith proposes to exclude wetlands from lot size, and it should apply to all  
3 new subdivided property, and not apply to existing building lots. Martin Morse added that  
4 allowing to count wetlands is not destroying the wetlands but still protecting them since  
5 construction is away from the wetlands. Tim Gowen added that controlling growth will make  
6 everything more expensive.  
7

8 **MOTION**

9 Motion made by Martin Morse for the wetlands, instead of establishing a new committee, to be  
10 turned over to the Implementation Committee, when formed, for their consideration. Seconded  
11 by Tim Gowen  
12

13 **MOTION**

14 Motion made by Jim Smith to amend above motion to send wetlands topic to the Conservation  
15 Committee instead of the Implementation Committee. Seconded by Linda Grenfell.  
16

17 **ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT AMENDED MOTION:**  
18

Committee Member	Accept	Decline	Abstain
Chris Chase		x	
Carol DesJardins		x	
Tim Gowen		x	
Linda Grenfell	x		
Jon Moody		x	
Martin Morse		x	
Chris Pugsley		x	
James Smith	x		
Jason Vennard		x	

19 Motion fails.  
20  
21

22 **ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT ORIGINAL MOTION ON THE FLOOR:**  
23

Committee Member	Accept	Decline	Abstain
Chris Chase	x		
Carol DesJardins	x		
Tim Gowen	x		
Linda Grenfell		x	
Jon Moody	x		
Martin Morse	x		
Chris Pugsley	x		
James Smith		x	
Jason Vennard	x		

24 Motion accepted.  
25

1  
2 Jim Smith read the State Statute requiring a roll call vote when members are participating  
3 through Zoom.

4  
5 Martin Morse stated if the town wants an ordinance on timber harvesting, the Plan has to be  
6 compliant with State regulations already issued. Mike Livingston agreed that the current  
7 ordinance has to be in line with the State, so the town ordinance needs to be updated.  
8

9 Rich Brerton spoke on the Branch Brook Aquifer in that it needs further protection for the land  
10 around the wells. Mike Livingston gave an explanation of the radius for protection of the wells.  
11

12 To answer Martin Morse, there was a discussion on the 2500 and 200 day travel shown on Map 4  
13 and the color designations on the maps being hard to distinguish. Martin requested to have a  
14 defined line for the 2500 day travel area and another line for the 200 day travel area. Mike  
15 Livingston suggested if there is new information from the water district it would be good to have  
16 it for these maps. Rich Brerton is confident there is no new information available that they know  
17 of.  
18

19 ○ Part 2: Chapter 4 Marine Resources  
20

21 Tim Gowen questioned the highlighted paragraph on Page 2, #5, and was told it will be taken out  
22 completely.  
23

24 On Page 1 under Regional Goals, Martin Morse wanted the word “Continue” added to “to  
25 partner with state and federal agencies”.

26  
27 ○ Part 2: Chapter 5 Historic and Cultural  
28

29 Under Introduction, the reference to Perkins Cove will be taken out.  
30

31 Martin Morse requested that under Wells Goals, #2, the language be added “while protecting and  
32 respecting landowners’ rights”.  
33

34 Chris Chase commented that there aren’t a lot of these protected properties. Jodine Adams  
35 explained there are those on the National Register, as well as some on the Town Register. She  
36 stated there are certain things architecturally required on these properties that need to be  
37 reviewed. A discussion on architectural standards for historical properties in Wells ensued.  
38 Mike Livingston added that all new commercial buildings have to meet the architectural  
39 standards as well.  
40

41 Martin Morse feels if a central area is referenced it needs to be defined on a map or eliminated.  
42 He asked about the educational opportunities and could the Wells Ogunquit Historical Society  
43 take over this project. Jodine Adams responded to educational materials being created that will  
44 tell the story of the town. That there are initial steps being taken in starting the education  
45 process, as to where beaches and parking, etc. are. She also mentioned there is a book with a  
46 walking and driving tour which might be able to be revitalized. Steve Whitman said The Wells  
47 Historical Society cannot take that responsibility on at this time.  
48



ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT MOTION:

Committee Member	Accept	Decline	Abstain
Chris Chase	x		
Carol DesJardins	x		
Tim Gowen	x		
Linda Grenfell	x		
Jon Moody	x		
Martin Morse	x		
Chris Pugsley	x		
James Smith	x		
Jason Vennard	x		

Motion accepted.

Martin Morse requested that the railroad, power line and Eastern Bike Trail be shown on Maps 2,3,4, 6 and 8. On the water and sewer layout he asked for a full size map east of the turnpike showing KKW and Wells Sanitary. The sanitary district might have one that could be easily reproduced, and the water district may have one as well. He also noted that on Map 10 what shows as wetlands is now a golf course.

- o Part 2 Chapter 7 Town Character
- o Part 2 Chapter 8 Transportation and Circulation
- o Part 2 Chapter 9 Economic Development

Not discussed.

- Feedback received from other Boards and Committees
  - o Energy Committee Matrices Received

Not discussed.

- Next Month
  - o Part 2, Chapters 10 - 17 Drafts for review

To be discussed next month.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

None.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURN**



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**MOTION**

Motion made by Jason Vennard to adjourn. Seconded by Martin Morse.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT MOTION:**

Committee Member	Accept	Decline	Abstain
Chris Chase	x		
Carol DesJardins	x		
Tim Gowen	x		
Linda Grenfell	x		
Jon Moody	x		
Martin Morse	x		
Chris Pugsley	x		
James Smith	x		

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Motion accepted. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_, 2022

ACCEPTED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol DesJardins, Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Chase, Chairman