

CPC Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022 – 5:30PM
Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present: Jenny Begin, Dan Hunter, Rachel Collamore, Tom Anderson, Ann Jackson, Mary Anne Moisan, Derek Webber, Sarah Gladu, Chuck Swanberg

Staff Present: Isabelle Oechsle, Town Planner

1. Call to Order & Introductions: Called to order at 5:33PM.
2. Review of minutes of previous meeting: August 8, 2022: Dan Hunter moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as presented. Jenny Begin seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Review and discussion of 2014 Comprehensive Plan audit:
 - Strategy A1 (*see meeting packet for language of corresponding strategies*): The Committee agreed that this feels too lofty and vague; doesn't necessarily belong in the Population & Demographics category.
 - Strategy A2: Historic preservation is something that is of importance to the community, so this strategy should be retained. Again, doesn't necessarily belong in the Population & Demographics category though.
 - Strategy B1: The Committee noted that this strategy could be revised to be more specific, such as "encourage CMCC to reopen or make better use of their satellite space in the Reny's warehouse." Additionally, the Committee noted that there is no real mention in the current Comp Plan of the elementary and high schools, which are major drivers of relocation of families to Damariscotta.
 - Strategy B2: The Committee agreed that this was a good strategy, and that alternative education programs at all stages need more community support. Agreement that this should be a larger focus of the upcoming Comp Plan and that the community should commit to contributing to alternative education programs in some way (whether through budget appropriations or otherwise).
 - Strategy C1: Generally, the CPC was not in favor of retaining this goal as written. It needs to be more ambitious and does not address the lack of rental housing in the community.
 - Strategy C2: Broadly, the CPC noted that it may no longer be appropriate to have multiple goals dedicated to retirees or senior housing. Focus needs to be on allowing all people to continue to live and work in Damariscotta (including young families, workforce housing, etc.)
 - Strategy C3: See comments in C2 above.
 - Strategy C4: Again, specific attention needs to be paid to the kind of housing we are hoping to have built and the kind of people we are hoping to attract. The Committee seemed to be in agreement that greater emphasis needs to be placed on young families and on workforce housing.

- Strategy D1: CPC noted that shopping needs to be defined here. What kinds of shopping is this referencing? If the intention is to have all basic needs met by the downtown, it may no longer be feasible for that area to be the "key" shopping center. Suggested changing this goal to: "Maintain Damariscotta's reputation as a community with an entrepreneurial spirit that is friendly towards small business."
 - Strategy D3: CPC noted that further discussion needs to be had about preserving the downtown area in light of climate change related impacts. Additionally, there is a lack of parking in and around Main Street currently. How can this be rectified? What should the community's role be in rectifying it? Discussion was had about ensuring that current businesses are retained and that there is not frequent turnover of downtown shops.
 - Strategy I1: The Recreation Subcommittee noted that there is currently room on the dump site for other uses, as the solar farm takes up only 4.76 acres out of a total of 13 acres. Recommended continued discussion of areas available for open space (whether that is this area specifically or other areas of the community).
 - Strategy I2: See above. If we pursue use of remaining land at the old town dump, we may still need the Brownfields assessment and follow-up.
 - Strategy I3: Broadly, the Recreation Subcommittee noted that there is conflicting terminology throughout the 2014 plan, making implementation strategies difficult to measure. Per discussions with Steven Hufnagel at Coastal Rivers, there is a plan to complete the Riverwalk, renamed Rhonda and Leon Cohen River Trail, from Round Top Farm to GSB Farm. Coastal Rivers has also purchased land to connect Round Top Farm with Church St. Then pedestrians can access downtown via planned sidewalks. Note: references to "Waterfront Park" may be at Griffin Property now owned by Bangor Savings. The Committee suggested continuing to pursue possible green space or park now that the building has been demolished.
 - Strategy I4: See note above re: acreage available at the former landfill.
 - Strategy I5: The Recreation Subcommittee found that the terminology of "passive recreational use" is so broad and means different things to different groups, so it is difficult to measure progress on this goal. For example, is the FARMS program at CLC YMCA an example of passive recreational use? Broadly, looking at opportunities to continue working with community partners is a great goal.
4. Presentation of data & update from staff re: data analyses to be created: Isabelle provided a summary of the memo included in the packet regarding data and maps currently being created. Derek Webber asked about the status of the transportation data for the plan. Isabelle responded that she would be having a meeting with the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission regarding the status of their data analysis for the transportation chapter and would report back at the next meeting.

Isabelle presented the “Damariscotta at a Glance” document that she has been working on, which is intended to be passed out to members of the public during engagement events to provide an overview of various data points related to the community. The Committee questioned data related to population demographics. Isabelle will look into the margin of error within the data and will make adjustments to those points as needed.

5. Adjournment: Prior to the meeting being adjourned, it was noted that the next regular meeting would fall on a holiday. Isabelle will send out a Google Poll to try to schedule an alternative meeting date. The meeting adjourned without objection at 7:02PM.