



Comprehensive Plan Committee Agenda

February 6, 2023

6:30pm – Meeting

At Broadcast Studio & via ZOOM

Committee Members Present: John Clark, Kaela Gonzalez, Peter Leavitt, Frank McDermott, John Rand, Greg Foster, Jackie Sawyer, Danelle Milone, Bradley McCurtain, Shawn McKillop

Committee Members Absent: none

Town Staff Present:

Don Willard, Town Manager

Chris Hanson, Assistant Code Enforcement Officer

Sue Look, Town Clerk

Town Staff Absent: none

1) **Called to order** at 6:30pm by Co-Chair Leavitt – there is a quorum present

2) **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

a) January 17, 2023

Motion to approve as presented by Co-Chair Leavitt. Seconded by Mr Foster.

Unanimously approved

Motion to move New Business, a) North Star Planning Interview to next for discussion by Co-Chair Leavitt. Seconded by Mr Rand.

Approved by consensus

3) **Old Business**

a) # Update Comprehensive Plan Logo

b) # Development of Short Video - Action Plan

c) # Scheduling Bus Tour - Part 2

4) **New Business**

* TAKEN OUT OF ORDER
Postponed to next meeting

a) * North Star Planning Interview

Ben Smith and Kate Burch from North Star Planning reviewed a PowerPoint presentation of their proposal for the committee. Mr Smith was the Planner for Windham for 11 years and Ms Burch works with the Town of Topsham. North Star Planning is located in New Gloucester. They know that water quality, protecting natural resources, balancing tourism and economic development with the needs of year-round residents, dealing with impacts of growth pressure with community character, etc. The building activity has been much greater than population growth, especially for seasonally vacant properties. They try to generate as much community involvement as possible using various in-person, online and print options.

Q/A

Mr McCurtain - Are either of you familiar with Robert Martin's work on planning and strategies? No. Do you recommend having a separate committee for implementation? It is a common practice for the committee to continue the process, and some towns choose to have a separate committee keep an eye on the implementation. One of our goals is that the plan will be reasonable, actionable and something the town can implement. The Comp Plan spans 10-20 years, recommendations for implementation will be in shorter increments (like 5 years) to work toward the plan.

Mr McCurtain – What have you found to be most effective in getting community involvement and what sort of attendance have you seen? We have had open house events with an online component. At one in Bath there were about 60 at the open house and 100 online. Meeting people where they are, events they are already attending, and having a presence. It requires a mix to get the greatest participation.

Mr McCurtain – How has Raymond been effective on slowing the growth on the Windham-Raymond border? Windham has been growing 14% from census to census while Raymond is at 2%. Raymond is 1 town further down the road from Portland. Windham has more affordable housing and it is closer to where they work. Raymond's zoning is different and lot sizes are larger than Windham. Raymond's ordinance includes open space or cluster sub-divisions.

Co-Chair Gonzalez – Could you give examples of "out-of-the-box" ideas that you have been involved in with other towns? The implementation effort in Pownal where they are trying to define and preserve rural character – the sense of quiet country living, open country roads, a rural economy of wood lots and gravel pits, wildlife habitat. This is something that will need to be determined for Raymond. Pownal is looking at changing their cluster sub-division ordinance to be more of a conservation sub-division ordinance. In Topsham they are charging a fee for solar based on the value of habitat zones to go toward conservation efforts. This encourages solar to go more to the lower value properties.

Mr Clark – Could you provide examples of climate initiatives you have done in other towns and how they could be implemented and grant monies available? This is the most popular, non State required section of the Comp Plan. We could have a chapter in the Comp Plan addressing this and/or have each chapter include climate concerns. Do you include ways to implement these? They can be separated into 3 categories: what the State/Federal government will help with, what the town can enact with local ordinances, and what could be a private/public effort (like a town committee to work with local businesses on climate related issues). There will be a list of real things you

can do at the end of this process.

Mr Foster – In regards to town government, we currently have a Town Manager – Select Board – Town Meeting form of government. I think we need to have open town meeting (we have been voting the Town Warrant via secret ballot for the past 3 years), or should we have a Council form of government? Is this a question that belongs in the Comp Plan? Town Manager Willard gave the Select Board's view that people do have ample opportunity to ask questions at the public hearings and at the Town Office and that we only had 60 citizens come to open town meeting and many hundreds at the elections. Attendance went down once the school budget was no longer voted at Town Meeting. A possible change in the form of town government could be a part of the Comp Plan.

Mr Rand – Climate is important to me. The Comp Plan should direct that the town's Open Space Plan be updated. I would like to see the Lake Region Bus keep rolling, keeping Raymond connected to Portland. The State requires you to say, these are the areas where we want to encourage growth, these are the rural areas where we want to restrict growth, and maybe you have a few transitional areas. Gray took it 1 step further and designated critical rural areas where it was important to preserve "quiet country living" and restrict growth more.

Mrs Millone – How do you characterize Raymond's character separate from the work you have done with our neighboring towns? The biggest part of that is public participation and what is important to the people. It could be similar to other communities, but the citizens will determine the direction we go. Keeping track of who we have heard from and who we have not as yet. Being creative with the strategies of reaching the broadest spectrum of the citizens possible via all of the avenues available. There are regional issues and issues across Maine. Each town has a different perspective of how to deal with them. How do you keep up with the changes to State Statutes? LD2003 for example (An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions). Reaffirming the vision and the values of the community which will set broad policy goals will help communities deal with these challenges to know what will be workable in town.

