



Comprehensive Plan Task Force Meeting
Minutes April 27, 2023
Harpswell Town Office
Approved June 15, 2023

Members Present: Brian Hirst, Peter Lieberwirth, Amy Haible, Phil Taylor, Kevin Johnson, Julie Moulton, Al LeGrow, David Brown, Bob Eaton, Mary Ann Nahf, Judy Colby-George and Madeline Tripp (VIEWSHED), Rachel Bouvier (rbouvier consulting), Steve Rowe (Safe Harbor Boat Yard), Courtenay Snellings (Harpswell Affordable Housing Committee), Greg Bestick (Harpswell Anchor)

- 1. Call to Order and Review Agenda:** Chairman LeGrow called the meeting to order at 2:33pm. TF members were introduced. Courtenay Snellings from the Town's Affordable Housing Committee, Steve Rowe from Safe Harbor Boat Yard, and Greg Bestick from the Harpswell Anchor were guests.
- 2. Recap of March 14th Meeting:** Chair LeGrow briefly summarized the March meeting. He asked the Task Force members and the community to continue contributing comments to the inventories reviewed at the last meeting. Minutes for March will be reviewed at the next meeting.
- 3. New Business:**
 - a. Communication**

Madeline Tripp reviewed the flyer for the Inventory Open House and requested feedback. A TF member suggested they add "Childcare provided." She will send out the updated flyer to the TF to distribute to their community and town committee contacts. There was also a discussion of having TF members do outreach at the Transfer Station again, since it was successful last time. VIEWSHED will also ask Kristi about adding the flyer to the Town sign and Kayla about the Harpswell School sign. Judy Colby-George added that Kristi offered to send out a special Town newsletter on the Comp Plan, and that this will be timed to promote the Focus Groups after the Inventory Open House.
 - b. Meeting in a Box**

Judy Colby-George reviewed the materials provided for the TF to conduct Visioning MIB and asked that TF members send their notes to her afterward. Amy reported out from a meeting with the King's Daughters. Judy reminded the group that another set of meeting in a box materials would be provided for focused-subject meetings that can be tailored for community groups with different interests.
 - c. Inventory Open House—May 24, 4pm-6pm**

Judy Colby-George shared the format for the Inventory Open House, with the inventory topics distributed among four tables that the public drift to. At least two TF volunteers will be needed at each table, in addition to people to help with registration. Each inventory will have a poster summarizing findings, with a dot voting exercise for the state/importance of that resource. There will also be handout versions. A kid's table will be in the center, with someone looking after the kids. Judy asked the TF to decide on and arrange food/snacks, if desired.
 - d. Reviews of the Following Inventories: Population, Housing, Economy, Fiscal Capacity**
 - a. Population**

VIEWSHED is waiting to update regional population maps until all of the Census 2020 data is available in May. The general trend noticed by the group is the age division in Town, which sparks concerns over school enrollment, and how the housing situation may change as older adults age.

The TF was concerned about the age of the data, which is from the 2020 Census. VIEWSHED may be able to supplement this data, which is the most accurate population data available, with additional data from the Town and school enrollment data. Rachel also mentioned that people working remotely could maybe be captured through change of address data and income tax data. May need to prepare for seasonal residents becoming permanent residents and for climate refugees.

b. Housing

Courtenay Snellings shared an update from the Affordable Housing Committee, including the need for both affordable options for the workforce as well as older adults. The group discussed the challenges to create affordable housing, including land and construction costs, as well as innovations in water/septic that could make it easier. There is also a need for “starter homes” for young people.

Partnership and regional coordination could be helpful, including partnering with Brunswick Housing Authority to develop town-owned land. The group would like more clarity on where and how many units would make a difference. There also could be more clarity around the difference between market-rate and affordable housing.

c. Economy

Steve Rowe shared his perspective of the business climate in Harpswell, including the need for more people in the trades. Most of his employees live outside of town. The Harpswell Anchor offered free want ads, and 26 businesses signed up.

The group discussed whether remote workers could be captured in the data, along with self-employed people in the fishing industry. Rachel will ask Monique if there is data from the MCFA.

d. Fiscal Capacity

e. Task Force Outreach

a. Invitations to Task Force Meetings:

- i. May: Planning Board, Fire and Rescue Committee, Technology Committee, Recycling Committee
- ii. June: Resiliency & Sustainability Committee, Conservation

4. Final Comments and Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Next Meeting: May 18, 2023 at 2:30pm