

Swan's Island Comprehensive Planning Committee Minutes

January 3, 2018

The Swan's Island Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting began at 6PM. The following members were in attendance:

Sonja Philbrook, Bill Banks, Myron Sprague, Jr., Keith Harriton, Dexter Lee, Donna Wiegler, Christal Applin and Sarah Lane. Member Sue Estler was not in attendance. Members of the public in attendance included Carol Loehr and John Trask.

Minutes from the committee's previous meeting held on November 21, 2017 were read by secretary Donna Wiegler. Dexter Lee made a motion to approve. Sonny Sprague seconded the motion and the minutes were approved as read.

Chairman Sonja Philbrook asked for a motion to accept the resignation of Candis Joyce. Christal Applin made a motion to accept Candi's resignation. Sonny Sprague seconded the motion. The motion carried. Candi offered to share some resources with the committee. Christal will talk to Candi to see what information she has to share.

Reporting on several additional comprehensive plans that were not reviewed at our last meeting took place. They included:

Sarah Lane – Cranberry Isles
Keith Harriton – Owl's Head
Donna Wiegler – Deer Isle

Highlights from the individual plans were shared with the group.

There was a discussion on adding new members to the committee. Keith Harriton suggested Tom Duchesneau. Dexter made a motion that Keith speak with Tom about joining the committee. Sonny Sprague seconded the motion. The motion carried. Keith will reach out to Tom and see if he has an interest at this time.

Sonja shared that she has received maps from Bill Hancock who works for Beginning with Habitat, a collaborative program at the state level that provides data, maps, tools and other suggestions for local conservation strategies that can help inform and guide a town's growth. Sonja will bring the maps to our next meeting for the group to look at.

Donna reported on a conversation she had with Beth Howe, the chairman of Chebeague's Comprehensive Planning Committee. Beth's background included working as a professor of urban planning and she was the author of Chebeague's Plan that was adopted in 2011. Beth shared information about conducting community surveys, meetings, research, funding the project, and the importance of doing accurate and thorough asset and inventory collection during the planning process. Beth provided information regarding the hiring of an outside consultant and the need for a professional mapper to complete the plan.

Sonja reported on her conversation with Fred Stocking of Lamoine's comp plan committee. Fred shared that he has been part of the comp plan committee for more than 3 years and he hopes that their committee will be able to present their plan to the Town in June 2018, which will be 4 years from the start of the project. The Town of Lamoine has spent about \$15,000 so far on the plan, with \$9,000 of that being paid to a professional consultant who wrote the plan. The committee utilized a survey to receive input from residents and only got a 12% return, using both Survey

Monkey, an online survey application, and a paper survey. The committee met monthly in the beginning and later switched to twice a month.

Maine Community Foundation has a grant that Sonja found that we might want to apply for, but the deadline is February 15. A discussion was held about whether or not we should apply, or have the time to apply given the deadline for applications. No decision was reached.

Sonja contacted Phil Carey of Maine's Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The Maine DOT contracts with Hancock County Planning Commission for help using a regional planner to research and write the transportation section of the plan. No other State funding is available at this time for towns working on comprehensive planning.

Sonja communicated via email with Kate Tagai, coordinator of Island Institute's Fellows program, about the possibility of a second fellow for Swan's Island to work on comprehensive planning. It seems unlikely that we would be able to host two fellows at the same time. Our current fellow, Stevie Kowalczyk, will most likely be staying on for a second year. Donna spoke with Bev McAloon, one of Stevie's advisors, to inquire about whether Stevie would be able to assist us with the plan. Bev indicated that Stevie is pretty busy with her ongoing work and it does not seem likely that she will be able to provide any assistance in the coming year.

A discussion on budgetary needs for the committee's work took place. The discussion looked at Island fellow versus professional consultant, in addition other expected expenses that will occur during the planning and writing process. Dexter indicated that any funding would have to come through the planning board's budget as he feels that what we are doing is planning. Donna asked Sonny if money budgeted for the project could come out of the administration budget. Sonny echoed Dexter's feeling that it should come out of the planning board's budget. This discussion was tabled and will be on our agenda at our next meeting to come up with an amount to request at Town Budget meeting, and ultimately Town Meeting in March.

Sonja distributed two handouts for reading as homework before our next meeting. The first was, "Ten Steps in Preparing a Comprehensive Plan" published in the Planning Commissioners Journal. The second reading assignment was chapter one and two of "Comprehensive Planning: A Manual for Maine Communities." The two chapters cover the topics of "Getting Organized" and "Public Participation".

The next Comp Plan Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 16 at 6PM at the Town Office.

Sarah Lane made a motion to adjourn. Keith Harriton seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Wiegler, Secretary