

MINUTES  
TOWN OF TOPSHAM  
Comprehensive Plan Update Committee Meeting  
January 08, 2018 6:30 P.M.

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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Larry Fitch  
Doug Bennett  
Sean Liedman  
Matt Nixon  
Joe Feely

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mary Kate Appicelli  
Jenna Godo  
Bill Ewing

STAFF PRESENT:

Rod Melanson, Director of Planning Codes and Development

CONSULTING:

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Fitch called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Committee reviewed the ground rules that were set for each meeting.

Introductions of public attendance

- Victor Langelo – Conservaton Commission
- Raija Suomela – Conservation Commission
- Steve Pelletier – Conservation Commission
- Shana Deeds - citizen

2. Review of draft data chapter Agriculture/ Natural Resources/ Conservation

a. Agriculture Draft –

- i. Larry opened the discussion of editing the documents, and offering comments/ feedback. The committee and members of the public discussed the general tone and perceived effort placed into the current draft for public review. There was a bit of confusion about what was needed from the committee at this point. It was decided to review the preliminary data chapter and offer broad feedback in regards to the data compiled thus far and the content of either included or not included.
- ii. Discussion about context of the data (some perspective of the regional context would give us a better context of what the data means)...example:

- number of farms in Topsham...how does this compare to our neighbors in the region? Agriculture should be looked through a regional lens as that is how it functions...
- iii. Have we contacted local farmers for input?
  - iv. Tone of the chapters seems negative in regards to the future of farming. Perhaps zooming out to look at the trends in the state of Maine where small organic niche farms have been on the rise would add a more positive tone?
  - v. Ag soils map...would this be in this section? Mention of importance of significant and priority ag soil identification and preservation?
  - vi. ACS data does not seem to be accurate – example: Sagadahoc county farm numbers appear extremely low...
  - vii. The writing is continually in the passive voice...
- b. Nat Resource Draft
- i. No mention of the Muddy River
  - ii. River Access data
  - iii. Conserved lands map
  - iv. Impaired stream discussion needs help
  - v. Any point source pollution issues (brownfields, etc.)
  - vi. More maps seem to make sense for this section (or even a list of potential maps)
  - vii. Review list of conservation partners- CREA is missing...anything else?
  - viii. Good mention of SAMP and vernal pool efforts
  - ix. Conservation sub/ natural areas plan mention is good...perhaps add the development transfer ordinance to the list?
3. The Historical Atlas of Maine was discussed as a great conveyance of data and information...the committee would like data chapters to be more closely related to that style.

## 5. ADJOURN

Meeting ended at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Rod Melanson