



Topsham, Maine

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee Meeting

AGENDA

November 4, 2024

Attending: Andrew Sturgeon, Pam Belford, Skye Siladi, Susan Rae-Reeves, Rick Schultz, Joe Feely, Pete Bono

I. Welcome and Agenda Review - One item added*

II. Public comment - NA

III. Administrative Items

- Minutes of October 7, 2024 meeting - approved unanimously
- Review of prioritized items in the Strategy Matrix* - CPIC members Rae-Reeves, Schultz, Feely, Belford and Sturgeon met on Zoom to review the Matrix items that had been highlighted as important in a review approximately 2 years ago. Highlighted were several items in 3 of the Big Ideas (Be Deliberate About Growth, Open Governance and Housing Diversity), and the committee will reach out as appropriate to those responsible for moving these forward. Overall, the group noted progress and important movement toward the 2019 Plan vision.

IV. ReCode Matters

- Planning Board Workshop Update, October 24 - Brief update as follows:
 - October 18 memo by Phil Saucier circulated ahead of the meeting
 - Significant focus on areas where form based code conflicts with Maine law, namely that the code over relies on Waivers to allow flexibility.
 - Planning Board does not have the authority to grant a waiver on zoning standards, but there were suggestions for ways to handle the conflict.
 - Build in the outer limit of what might be allowed along with specific criteria required to be met in order for approval.
 - Design standards are not an issue, only the dimensional standards.
 - Saucier was careful to explain the limits of Planning Board authority when it comes to waivers, explaining that the need for measurable, clear standards is to eliminate the possibility or perception of favoritism.
 - Two Select Board members attended.
 - Consultants responded that the suggestions were clear and helpful.
 - Town Manager wrapped up the session with questions and comments for the consultants, including that given the changes needed there will be another draft

needed for the public open house process. Therefore it will not be possible to get ReCode on the warrant in time for the May 2025 Town Meeting.

- A special town meeting can be called once it's ready, possibly within a few months of that date.
- There were questions and discussion by committee members who had not attended, including how developers might respond to the information about waivers. They may still have concerns about drive throughs and parking, and it will be important to hear their response to the current draft on these issues.
- Milestones ahead in the process - discussion of next steps, these were the highlights/conclusions:
 - While we don't need another Community Forum on this draft, there needs to be another session with developers who offered specific feedback that was incorporated into the current draft. We need to hear how they respond to the current draft. First week of December is a good option, Dec. 2-5 specifically.
 - Staff recommends that the next Community Forum ought to be on the next draft.
 - Skye, Tom and Mark will meet with the consultants 11/7 to discuss the process.

V. Liaison updates

- Check in – status of activity - Andy Sturgeon offered an update on activity at TDI
 - The Wright Pierce study is moving forward, report expected by end of the year.
 - They are looking at capacity at “full build out” and including both the area across 295 but also where we have water and sewer but capacity needs expansion and improvements are needed to handle anticipated/possible growth.
 - Other TDI focus has included learning more about TIFs, how and whether the current TIFs benefit the town, and how these might be used in the future.

Adjourned 5:30 - unexpected ending, because system capacity was exceeded with 3 committee meetings happening concurrently.