



## Topsham, Maine

# Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee Meeting

## MINUTES

May 8, 2023

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Start Time: 4:30PM (In Person - Town Office Conference Room + Zoom invite by request)

### I. Welcome and Agenda Review

Attendees:

- A. Town of Topsham: Mark Waltz, Julie Erdman
- B. CPIC: Pete Bono, Robin Brooks, Joe Feely, Susan Rae-Reeves, Rick Schultz, Andy Sturgeon, Angela Twitchell, Margaret Williams

### II. Public comment - none

### III. Administrative Items

- Welcome to new committee member - Committee members and staff introduced themselves
- Minutes of April 10 13, 2023 meeting - approved unanimously

### IV. ReCODE town center

- Review of decisions/discussion at recent workshop sessions - brief review of discussion highlights during March and April workshops with Leslie Oberholtzer
- Review and discussion toward readiness for scheduling public stakeholder feedback sessions - Susan noted that Leslie views the draft as ready to present to the stakeholders and public. The committee is taking time to identify questions or concerns. We are looking at Articles, 2, 6, 7, 8, the changes in red and other material. We can skip Article 15, as there were no changes and it is a work in progress given the Planning Board review/feedback process. Article 2, Topsham Center Zones is a primary focus. All questions and concerns will be shared with Leslie for feedback.
  - Pg 2-5, 2.40.9 A - There is a concern that the description of street depth is not clear, and consequently how it affects set back.
  - Pg 2-5, 2.40.9 C - Minimum streetscape area: Public easement must be **offered** for acceptance. This will comply with town government code, whereby Town

Meeting is the decision process for an easement. So offered instead of dedicated.

- Given that civic buildings are allowed in all center zones only with Planning Board approval we'd like to hear more about the thinking behind this. For ex: in the upper village where there already are several civic buildings, should we allow more as of right? We'd like to be ready for questions on this.
- Pg 2-26, 2.140.5 C 1 - Master Plan Development re: travel lanes and fire safety. Mark Waltz brought a concern of the fire chief who suggested changing 10' to 12' for street widths. There may be a distinction between major and minor that we are missing. We want to address the fire chief's concerns.
- Pg 2-26, 2.140.5 C 2 -C Given the potential for problems, we'd like to allow only head-in parking. This is based on experience in Brunswick.
- The visual nature of form-based code is a big plus. We are wondering if some visual examples have been lost in the process of taking a less granular approach as outlined in the memo by Kate Burch. It seems that prior to the simplification there was a wider array of building types and illustrations.
- Pg 2-24 through 2-29 - Are illustrations of Crooker district in line with the changes made in the text?
- Pg 6-3, Table 6.1 - Given the distinctions between Topsham Fair Mall (TFM) 1 and TFM2, we wonder if there out to be more distinction in uses between the two.
- Pg 6-3, Table 6.1 - What is P-1 and P-2?
- There was discussion about whether "homeless shelter" should be defined and included in the use table, conditional in certain zones. Currently, group living is allowed in all zones in town. Given issues that have arisen in a neighboring town, there is concern. However, it seems this is a policy change that is unrelated to the 2019 Comp Plan. If this should be addressed, it was agreed that it is outside the scope of this committee's charge.
- Pg 6-11, 6.50.8 B 2 - Short-term rental category is new, represents a policy change. However, unlike the above, there has been considerable discussion about town residents for some time, as well as in other coastal towns, about this, so it makes sense to include it.
- Pg 7-3, 7.20.8 - change "zoning" officer to "code" enforcement officer
- Pg 7-3, 7.30.5 - Home occupations not allowed. There are questions about where these rules/prohibitions apply, please clarify.
- Pg 7-4, 7.30.5 - no outdoor signs related to a minor home occupation, there is concern with this, especially beyond the center growth zone/FBC, where there are vegetables or eggs etc for sale with signs put out and taken in as needed.
- Pg 7-5, 7.40.2 What is an accessory parking structure? We need to understand more about these specs. Should the Annex be included in this "allowed"

passage? The general building seems an unlikely pairing for an accessory parking structure. Can you help us understand this?

- Pg 7-5, Typo at top of page: 7.50 should be 7.40
  - 7.50 Questions around drive-through's - we know there are questions that will be posed, and we'd like guidance about the stated limitations as they reflect the Comp Plan vision.
  - Pg 7-6, Top of Page: 9,60 Fuel pumps should be 7.60
  - Pg. 7-6, 7.60.2 - Limiting fuel pumps to TFM is problematic given their locations currently; they should be allowed along Rt 196.
  - Table 8-3 labeling is confusing. Materials are listed alphabetically. After some discussion we understand this makes sense. However, if there can be photos of all the materials that would be helpful.
- Status update on list from Tom Lister highlighting "Policy Changes" in Zoning Ordinance - Julie reported that in meetings with Kirk Bishop the code clean up chapters are moving forward. Kirk sent chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5 which will be discussed at the Planning Board on May 11; Kirk also sent chapters 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and these will be discussed by staff with Kirk on 5/16. The Planning Board agenda for 5/25 is pretty full so there may be a smaller breakdown if any of these chapters are presented for review and feedback.
  - Update on status of milestone schedule for FBC and Code Cleanup. Susan will work with Robin on notes and what needs to be presented to Leslie within the next few days, and we'll take next steps. We are hoping that a public session for key stakeholders can be held on a morning in June.

## **V. Community Engagement/Communication**

- CPIC update in the May Cryer - there has been good feedback including some conveyed during the May 4 update to the Select Board. It seems the article served the intended purpose of bringing people who haven't been following things closely up to date on CPIC's work
- Select Board update - positive feedback, several questions including about Streets Master Plan in the CPIC work plan, what is meant by the center of town growth area, and whether it is the November town meeting or May that we intend to bring the revised code project.

## **VI. Liaison updates**

- TDI Update - because he needed to leave a little early, and discussion of ReCode was running a little long, Andy Sturgeon will provide a written update.
- Commitment from committee member to spearhead and maintain FAQ's file - Margaret expressed interest and we will talk about how this might be revised, all CPIC members can weigh in.

Meeting adjourned 6:07 pm.