

**TOWN OF BRUNSWICK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 6, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Larissa Darcy (Steering Committee Chair), Catherine Ferdinand, Alison Harris, Fred Koerber, Marcy McGuire, John Perreault (Town Council Chair, District 4), Anthony Sachs, Jacqueline Sartoris, Sande Updegraph (Planning Board), Christopher Watkinson (Town Council, District 5), Kathy Wilson (Town Council, At Large)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Elizabeth Kohler

STAFF PRESENT: Matt Panfil, Director of Planning and Development

A meeting of the Town of Brunswick Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee was held on Tuesday, August 6, 2019, in Room 206 of Town Hall, 85 Union Street. Being the first meeting of the Steering Committee, Matt Panfil called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Matt Panfil, Director of Planning and Development, asked the Steering Committee members to introduce themselves and share their expectations for the Comprehensive Plan Update. Commonly expressed expectations included that the Plan Update be: inclusive of the public, beneficial to future generations of Brunswick residents, and more implementable than the previous update.

The Steering Committee agreed that future meetings will be held from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. A discussion was held regarding the appointment of a Steering Committee Chair and Vice-Chair. It was agreed to postpone the nomination of a Chair and Vice-Chair until the end of the meeting.

Matt Panfil gave a presentation on the comprehensive planning process. Topics included: State of Maine requirements (inventory and analysis of thirteen different elements, policy development, implementation program, and future land use plan), Findings of Consistency, the Steering Committee's Charge (as issued by the Town Council), and a project timeline.

Catherine Ferdinand asked about the date of the data to be used for demographics as she is concerned that the Steering Committee would have to rely on the 2010 U.S. Census. Matt Panfil responded that in some instances the 2010 U.S. Census may still be the best available data, but for most demographic data the 2017 American Community Survey will be used.

Sande Updegraph asked where the topic of education fit in the update process. Matt Panfil responded that generally education is discussed in regards to physical improvements, anticipated new facilities, etc. within the public facilities and services element. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update was unique in that it addressed specific programming goals and student expectations even though the School District is responsible for addressing these items.

Councilor Watkinson noted that the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update involved both a Review Committee and Update Committee. The Review Committee was tasked with reviewing and preparing a report on the 1993 Comprehensive Plan Update and its subsequent implementation while the Update Committee was tasked with developing a vision, key policy areas, and an implementation plan. Councilor Watkinson asked if there would be two (2) separate committees for this update to which Matt Panfil stated that it is expected that the Steering Committee will serve both roles.

Councilor Perrault, Larissa Darcy, and Jacqueline Sartoris all asked questions regarding the project timeline in regards to adopting the Comprehensive Plan Update prior to the expiration of the existing Findings of Consistency in November 2020 and how the Town may be impacted should it fail to update the plan by the expiration date. The Steering Committee generally agreed that the adoption process might be more time consuming than staff had anticipated in the project timeline. There was also concern that the project timeline would not allow for significant public input. Matt Panfil stated that he would contact the State for clarification regarding the impact of expired Findings of Consistency.

Matt then provided a review of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan focused on eight (8) key policy areas. Although not a State requirement, the Steering Committee is charged with reviewing the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update and providing a report to the Town Council on the status of the implementation of the plan. Staff provided a spreadsheet of each action item contained within the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update and asked the Steering Committee to review each action item to see if it had or had not been completed and if it had not been completed evaluate if it is still relevant for the current Plan Update.

The Comprehensive Plan Update website, planbrunswick.org, Facebook page (@planbrunswickme), and Twitter account (@planbrunswick) were introduced to the Steering Committee. Anthony Sachs suggested that Twitter account be made consistent with the Facebook page by adding “me” to the end (this change was made on September 9, 2019).

Sande Updegraph asked how public comment would occur at Steering Committee meetings. Matt Panfil stated that he has specifically included a public comment section in the agenda to make sure there is time for comment, but as their input is greatly desired on this project, he will defer to the Steering Committee as to how they would like to receive public feedback at their meetings.

A review of the 2008 Community Survey was provided. Matt Panfil stated that the intention for this Plan Update is to conduct two (2) different types of surveys: analog and digital. One survey will repeat the 2008 Community Survey (mailing to a random sample of Brunswick households) to provide for an “apples-to-apples” comparison. A random mail survey avoids the problem of self-selection bias, but often has a low response rate. The online survey will be made available to all interested to allow for more public participation. However, the online survey is not truly random and is subject to self-selection bias. Each survey will have the same questions, those that are still relevant from the 2008 survey and

new questions based on the changes that have occurred in Town and the region over the last ten to twelve years. The Steering Committee was asked to think about new survey questions for discussion at their next meeting.

The Steering Committee discussed the configuration and role of the Committee prior to nominating a Chair. A motion was made by Councilor Wilson, seconded by Alison Harris, to nominate Larissa Darcy as Steering Committee Chair. The motion passed unanimously. The Steering Committee determined that a Vice- or Co-Chair would be nominated at a later date.