

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES: July 2025

Date: 7/9/2025

Time: 6:04pm

Present: Dave, Jason, Peggy, Buddy, Jan, Bill, Yvette (staff)

Absent: N/A

Guests: N/A

Adjustments to the Agenda: Dave resignation, election of officers

Notetaker: Jason

Public Comments: Dave received an email prior to the meeting from Chris Vonderweidt for Public comment. Chris noticed in the posted minutes that the committee is considering a survey about Open Space. He supports the idea of a survey. He requests that the committee include a question about income level of the respondents. Such data, in his opinion, can show trends or needs and he feels that information can be valuable. See attached email from Mr Vonderweidt for the complete comments.

Approval of Minutes:

- (1st) Peggy & (2nd) Jan
- All in favor YES

Staff Updates: Yvette reported that the Town is still looking for vendors for Celebrate Bowdoinham 2025.

Subcommittee Updates: Jan and Peggy reported for the Tree subcommittee. They still meet monthly, have defined the term “municipal tree”, and have scheduled Colleen Teerlint (**spelling) for a public speaking event on September 15th, 2025 at Merrymeeting Hall. This presentation will be on the emerald ash borer infestation. The Tree subcommittee has also requested space at the Comp Planning Committee table for Celebrate Bowdoinham 2025.

Discussion Item #1 Open Space Plan: The committee discussed each of the committee members' assigned document examples of open space surveys/questions, and listed pros and cons of each. See below for a summary of each question's discussion.

The group decided that the best approach to the Open Space survey for Bowdoinham would be a three-phase process. This will include a broad survey of what parts of an Open Space plan is of most interest of residents using a fun, interactive activity at the Comprehensive Planning booth of Celebrate Bowdoinham. This will be followed by a more detailed online survey with multiple questions on demographics, current uses of open space and desires. Once the results of the online survey have been compiled, the group will organize an in-person forum to discuss the results and dive deeper into specifics of an Open Space plan.

Specifically for Celebrate Bowdoinham in September, the group will have 7-8 “buckets” or “egg baskets” for residents to place plastic eggs into to vote for areas of open space that interest them the most. The committee will also have on hand a large, clear definition of what an “Open Space Plan” is and what it is used for. Bill will work to develop a display board of flip-up questions specific to Open Space with answers to the questions listed underneath. There will also be an area provided for attendees to jot down ideas, comments or concerns they would like to have the committee consider. Needs for Celebrate include: white board paper, plastic eggs, egg cartons (Dave to provide), egg buckets and questions for the question board.

Summary of Pros/Cons from other community surveys:

Bill’s questionnaire:

- More of a deeper dive and not an initial survey
- Very specific questions
- Would be good for Forum later in the process
- Good for step three

Jason’s South Portland survey:

- Great version for an online survey
- Good for step two
- Very well put together survey with great graphics, colors and specific questions. We should determine who conducted the survey and compiled the results.

Peggy’s Readfield survey questions:

- Much less formal survey than others
- Only conducted the survey in-person at a forum
- Had a few open-ended questions
- Only community to include “cultural/historical sites”

Jan’s Investment Priorities (using a hypothetical amount of money to invest in different areas):

- Uses pretend money to invest in priorities
- Could be an activity for Celebrate or Forum using Monopoly money
- Could cause confusion with people assuming there is actual money available or being used

Buddy’s questions:

- Open-ended, very broad questions
- Could be listed on a big board or on paper at Celebrate for people to answer
- Open-ended questions are important to include at all points of the process (Celebrate, on-line survey and Forum)
- Good for step three

Dave’s Winslow survey:

- Gets into the actual mechanisms/ordinances to protect open space
- “what do we do about it” approach
- How does this interact with our current ordinances?

- Good Step 4 or final part of the process

Discussion Item #2 Election of Officers: Dave announced to the group that he would be resigning from the committee effective immediately. Dave has greatly served the committee as a member, vice chair, and chair. He is ready to “pass the torch” to another committee member and spend more time at his farm and with his young family. The committee accepted the resignation and proceeded to elect new officers. Dave nominated Peggy for new Chair. Peggy accepted the nomination and the committee approved 5 – 0 (Peggy abstained). Peggy nominated Jan for Vice Chair. Jan nominated Jason for Vice Chair. Jason accepted the nomination and the committee approved 5 -0 (Jason abstained).

The committee briefly discussed recruiting more members. Current members should use personal acquaintances and relationships to try to drum up interested community members. The group agreed to continue the recruitment conversation at the next meeting.

Committee Member Comments: The entire group thanked Dave for his time and commitment to the committee.

Next Agenda Items: Set up mock booth for Celebrate, fine tune “priorities buckets”, fine tune question board questions, fine tune activities for Celebrate. Discuss committee recruitment.

Adjourn: 7:46pm

A true copy, attest.

Yvette Meunier DATE