

Wiscasset Comprehensive Plan meeting minutes - 12-16-2019, 6:00 p.m.
Wiscasset Municipal Building

Present:

Kim Andersson

Anne Leslie

Katie Bryant

Colleen Gilliam

Jason Putnam

Elswyth Strassburger

Many people were unable to attend. We welcomed County Planner Elswyth Strassburger of the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission, who is able to give a few hours a month to us.

Anne reports on slow but ongoing progress on the Natural Resources chapter. She and Kevin have done work on their respective sections. Anne feels daunted by the breadth of this chapter (and the project in general) and what needs to be researched.

Anne will be sure to update language about White's Island.

The previous comp plan committed distributed a survey about the town and its growth and encouraged townspeople to respond. Discussion about using this approach again.

Elswyth recommends during such a survey early. Provide the surveys to the public online and on paper.

Anne will look for the 2004 survey and share with the group.

Re: Open Space subsection: all the town-owned open spaces need to be included.

Kim, Jason, and Colleen made updates to the Public Facilities and Services chapter.

Colleen wonders whether, in the school department section, we should get rid of old census numbers? Yes, but it should be noted that past predictions about school population were remarkably accurate. Colleen will add info about how the school is run.

Jason rewrote his section of the Public Facilities chapter.

We discuss the importance of not editorializing. We are giving as clear, accurate, and objective a snapshot of our community as possible.

Recycling and Transfer Station: Katie did a great job. It would be good to cross-reference this section in the Natural Resources section.

Jason says the Wiscasset Water District seems to be very well organized and on track to achieve its goals.

Several people in the group participated in a recent tour of the sewage treatment plant. (This should also be cross-referenced in Natural Resources.) It would take about \$500,000 to update equipment and a couple of million more to update the collection system. # of customers: 811.

Question: Does anyone live on the town water/sewer lines who doesn't use this public facility?

Elswyth recommends that in the Transportation chapter, we recognize overreliance on the automobile. We will use money from the MDOT. To help fund that work...

Transportation/ elder people need

Elswyth: "The automobile infrastructure that was funded mid century is too expensive to maintain and to build now." Jason notes that "the car mentality is changing."

We need to focus on: Municipal finances, Land Use. Regional coordination.

Elswyth: It makes sense to use 2010 census for population numbers, noting that a new census is upcoming (and if those numbers become

Dan Thompson, who led Wiscasset's first comprehensive planning effort, brought civil defense to Anne's attention. **Here is Dan's note: "A new [Civil Defense] section to the Wiscasset Comprehensive Plan would be very appropriate. Take a look at the article in the *Lincoln County News* 26 September 2019, front page, featuring Michael Mabee, author of the book *The Civil Defense Book: Emergency Preparedness for a Rural or Suburban Community*. I also invite your attention to**

<https://www.maine.gov/mema/maine-prepares/community-preparedness>, which contains this statement, "By state statute, every town in Maine has an emergency management director. This person coordinates all the planning and preparedness activities for his or her community." I suggest you find [out] who that person is in Wiscasset and get her or him behind the update.

Kim says that it's clear our inventory will not be done by January 1. She asks if we think this working groups should become the official Comprehensive Plan Committee. Those present think yes. But we definitely need more help, more hands on deck. Everyone is encouraged to send Kim (at her personal email) the names of possible volunteers. We should review the email list and find out who wants to continue to participate.

Elswyth encourages us to "look for what is not there [in each section] as well as what is there."

At next meeting, we'll work on "planning the planning"; review state information about mandated comprehensive planning; and continue reviewing inventory sections.

Next meeting: January 20, 2020 (third Monday of the month), 6:00 p.m.