

Pownal Economic Development and Sustainability Committee

~ Agenda – March 4, 2024 ~

6:30 p.m.

1. Review of minutes from 02.13.2024 - See page 2
2. GPCOG
 - a. Meeting – March 12, 2024 at 2:30.
 - b. 8.5" x 11 or 11" X 17" paper
3. Water capacity grant – See Page 4
4. Marketing and Promotion. Phase 3? Best case scenario/worst case scenario for coming fiscal year.
5. Budget request – Confirming we will request \$40,000
6. Review/discussion of caveat. – See page 4
7. Farmers Market update – See page 5
8. Other
 - a. Summer schedule – vacations
 - b. Reminders: Tom is out-of-the office March 6 and May 14

DRAFT

Pownal Economic Sustainability and Development Committee

February 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Call to order – 3:30 pm

Present – Susan Peters -Chair, Andy O’Brien – Select Board Liaison, Tom Ursia - Town Planner, John Libby, Paul Schumann, Pat Hodgdon – Secretary

The meeting began with approving minutes from prior meeting. Minutes for 1/24/24 and 1/30/24 were approved with Paul making the motion, John offering the second.

The minutes for 2/7/24 were approved with the correction of a typo on the word size in the second bullet point. Paul moved to approve with that correction and John seconded.

There was a brief discussion of GPCOG’s final report. Tom suggests that we ask Matt about the possible use of drones in creating the rendering as it might be helpful to us.

There was a discussion by the committee on the inclusion of a caveat in the Vision Plan. Tom says the caveat serves as a recognition by the committee that the townspeople were included in the process and that the committee didn’t write the plan. A decision was tabled.

Water Grant –

- Discussion turned to the water capacity grant (a drinking water grant) written and submitted by Tom. Pownal qualifies for the small capacity grant. Tom hopes the town will hear in March or April.
- Discussion ensued about the grant being a reimbursement grant and how to work the timing of the cash needed up front.
- Andy, Paul and John discussed the logistics of getting a water evaluation test while serving the current 7 customers.

There was a discussion surrounding the committee’s next request for funding; the request being required soon by the budget committee. The following topics were touched on:

- The different phases of the village plan project were discussed. Phase 2 is the town water issue and Phase 3 needs to be decided on.
- Marketing and promotion
- Andy suggests the committee ask for a budget of \$40,000.

The committee discussed the submission for the town newsletter. Three options were available, and a decision was made using a combination of the three options.

Tom updated us on his progress developing a farmers market.

Tom provided an example of Transect Planning and of another small town village plan.

There was no move to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Hodgdon, Secretary

Water Capacity Grant - Memo to Committee from Tom 02.28.2024

Good morning, Susan, Paul, John, Pat and Andy:

Let's start with the good news: The Town has been officially awarded the Capacity Development grant from the State of Maine. This award positions the Committee to begin the preparation of a RFP. Most of Paul's bullet points in his email of Feb. 3rd are appropriate for the RFP scope of services. With a bit of fine tuning and making sure that the engineering request is financially doable within the cap of \$40,000, the Committee should be able to advertise the RFP ideally in late March.

For our next meeting on March 4th, may we discuss the Capacity Development grant in more detail, as well as a decision to pursue or not to pursue the Farmers Market for the summer of 2024. Now that Phase Two is a green light, the Committee should determine the direction of Phase Three (Marketing Strategy, Stakeholder Engagement & Regulatory Challenges).

Other news in brief: Preliminary approval for a transient well for the Bradbury Mountain Campground (easterly side) has been granted by the Dept. of Health & Human Services and a potential location has been found in the vicinity of the State's RV site. Once drilled, the findings will be helpful data for our engineering consultants.

Caveat:

Option 1: This report is the view of and written by GPCOG (Greater Portland Council of Government.) Information/recommendations/assessments and zoning ordinance changes may or may not be the view of the Economic Development and Sustainability Committee of the Town of Pownal, Maine.

Option 2: The Village District Vision Plan, inclusive of new recommendations for the Pownal Land Use Ordinance, has been created by the Greater Portland Council of Governments. The synopsis and findings of the Community Visioning Workshop held on September 13, 2024 are located in Appendix A. These findings are the key observations and priorities of the workshop attendees.

INITIAL RESEARCH on FARMERS/VENDORS FOR POTENTIAL FARMER'S MARKETPLACE

- **Bradbury Mountain Berry Farm:** Spoke with Dwight Ely and he gave me a great overview of his berry farm (approx. 10 acres in rotation). He expressed that his current on-site farmer's stand is working best and that it would be too expensive to staff another person at a farmer's market. He is not interested but very congenial & willing to send people our way.
- **ChiGoBee Farm:** Spoke with Jim & Jodi regarding their farm products (cheeses, breads, etc.) and explained our experimental market concept ... they both were both the most enthusiastic farmers that I've spoken with, however, they are currently doing five (5) different farmer markets (3 with very high market attendance). They are unsure that they have the time to staff another market this year, but would gladly encourage people to stop by a new in-town farmers market. They also offered to visit with the Committee after 7 pm when their farm chores are done.
- **Canopy Farms:** Awaiting answer ... emailed Cara, Cecile and Kate ... on their very innovative approach to hydroponics and aquaponics. Maybe a long shot but some tasty and unique product lines that I've tasted Yum!

