

South Berwick Comprehensive Plan Committee

May 23, 2022

MINUTES

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Ken	Member of the Public	--

- Minutes from the 4/25 meeting were approved
- Committee Related Concerns
 - Laura Leber was appointed Chair of the Committee
 - Chair will collaborate with SMPDC on developing the agenda and as a general point of contact for the Committee
 - Nora Gibson was appointed Recording Secretary and will continue to keep minutes
 - Dawn will continue to be cc'd on all communications
 - Chris Harris volunteered to create a Google Drive to share and organize documents
 - Drive will assist in communication. For example, certain planning files that are too large for email can be shared easily on the Drive.
 - A tutorial on using the Drive was expressed as helpful
 - Committee expressed interest in having a Web presence to better present the Plan to the community
 - Jessica Cyr volunteered to create a “micro website” for the Plan that will be linked to the larger town site, as well as stand alone
 - Examples of sites will be provided
- Example Plans
 - SMPDC shared examples of completed Plans from local towns (Ogunquit, Wells) for the Committee to review
 - Ogunquit’s plan was found to be graphic heavy, with less emphasis on narrative
 - Committee shared the opinion that brevity was best in communicating with the public, and an effort should be made to avoid restating information
 - The Executive Summary would briefly state process, highlight major points, and mention new items (solar, marijuana, etc.)
 - SMPDC noted the Executive Summary should be able to stand alone, as it would be the most digestible, public facing portion of the Plan
- Survey
 - SMPDC provided an updated draft of the “South Berwick Community Opinion Survey”

- Discussion on the issue of “survey fatigue” and how to ensure the survey is understood as significant and deserving of people’s time
 - Last survey received 26% response rate (6% is needed for policy)
 - Suggestion to break up survey into sections
- Discussion on language changes on survey from the last distribution, particularly how changes in questions affect the comparability of results
 - SMPDC explained that language was changed for the sake of clarity or due to antiquated terminology, as well as to address any new issues
- Discussion on the inclusion of questions related to new issues, predominately (1) marijuana, (2) housing density, and (3) alternative energy
 - New questions are necessary to address these significant matters impacting the town
 - Committee also found that the original, broader questions are necessary to ensure we have a current, general understanding of citizen needs (particularly as the town has grown since the last survey)
- Survey cannot capture all nuances, so a Public Forum will be needed
- Committee was encouraged to help condense survey questions
- The following changes* were mentioned:
 - Q 1: Combining options b and c into k; e should read “Places of Worship”
 - Q 4: Wording should be more neutral with less negative connotations (remove the use of “lack,” “threat,” “overburden,” etc.)
 - Q 6 + Q 7: condense into the LD 203 specific question
 - Q 8: Add option concerning marijuana specifically; e may need greater explanation on “industrial uses” (illustrate difference between “machine shop” vs. “strip mine”)
 - Q 17 + Q 18: “School bubble” questions can be removed
 - Q 25: Crucial to understand demographics of recent growth of town
 - If we have more remote workers, the town may need fiber/improved broadband for better internet connectivity
 - Need question(s) specific to LD 203 (related to housing)
 - “Affordable housing” language can be ambiguous, more specific wording is needed to clearly communicate the impact on the town
 - Certain matters related to housing are mandated, questions are best directed towards the desirability of various housing developments
 - Zoning trends towards building out around the resource center
 - Jack will draft a question specific to marijuana
 - 2 referendums have failed by large margin on retail marijuana
 - The town currently has 3 places selling medical marijuana
- Survey response time is typically 30-45 days
- Raegan will share updated Survey with edits prior to next meeting
- Goal: Publish Survey by July 1
 - Discussion on distributing survey on paper, in addition to digital
 - More options will capture more demographics (older individuals may only be able to access paper version)
 - Dawn will be able to provide more detail on cost to send survey through direct mail with return envelope
 - Suggestion to advertise survey in The Sentinel
 - Suggestion to hold booth at Strawberry Festival
 - Meeting moved to June 20th for preparation time (though updates will be sent in advance)

- FOLLOW-UP:

- Jess will take lead on the micro website for the Plan and share examples
- Chris will create and share a Google Drive for the Committee
- Jack will draft question related to marijuana for the Survey
- SMPDC will send updated draft of Survey for review before next meeting

*Refer to “South Berwick Community Opinion Survey” draft sent prior to meeting for more detail

NEXT MEETING
Monday, June 20 at 6 PM
Town Hall

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30pm.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'NG' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nora Gibson, Recording Secretary