

# Comprehensive Planning Committee Minutes

## October 20, 2021

**Present:** Alanna Bachelder, Jeffrey Carlson, Chris Cheney, Jessica Gorton, Matt Nazar

**Absent:** Paula Clark, Henry Clauson, Eric Dyer, Greg Leimbach, Dennis Price, Joel Greenwood (CVCOG), David Trunnell

Jessica called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m. in person at the Town Office and via Zoom. There was not a quorum.

### Minutes

Without a quorum, the minutes could not be approved.

### New Business

Jessica introduced the SharePoint site that KVCOG set up and explained it to new member Alanna Bachelder, who attends Kents Hill School.

Even without a quorum, the decision was made to review the chapter on Outdoor Recreation, as the section lead Jeff was present via Zoom. He did note that information he was supposed to receive from a couple of people did not come through.

Outdoor Recreation begins with water recreation. Jeff noted that there have been changes in the fees charged to users. Matt noted that the section about concerns in the 1980s are probably no longer relevant and should be deleted or updated, such as the information about acquiring a second beach, as the town beach seems to be adequate.

The public boat access at Maranacook and Torsey were discussed. Is the boat access at Torsey a ramp? It was unclear as to what defines a ramp. Personal watercraft is prohibited on Torsey, but the legal channel that allowed that restriction is no longer available and jet skis are allowed on Maranacook. Chris noted that the statement about there being no concern about public access at Lovejoy Pond is not correct.

Chris noted that we seem to be focusing on the past when we should be focusing more on the future. It was agreed that the final document should be forward looking, as it needs to hold up for the next ten years.

Regarding the snowmobile trail network, Jeff said he will contact the Blizzard Busters for the updated maps. Matt asked about the viability of the groups maintaining the trails, both regular and snowmobile. Are there enough volunteers, as many groups are aging? Students from Kents Hill and Maranacook do volunteer a couple of times a year to help with trail maintenance.

The topic of utilizing Kents Hill School trails was also discussed, as were the Kennebec Land Trust trails. Minute-taker Holly, who is the secretary for Trails, volunteered the information that there is an updated map of Readfield Trails, which includes all the trails except the new Morrill Road trail, which is not quite completed. Jeff said he will follow up and perhaps add the map to the appendix.

Discussion moved to fishing management and land management, which falls to the Conservation Commission. No representative of that committee was present.

Jeff said the town is currently dependent on the school for baseball fields and basketball courts, which does not always work out, so the Recreation Committee is trying to set up facilities for the town, working with the Conservation Commission.

The Lions Club is no longer a going concern, so it can be deleted.

The next section was about the schools. The question was raised as to whether all the available sport programs should be included or just the ones managed by the Recreation Committee. Matt noted that there is value to the residents to be informed about these programs. Jessica suggested we include them all but note which ones are sponsored by the Recreation Committee.

It was unclear whether the connection to Lost Valley still exists. Jeff said he did not think so.

Alanna asked if there is anything new that should be included. The library now sponsors a story walk for children that should be included.

The goals and policy sections currently fall at the end. Committee members agreed that those should be moved to the top.

Chris asked if we have any data to back up the accomplishments and ideas we have been discussing. Matt noted that KVCOG is supposed to be doing that, going through the records and making sure that the information is correct and complies with state rules. He further explained how the system was supposed to work, with the section leaders collaborating with KVCOG and Eric to identify the community stakeholders and obtain necessary information.

Chris noted that in looking at the goals and policies we don't really have any knowledge about whether they have been achieved and how we can measure progress going forward.

Jessica said that there is no legal requirement for the Selectboard to follow the Comprehensive Plan, but perhaps we should be following up.

Chris pointed out that most strategic plans, which are similar to the comp plan, end up on the shelf. Matt agreed that we need a way to implement any established goals. Jessica wondered if other towns have an implementation plan. Matt said some do, but that's really up to the Selectboard to follow through.

Jeff said that there have been lawsuits where the Comprehensive Plan has been used to defend or attack a town's action. Matt said the plan is the legal basis for zoning and that without a comp plan there is no zoning.

As for goals, the chapter currently lists only two but then has a whole list of policies, although many of them sound like goals.

The committee discussed some of the topics included in the policies. Many of them are rather vague. Jessica asked how granular do we want to get? Do we want to list specific or sweeping suggestions?

One big priority is to get KVCOG to do the work on what has been achieved since the last plan.

Many of the policies refer to expanding opportunities for outdoor recreation, such as implementing a Factory Square walking tour and adding to trails. With the Giles Road bridge closed, access to Mill Stream Dam trail will soon be increased by a new trail that crosses Route 17 over to Morrill Road. The Trails Committee is also working on a trail around Carleton Pond.

Jeff noted that the Recreation Committee is already working on revitalizing the Fairgrounds area. Jessica said we don't need to rewrite what the Recreation Committee is outlining in its plan but rather can simply refer to implementing that committee's goals. Some key events for that committee include Heritage Days and an ice-fishing derby that raised \$1,000.

Do we have a list of discontinued roads? It seems likely the town office could provide that information.

Chris pointed out that biking is missing from the document, including both road and mountain. Matt suggested making connections with New England Mountain Biking Association (NEMBA).

Jeff updated the document on the new SharePoint site if other committee members want to review what was discussed.

#### Next Meeting Action Items

Jeff will follow up with suggestions made tonight, connecting with other groups and KVCOG.

Next meeting will be November 17 at 6 p.m. Jessica will send out an email reminding members of the meeting and the next chapter to be discussed.

Chris said we need to be committed to reading the chapters before the meeting.

Matt said we need to get a notice out to members about a week before the meeting so they will be there and prepared.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Holly Rahmlow