

Brooksville Comprehensive Plan Committee
Minutes for Meeting on November 11, 2020

Present were: Jonathan Hall, Co-Chair; John Gray, Co-Chair; Allen Kratz; John Kimball; Nancy Sanford; Bud Fisher; Sarah Cox; and Jackie Pike.
Friends of the CPC: Phyllis Cox.
Jarod Farn-Guillette, Planner with the Hancock County Planning Commission
Debbie Grimmig, Secretary

Jonathan Hall convened the meeting via Zoom. He previously distributed the agenda, minutes from 10/28/2020 meeting, drafts of the Population and Economic sections, and draft of the community input letter with list of survey questions via e-mail.

1. Update on and further discussion of “town input” letter – The feedback that Jonathan Hall received on the latest draft of the community input letter was very helpful. He eliminated everything that was non-essential while explaining what the Comprehensive Plan is, why the Committee is soliciting input and how the community can provide feedback. There was consensus that the latest draft was good and the edits suggested by Allen Kratz improved it. The Town Office and the Library are now limited to curbside service only, so residents may not view the draft sections in the library. As an alternative, a few copies of each section will be available at the Town Office. Residents without internet may pick up copies and return them with their comments to the curbside window. Community members may also call Debbie Grimmig with comments. As John Gray will be very busy with preparation of the annual budget, Jonathan Hall will take phone calls from residents with comments on the draft sections of the plan.

There was discussion on the draft survey questions to be included on the back of the community input letter. Jonathan Hall noted that in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, committees were established to delve more deeply into certain issues. Is there an advantage to creating committees to investigate recreation, climate change and health issues rather than soliciting additional information via the survey? The Committee on Rising Coastal Waters has been created to investigate the effects of climate change is one example. Jarod Farn-Guillette said that while the supplemental survey information is not harmful, is not necessary. There is enough data already to submit the plan for State approval. The questions that remain from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan can give rise to policies in the future. Allen Kratz thought the formation of committees is different from survey data. The Committee on Rising Coastal Waters will be meeting soon and may decide to create its own survey to supplement the Comprehensive Plan survey. He suggested eliminating questions on climate but to include questions on recreation and health. He noted that this is good community engagement which is helpful when it comes to getting the document approved. The new survey data may also help the community obtain additional funding for projects. There was consensus to leave the climate questions to the newly created climate committee, but to obtain additional information on recreation and health.

Residents will have the option of dropping off survey responses at the Town Office, mailing them, or sending it to the Committee’s e-mail address. Allen Kratz and Jonathan Hall will work with Peter Van Der Eb on a Survey Monkey form which will make tabulation of responses much

easier. A date for return of the responses will need to be added to the survey. The results of survey will be added to the goals or implementation strategies in each section.

Discussion on the formulation of the survey questions – The recreation questions are designed to gather information on both organized recreation facilities and programs as well as outdoor recreational opportunities. The questions also allow for narrative responses, which will help clarify the responses. There is a question regarding the frequency that the respondent actually accesses recreational opportunities. All of this data will help provide a clearer picture of respondent’s perception of recreational opportunities. Bud Fisher suggested more specifics be added to the outdoor facilities including the Brooksville/Sedgwick Town Beach, ramps and boat access at Betsy’s Cove and Dodge’s Point. Jonathan Hall noted on his boating trip that several small communities have parks with picnic tables and playgrounds with equipment for small children and courts for basketball, tennis or pickleball and ball fields for adolescents. There seems to be a lack of these facilities in Brooksville, but perhaps there are such facilities but they are not well known to residents. Nancy Sanford expressed concern that the questions are too leading and should be open-ended. One result of the pandemic is more grant money available for outside activities, but there is a lot of competition for these funds. Unless there is very strong community support and organization to push a project, it would probably not receive funding. The new Lawrence Fitness Center in Blue Hill may provide some of the programs that Brooksville residents will use. There was a suggestion to include a question specific to this facility such as How often would you use the Lawrence Fitness Center, or do you expect that this facility will satisfy your recreational needs? There are fees associated with this facility that may put it out of reach for some families, however there may be scholarships for people who cannot afford the fees.

Small communities struggle to retain residents for their whole lives. The health questions are designed to gather information on residents’ perception of whether they have services needed to remain in their home for their lifetime. Does the community provide services that allow residents to “age-in-place” and is Brooksville an “age friendly” community? What does the resident feel they will need for services to allow them to live at home? Do they have access to health care? Can they access facilities that are out of town through public transportation or other means? There was the suggestion to include specific questions about the Covid-19 pandemic such as has the recent pandemic raised any specific concerns about access to health care?

Jonathan Hall and Jarod Farn-Guillette will refine the survey questions based on these comments and suggestions.

2. Discussion of writing process and overall Plan format in terms of attached Economy and Populations sections – Jarod Farn-Guillette noted that the format of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan separated the inventory and analysis sections from the goals and implementation strategies sections. He finds this format to be more difficult to navigate. He suggests including the data and the goals and strategies related to the data all in the same section. It appears to be more logical and easier to make the connections between the data and the goals. The State will approve the documents in either format. There was consensus to keep the data and the goals in the same section rather than in separate sections.

Jonathan Hall reviewed some of the goals from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan to determine if the Committee felt they should be carried forward in the new plan. There were no disagreements. John Kimball suggested addressing the potential of large corporations disrupting oyster farming on the Bagaduce River that up to now has been a family-based business. Something similar can happen with seaweed harvesting by large companies from Canada. These natural resources need protection.

Jonathan Hall requested that the Committee review all the 2006 Comp Plan goals and implementation strategies and e-mail him as to what should be retained, changed or added.

Jarod Farn-Guillette added questions at the end of the first two draft sections to be considered by the Committee. These questions are more about the local understanding on the economy and population. What is the story on the Buck's Harbor Market and the Tinder Hearth Bakery? What is the major economic developments over the past 10 years? Allen Kratz will write up something on the Hiram Blake Camps and North Woods.

Jarod Farn-Guillette is open to hearing from any Committee member directly, just copy Jonathan Hall on all correspondence. Jonathan Hall will provide Jarod Farn-Guillette's telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

3. Next Meeting – Wednesday 11/25/2020 at 6:30 pm. Jonathan Hall expects the Committee will continue to meet every two weeks. Jonathan Hall will send an e-mail with the assignments for the next meeting.