

**York, Maine**  
**Planning Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 4, 2021; 7:00 P.M.**  
**Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Call to Order; Roll Call; Determination of Quorum; Appointment of Alternates**

Chairwoman Kathleen Kluger called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. A quorum was determined with five people voting: Kathleen Kluger, Vice-Chair Wayne Boardman, Board Secretary Gerry Runte, Al Cotton, and Peter Smith. Alternates Kenny Churchill and Ian Shaw were present but did not vote. Planning Director Dylan Smith represented staff. Chris Di Matteo, principle of Longmeadow Planning and Landscape Architecture, served as compliance and peer reviewer. Patience Horton took Minutes. Votes were tallied via roll call. The meeting lasted two-and-a-half hours.

**Public Forum**

Kathleen Kluger opened and closed the Public Forum. No one came forward to speak.

**Discussion/Review Comprehensive Plan Update and Climate Action Plan Development.**

- **Scope and Schedule Review with Comp Plan/Climate Action Plan Consultant**

What is a Comprehensive Plan, and why should I care? a few people have asked Planning Board Chairwoman Kathleen Kluger. She launched this workshop meeting by explaining what the Maine.gov website says a Comprehensive Plan is. To answer this, she had also looked at Comp Plan summaries from Brunswick, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Lewiston.

Kathleen explained that a Comprehensive Plan is the document that pulls information together on a wide range of community issues to assess trends and establish town policies. In a sense, a comp plan is a lot like a blueprint for a community. It forms a basis upon which ordinances are drafted and enacted on by voters, she said.

The comprehensive planning process became the basis for zoning in Maine in 1943. In 1988, the three-pronged Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act, including the Growth Management Program, was adopted state-wide. A Comp Plan includes:

1. The Inventory and Analysis of existing conditions
2. The preparation of policies to address the Inventory and designate growth in rural areas
3. The preparation of strategies to implement the Comprehensive Plan

The Comp Plan and Land Use Act directs most of the anticipated growth to areas designated as growth areas and protects rural areas from sprawl. The heart of the Comp Plan is to build neighborhoods and commercial centers where their locations can accommodate and stimulate economic growth. It should help conserve large rural territories. This hasn't been exactly successful in Maine, she said. Even in towns with approved plans, 50% to 80% of the growth is

spreading in designated rural areas, rather than designated growth areas. One of the reasons is that some far-sighted policies of some comprehensive plans did not gain the endorsement of townspeople during the planning process.

A Climate Action Plan will be developed at the same time as the Comp Plan is being updated. Burlington, Vermont, summarizes their climate action plan as a framework for detailing, measuring, and planning the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Parts of the Climate Action Plan will be reflected in York's "new" Comp Plan.

The Town has contracted Susan Silberberg and CivicMoxie of Brookline, Massachusetts, to guide the Planning Board through the steps of updating the Comprehensive Plan and developing the Climate Action Plan. A top goal is for the new Comp Plan to be State-certified. There is a self-assessment checklist of 14 required elements that the Comp Plan must have to be a State-certified plan. Under Susan's guidance, committees and workgroups will be formed to tackle the 14 elements, Kathleen explained.

Susan Silberberg: Members of the workgroups and committees have to be really curious people who are eager to dig in. That would be the criteria for them, open minds. One of the first tasks is to have a kick-off meeting where we sit down and look at our schedules and figure out what our first outreach is. What is the list of stakeholders? There has to be flexibility. Until we have a better sense about COVID conditions and recovery, we are not going to know exactly when we are going to do that. We know that typically, summer is a bad time for outreach, but online meetings have attracted people who have never been to meetings before. Sometimes 50% or 60% have never attended a public meeting in their town.

The steering committee has to sit down and strategize. We are trying to reach out to do interviews from representatives from DPW, Economic Development, Schools, and other organizations. Fairly early in the project, we will have team leadership meetings. We like to get a group together--it might include the head of the Library or Public Works, a range of people--to talk about questions they have about the planning process. What would they like to see addressed? Those conversations usually yield wonderful bits of information.

Kathleen: The makeup of the steering committees and work groups are reflective of what the town's composition is.

Al Cotton: We did something like that for our original work with the Green Enterprise District. For about a year-and-a-half, among others, we drew both Fire Chiefs, the Police Chief, the DPW Director, and the Parks & Rec Director. We had very good attendance because people were very involved. We had something going on, and they wanted to be part of it. And I think you are going to find people want to be a part of this, too.

Susan: I think your idea about keeping the two steering committees small is a good one. Making sure that there is a good representation on each committee is important so there is a wide amount of knowledge on both boards. Typically, there is someone from the Selectboard

on each committee. There would be someone from the Planning Board. There might be someone representing Schools, and someone on the Conservation Commission. You are trying to get enough coverage to focus in on the major concerns. CivicMoxie will produce a guideline with bullet points to help you put a steering committee together.

Kathleen: The Planning Board needs to discuss this idea of a steering committee. As we approach our tourist season, the number of volunteers dwindles.

Dylan: I think we are on the right path. These are two very large pieces of work with themes, ideas, and plans. Things have been up in the air since COVID. Now things are back on. We have all been rushed. The Board is getting caught up and is on the right trajectory. I think we can take the right next steps to begin this process. We have another workshop coming up during which I hope we can wrap up this part of the process. We'll keep moving forward.

### **Minutes**

- Motion: Al Cotton moved to accept the Minutes of the Planning Board meeting of January 28, 2021, as corrected. Zoning section numbers were recorded incorrectly in two places. Pete Smith seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

### **Other Business**

1. Dylan, Kathleen, and Chris Di Matteo have discussed how inconveniently long application reviews have become. This is cutting into the Board's ability to move quickly. The Planning Board is bogged down. The Board would like Chris to summarize his item points more succinctly.
2. Wayne: Chris is possibly erring in voluntarily offering solutions to applicants' design problems.
3. Dylan suggested limiting each application to one hour of review.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Patience G. Horton