Ms Sawyer – Are you seeing trends in the post-COVID world, things that need further consideration? The 2020 Census had some issues which have made it important to "ground truth" the data. Maine has had more people move here permanently since the pandemic than in other states, and more remote workers. It will take time to see if this is really permanent change or temporary. Air B&B/Short-term rental has also become a bigger impact. What does it look like for us as a committee working with a planner? One of the things to clarify is the role of the committee in drafting the plan. Some want each member to be in charge of a chapter and others want the planner to write the draft plan. Our experience is getting good input and guidance from the committee and then drafting the plan.

Co-Chair Leavitt – We did a preliminary survey of the voters at the November 2022 Election where we found that people want increased services and low taxes. Do you have any guidance for this? No. We work in a number of communities where they have a higher mill rate and are happy to pay for the level of service they get. Others want to keep the mill rate low and are fine with lower level of service. Others will decide the perceived value of the service they are getting from the tax. We have access to interns from St Joseph's College, how would you see using them? We would want to see what their area of interest is and try to use them there. I could see

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them working on the research updates. Also, on the online aspects of outreach.

Town Manager Willard – What helps and what does not help in a Comp Plan? Clarity and specificity are helpful, as is the vision statement if it is clear and not “pie in the sky”. Tying the vision statement to specific areas in town can be 1 way. The vision statement comes later in the process after community meetings. We will want an implementation list in the plan. We do not want things that are vague or too far in the future. Universal broadband internet to the Lakes Region and sustainability are 2 items I am interested in. What are your thoughts? The Comp Plan is a good way to look at each category with an eye to sustainability, not only good for the environment, but also could save money/resources for the town and its citizens. Broadband I believe that is a part of 21st century infrastructure that is as necessary as any other. There is a State broadband authority and we need to try to align with the larger State plan and Federal plans to gain greater success.

Assistant CEO Hanson – Air B&Bs can be disruptive to a neighborhood. We used to have these where owners were supplementing their income and now there are developers who are building specifically for Air B&B only use. I also think we will begin to see more growth as Windham is filling up and we are the next town in line. We will need to protect our lakes, streams and mountains. Infrastructure and the transportation side of that with a connector from Windham through Raymond which could help with jobs for Raymond residents. We do not have any large employers. We have a greater volume of use on the lakes and we need to keep a balance.

Mr Smith asked the committee about growth and infrastructure, and the considered new road connecting Windham and Raymond is a specific example of potential growth. Growth will be ok in certain areas. Our goal is to manage growth. We can't not grow, it is how do we do it.

Thank you to Mr Smith for such a professional, well organized proposal.

b) * Consider New Committee Applicant(s)

Derek Ray applied to become a member of the Comp Plan Committee. There was some discussion that there are already 3 members of the committee who are involved in real estate and the State guidelines say that the committee should be diversified enough to be representative of the community. Mr Ray is a part time agent for his own personal properties. He also does development, has storage units, and is a general contractor by trade.

Motion to recommend that the Select Board appoint Derek Ray to the Comp Plan Committee by Co-Chair Leavitt. Seconded by Mr Rand.

Voted 7-3 to recommend, motion carried

Motion to finish the meeting with the committee discussing North Star Planning and carry the remaining business other than Committee Member Comments to the next regular meeting by Co-Chair Gonzalez. Seconded by Mr Clark.

Unanimously approved

There was discussion pertaining to the quality of the presentation and proposal from North Star Planning. Mr McCurtain proceeded to ask a series of questions about the

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experience of the committee members with strategic plans and interviewing multiple planners. Co-Chair Leavitt informed Mr McCurtain that this line of questioning the process of soliciting proposals is out of order.

Co-Chair Leavitt asked Town Clerk Look to provide the cost of North Star Planning's proposal:

The proposed Fee Statement is based on a 22-month project timeline. In the absence of a target budget, our team has done our best to provide a scope and fee that meets the needs of the community and delivers a successful, state-approved Comprehensive Plan. Below is a summary of the fee statement, with the full outline on page 3. The final fee, scope, and timeline will be refined in collaboration with Town Staff during project contracting and finalized with the Committee. We remain flexible to address the needs of the community, the Committee, and boards and staff.

Fee Statement Summary 1-5-2023

Task 1 - Inventory & Analysis	\$37,440
Task 2 - Visioning, Values & Attitudes	\$18,020
Task 3 - Goals, Policies, Strategies, Future Land Use	\$15,250
Task 4 - Implementation Plan	\$4,740
Task 5 -Plan Drafting, Review & Adoption	\$23,860
Project total	\$99,310
Direct Expenses (printing, web site)	\$1,000
Milage	\$400
Estimated total fee	\$100,710

Motion to ask Town Manager Willard to proceed with contract negotiations with North Star Planning for the purpose of providing contract planning to update the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Raymond by Co-Chair Gonzelez. Seconded by Mr Rand.

Mr McCurtain requested to get information, before voting on North Star Planning, from the planner who reached out to the Town after the deadline. Co-Chair Leavitt informed Mr McCurtain that this is not germane to the conversation unless the committee votes to repost the bid.

Voted 9-1 to approve the motion, motion carried

- c) # CPC Community Update Document
- d) # Community/Association Outreach Opportunities

5) Next Meeting Date

- a) March 1, 2023

6) Public Comment – none

* TAKEN OUT OF ORDER
Postponed to next meeting

7) **Comp Plan Committee's Comment** – none

8) **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 8:58pm by Mr Rand. Seconded by Mr Clark.

Unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,

Susan L Look, Town Clerk