

Pownal Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting
December 10, 2019
6:30 – 8:00pm @ Mallett Hall

Present: Kathy Hogue, Joan Mueller, Marcia Bowen, Coren Wheeler, Jon Morris, Heidi Curry, Christine Watson, Russ Schmidt

Excused: Adam Haynes, Susan Peters

The meeting was called to order at 6:35.

1. The minutes of November 12, 2019 were approved unanimously as written.
2. Finances / Susan: An email from Susan indicated there were no expenditures this month. As was true last month, we have spent \$2,027.23 of our \$6,000 budget.
3. Vision Statement / Joan. Joan was thanked for taking on this task. She reviewed vision statements from other towns as templates. She reviewed the focus group report and looked at any of the survey results > 60% and tried to incorporate them in the vision statement. Susan sent today some definitions of a vision statement that were quite different. All present agreed that Joan's version was in a preferred format. The 1992 vision statement (not included in the Plan) shows how stable the Town's thoughts have been since then. There was also discussion of whether to include a statement discussing the purpose of the Plan and it was decided that it was most appropriate for the Plan and not vision statement. Marcia thought that there was divided opinion about affordable housing/elder care so should not included in the vision statement. There is also mention of a building cap as a vision. At this point, there cannot be a cap limiting new houses without it being included in the Plan. Similarly, survey results for example supporting a Town Center plan or limiting building permits could be included in the Vision/Plan, which would then prompt the Select Board to take the next step (charge a committee to create a Town center plan, write ordinance for building permit limits). Heidi mentioned that the Planning Board is considering developing architectural standards for the village, which would be part of keeping a certain aesthetic in the Town. Unfortunately there wasn't a question about aesthetics in our survey. Coren thought that having something in the Plan about the direction we'd like to head with respect to the Town center, especially given the likelihood that property may change hands. Coren also would like to be able to have visuals (maps or graphs) of what exists now and what would happen if we enacted results of the survey, including projected development, green infrastructure, wildlife habitat, farmland etc. We do not know if the Town has any mapping capabilities like ArcView, but more importantly we as a committee do not have the expertise to perform future projections. There was continued discussion about various parts of the vision statement, whether it should strictly include what the survey results pointed to or whether we should instead write what seems realistic. For example, survey results indicate town government should remain the same, but in 20 years this model will probably not be sustainable. Heidi recommended that the vision statement be as vague as possible to encompass as many possibilities as possible. The survey data will still be available in the Plan. Russ said survey results indicate no-one wants change and Christine thought that was more a results of the demographic (55-70+) that responded. Heidi wondered about

the tipping point – do the taxes from a new house offset the cost of town services for that new family. Marcia recommended that we revisit the Vision Statement after we have written sections of the Plan. All agreed.

4. Town is having a Town pot luck on 12th night (January 6) and Jon hoped someone from the committee will speak and also to plan on a 12th night next year with stage production.
5. Plan Format: Discussion of how to format. Will recommended Executive Summary, Vision, Recommendations/Policies, and then inventory/maps as appendices. Original Plan had issues/strategies in each chapter. Decided to table the format discussion to be tackled at the next meeting along with responsibilities for the various sections. North Yarmouth and Durham and Topsham have good example plans.
6. Russ requested that the Committee write a letter to Dick Clarke apologizing for the oversight in removing a survey question from the on-line survey. There was discussion and all voted in favor of Kathy sending the letter.
7. Kathy reminded the group to submit the consent forms to Melissa.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

Action items

Kathy to write letter to Dick Clarke

All review North Yarmouth, Topsham and Durham Plans and be ready for discussion on our Plan's format.

All be ready to select sections to write.

Respectively submitted,

Marcia Bowen

Committee Members:

Marcia Bowen, Heidi Curry, Adam Haynes, Kathy Hogue (Chair), Jon Morris (Selectman), Joan Mueller, Susan Peters, Russ Schmidt, Christine Watson, Coren Wheeler