

Readfield Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Day #1 1/27/2023

When asked how the attendants heard about the information session, the responses were mixed and included: postcards, online, word of mouth, and meeting postings.

In Person Attendees:

Eric Dyer, Readfield Town Manager

Jessica Cobb, KVCOG

Jessie Cyr, KVCOG

Jessica Gorton, Chair of Readfield Comprehensive Plan Committee

Greg Leimbach, Readfield Comprehensive Plan Committee

Elaine Katz, Readfield Comprehensive Plan Committee

Ralph Eno, Past Selectman, longtime resident

Amy Burnham, 1 year in Readfield

William Melden, 1 year in Readfield

Tony Plante, 24 years in Readfield

Samantha Horn, 19 years in Readfield

Larry Dunn, 44 years in Readfield

Cliff Buck, 22 years in Readfield

Marty Hanish, 27 years in Readfield

Attendees Via Zoom:

John

Andy

Nate Rudy

Jerry Bley

Tim

Hannah

Bess

Town Manager, Eric Dyer and Comprehensive Plan Committee Chairwoman, Jessica Gorton introduced themselves and went over the history of Readfield's comprehensive plan update. Jessica Cobb reviewed the introductory PowerPoint presentation (hard copies of both full and condensed versions of the PowerPoint were available for the public at the meeting).

Jessica Gorton, Chair explained the four categories that were to be covered and encouraged the public to discuss these topics, share where they would like to see Readfield in the future, and what changes they felt were important relating to these categories covered at this meeting.

Categories Discussed:

1. Foster Local Economic Development
2. Prepare for Future Readiness
3. Encourage Civic Engagement
4. Promote Active Lifestyles

Discussion Topics Relating to Foster Local Economic Development:

- Focus on underutilized spaces and buildings in town
- Expand Village Area: revitalize, entice businesses, develop Readfield Depot
- Encourage new restaurants/cafes
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District
- Lower taxes to entice growth in housing
- Revitalize commercial areas
- Promote agriculture/forestry in Readfield
- Encourage schools to include courses in agriculture/forestry
- Discourage development of solar farms on areas known to have prime agricultural soils
 - Property Tax Incentives for Solar Farms
 - Siting analysis and pre-application requirement for solar farms
- Schools to enact Farm to Table,
 - Supports local farms
- Resiliency-climate change
- Solar farm concerns,
 - Environmental pros & cons
 - Economic impacts pros & cons
 - Aesthetics
 - Property taxes

Discussion Topics Relating to Preparing for Future Readiness:

- Public infrastructure,
 - Facilities
 - Emergency management
 - Adequate Public Works staffing
 - Aggressively maintain existing facilities
- Climate change,
 - Hazard plan
 - Shelter plan
- Periodic assessment
- Recruit students for free EMT/EMS training classes
- Recruit within schools

Discussion Topics Relating to Encouraging Civic Engagement:

- Need volunteers to support all these endeavors
- Mentorship programs for new volunteers
- Electronic means of announcing volunteer opportunities
- Open house for committees
- Advertise/announce vacancies in volunteer positions at Heritage Days
- Welcome packets for new residents with info on town boards/commissions/committee
- Short video from each committee with links on website for each committee/commission
- Restructure participation to engage younger volunteers
- Provide food/babysitting services during meeting times to encourage attendance
- Calling/follow up with new residents

Discussion Topics Relating to Promoting Active Lifestyles:

- Community center space,
 - Utilize existing spaces-churches, masonic lodge, Town Hall, Library (all of which need to be ADA accessible)
- Safe outdoor spaces
- New facility for youth and aging populations encouraging social interaction,
 - Provides mental and physical stimulation for all age groups
- Adult education @ schools
 - Town offered community classes
- Outdoor spaces
- School sports
- Closing of other spaces (YMCA) due to pandemic has limited where locals can go
- Hosting daytime events,
 - Many older residents prefer not to drive at night
- Middle school- senior café
- Enrichment
- Competitive senior sports
- Dog park-engaging for owners, dogs and other dog lovers
- 1,300 acres of conservation land currently in Readfield
 - Areas with amenities-accessible, comfortable, multi-use
 - Needs a master plan/analysis
 - Needs Bathrooms
- Regional YMCA
- Formalize relationships with schools for use of space for non-student activities
- Summer recreation program
- Activities for teenagers
 - Skateboard park
 - Ice skating
 - Water sports