



Topsham, Maine

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee Meeting

MINUTES

October 16, 2023

Present: Susan Rae-Reeves, Larry Brann (Planning Board), Julie Erdman (Town Planner), Andrew Sturgeon, Robin Brooks, Angela Twitchell, Margaret Williams, Joe Feely, Pete Bono, and Rick Schultz

I. Welcome and Agenda Review - Agenda order to be adjusted (in real time only) in order to maximize time with Leslie Oberholtzer, joining at 5.

II. Public comment - None

III. Administrative Items

- Minutes of September 11, 2023 meeting approved as presented.
- Calendar items
 - October 17, 4-5, CPIC workshop: To determine whether we hold a monthly workshop, we will return to this later in the meeting
 - October 28, 1:00-3:00 - Property owner informational meeting - Topsham Library: Leslie Oberholtzer will not be present, the committee will meet with interested property owners to hear their questions and concerns, answer those we can, and convey them as a group to the consulting team. Susan will seek more info on budget constraints. Oct. 28 will be an open-house style event rather than a formal presentation. There will be a display and Leslie's slide presentation, along with posters of the update.

IV. ReCode Update Leslie joined to discuss community feedback.

- Office hours (8/31 + 10/12)-We have gotten a lot of good information from these two sessions. Several topics discussed need language clarification and/or revisions will be made, including drive throughs, size of the MPD, open space requirements, MPD waivers. People seemed to be satisfied with the Master Plan Development. We need to make sure that the language in ReCode is clear enough to be interpreted consistently in the future. There was discussion of items in the use table, specifically in the TMF2 zone. Some definitions, such as artisan manufacturing, electric vehicle charging stations, etc, need clarification and input from Kirk. The Comp. Plan is clear that the townspeople want a safe, walkable community. Items such as drive throughs challenge this, but the code will seek to honor the plan and safety as well as changing demand. There have

been requests to include the Southwest Quadrant and other contiguous areas. The committee is clear that these areas can be considered in the future.

- Select Board workshop (9/6) was recorded, and committee members unable to attend were urged to listen. Two members of the Select Board suggested that we take the Crooker Zone out of the ReCode process because they are confident that Crooker will not be moving. The Select Board wants to know about non-conforming uses not being able to expand in the revised code. The Southwest Quadrant came up here also.
- MCOG talk, 9/21 - examples of good development in Topsham were noted.
- Planning Board workshop (10/3)-Question arose about why the Topsham Fair Mall 1 and TFM 2 are two separate zones. That question seems to be getting more settled with each hearing.
- Staff review team (10/17 and possible additional dates) Staff will comment on the first draft. More than one session by the staff review team is likely.

V. Community Engagement/Communication

- Open house November/December/January - Date options
- FAQ's document – this is still in progress, it's uncertain whether Kirk and Leslie have reviewed it. The point when it will become useful to post is when we begin the Open Houses after the revisions are made on this draft.

V. Liaison updates

- Margaret reported on her meeting with the Energy Committee (9/26). They reviewed the implementation matrix strategies and much progress has been made. She gave an update on the progress of ReCode and explained that it is still being revised. The Energy Committee wants to review the draft code with an eye towards energy efficiency. The 12-minute video and draft code are on the town website. CPIC would like to hear back from them! It is likely their concerns will span both parts of the ReCode Project, and the clean up/update chapters are still undergoing Planning Board review and so not available for review except during their workshop schedule.
- Andy gave an update on TDI
 - Topsham Fair Mall Road, and the Master Transportation Plan that was done by TYLinn in Sept. 2017. That study was done before Market Basket, and the numbers have changed. The road is not attractive but the cost to invest in improvements has been prohibitive. TDI hired Owen Haskell to survey the area so that we have a complete picture of existing conditions, with accurate data from which to proceed.
 - TDI is wondering about its purpose and how best to support development? TDI currently has about \$350,000 and can act quickly to meet community needs. There are different models and these are under discussion.
- Pete gave an update on the Planning Board. There are proposed changes to signage at the TFM to accommodate Market Basket's need for a larger sign, an option triggered by square footage. The PB also is seeking a code amendment related to fees in lieu of green space, to create parity between single family homes and multi-family buildings. Both items will be given a public hearing tomorrow, and the Code clean-up of subdivision ordinances and the ReCode clean up/update chapters are ongoing.