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- **Emily's Oysters:** Emily's business is going gang-busters and she unable to take on any additional markets for 2024 or 2025. Currently at Freeport F.M. & others
 - **Replenoa Farm:** Well-organized family farm with diversified products in Durham; Tom left two voice mails ... no response as of 6 February
 - **Dorothy's Sugar House:** Maple syrup products in Pownal. Spoke with Lesley and she seemed semi-interested; said that she mention the farmers market to her husband, Timothy. Also mentioned that "Pownal had lost its sense of community"
 - **Snowfields Farm :** Great CSA farm in Pownal run in last two years by Emma (contracted farmer). Farm owned by gentleman farmer Brian Stornelli (Planning Board member) Unfortunately, 2024 may be a transition year for Snowfields Farm with the loss of Emma. Brian did mention a potential willingness for a "pop-up" (one-time) sale of lavender at a potential market
 - **Eli's Homestead & Chirp Creek Farm:** Collaborative venture Voice mail contact but no feedback as of 6 February 2024
 - **Sweeter's Apple Barrel & Orchards:** Located in Cumberland and well-established market retail sales. Tom has sent detailed email to Greg and his family members regarding Pownal marketplace potential.
 - **Garden Spot Farm:** Located on Lawrence Road, Pownal. Spoke with Dennis and he liked the idea but needed to think about selling seedlings in the summer marketplace. I plan to chat more with him next month, but we do have his attention.
 - **New Spoke Farm:** First generation farmers (Janelle lummer & Ross Spencer) Shifting their leasing interests from Gray to deeper into Western Maine (no prospect)

*** New updates by Tom (Wednesday, Feb. 21st)

** Researched by the Town Planner (late Jan. 2024 – Feb. 6, 2024)

**Pownal Economic Sustainability and Development Committee
January 24, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Present – Susan Briggs Peters, Chairperson, Pat Hodgdon, Secretary, John Libby, Paul Schumann, Tom Ursia, Town Planner, Andy O’Brien, Select Board Liaison

Called to order – 3:30 pm

Review of minutes from 12/6/2023 –

Paul moves to approve with correction of his name. John seconds. All in favor.

Tom distributed out working draft of water statement for pg 18 of the draft vision plan. First parish church should be deleted from last paragraph. A few other possible edits were discussed such as the use of “public water system.”

Vision Statement - The vision statement was revised.

The Draft Vision Plan -

Starting with the rendering that was provided by GPCOG:

Discussion ensued as to whether the rendering met our expectations. Committee members found it lacking in general. Tom says a rendering should be readable, understandable by anyone. It should be a marketing tool. He feels the rendering is confusing and could be controversial. The committee votes to not include this rendering as part of the plan. Andy’s opinion is to tweak the vision plan and look to someone else for a re-do on the rendering.

Susan asked about changing the Vision Plan.

Andy and Paul discussed differing opinions on the inclusion of zoning recommendations.

Tom suggested we should look to plan incrementally, because zoning ordinance changes will take time and don’t currently allow for what is in the draft plan.

Next meeting is to be Jan 30th 6:30 pm where the committee will look to finalize comments on the vision plan for the next meeting with Matt Panfil

Adjourned – 4:50 pm

Approved 02.13.2024

Pownal Economic Sustainability and Development Committee

January 30, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Present – Susan Briggs Peters, Chairperson, Pat Hodgdon, Secretary, John Libby, Paul Schumann, Andy O’Brien, Select Board

Called to order - 6:30 pm

The Committee discussed the following in relation to the latest draft version of Vision Plan offered by GPCOG:

- Implementation Plan – should it be listed by priority or alphabetical. Priority was favored.
- Where we go from here? Farmer’s market as top priority. Water development
- Discussion of website, marketing priority in implementation plan should be changed to high.
- Webpage for the village district

The Committee then reviewed page-by-page the first 18 pages of the vision plan with an eye for any final changes to be conveyed to Matt Panfil.

Adjourned – 7:58 pm

Respectfully submitted by Pat Hodgdon.

Approved 02.13.2024

Pownal Economic Sustainability and Development Committee

February 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Present – Susan Briggs Peters, Chairperson, Pat Hodgdon, Secretary, John Libby, Paul Schumann, Tom Ursia, Town Planner, Andy O’Brien, Select Board & Jonathan Morris, Select Board and guest, Matt Panfil from GPCOG.

Called to order – 3:30 pm

The meeting opened with a discussion about the rendering and whether it serves us a marketing tool.

Tom asked that we decide later whether to use the rendering as part of the plan, to edit it with changes, or not use it at all. The decision on the rendering is tabled. Jon believes the rendering does not support a vision of the town that as a select person will give him and the town something to base future planning on.

The discussion then moved to the draft vision plan itself with the committee going over with Matt the changes and questions discussed in the prior meeting.

- Matt to change wording with regards to the use of the term multi-generational.
- Matt explained his edits at the bottom of page 4 re: LD 2003. Delete min lot size.
- Discussion of the Implementation Plan contained within the Plan. Tom asked Andy & Jon if the timing was feasibility for those items for which the Select Board is listed. Jon said it did.
- The committee decided to do more work on the plan and implementation plan and get back with Matt.

At this point, the meeting continued without Matt Panfil.

The importance of discussion with key property stakeholders was discussed.

The committee voted unanimously to not include the rendering offered by GPCOG.

Tom brought up that he discovered that there will be a drinking water grant coming up. He’d like to go after the grant. The town qualifies for the small capacity grant but there is a larger grant for a large capacity system. Tom feels he can write the grant himself; it has to be done very quickly.

Adjourned – 5:10 pm