

**Planning Advisory Committee**  
12 September 2017  
Minutes

Attendees

Members/Staff: Adam Nelson, Bruce Rockwood, Haas Tobey, Ron Ranes, Robin Mayer, Matt Lutkus, Tony Dater

Guests: Lucy Harrington, Jenny Begin, Dana Orenstein, Ronn Orenstein, Jim Campbell

The meeting opened with Chairman Robin Mayer informing the Committee that Shari Sage had resigned from the committee due to the press of other business. Shari had, however, provided the Committee with a draft map of a new C3 zone, with a view toward limiting lighting/signage in the new zone. Discussion on this issue was tabled, to be considered at a later time.

Town Planner Tony Dater provided a brief overview of the primary zoning and land use ordinances and Planning Board (PB) and Board of Appeals; the reason(s) for variances; and the relationship of the ordinances to the Comprehensive Plan (2014 update) and, in particular, the "Future Land Use Plan" portion of the Comp. Plan. He noted that the PB looks only at performance standards, and cannot make decisions based on design, materials, or the type of business intended to occupy the space (unless specifically governed by a Town ordinance). During the discussion Haas Tobey asked about the Flood Plan Ordinance, flood insurance, and the relationship of ordinances to the natural habitat.

Bruce Rockwood discussed the new draft Historic District Ordinance in relation to other ordinances, and the need for protecting the town from water runoff (e.g., recent flooding due to hurricanes). He discussed an email that he had earlier provided to the committee regarding updating current ordinances vs. developing a Form Based Code (FBC). The main points to be considered are (1) unifying definitions between all ordinances; (2) updating all ordinances; and (3) folding 'minor' ordinances into the overall new ordinance using 'chapters.' Matt Lutkus reminded the committee that three years ago the Board of Selectmen had charged the Town with updating ordinances to make them consistent in format and content and consistent with any new state federal laws. The land use ordinances are the last to be tackled.

Bruce asked if the Site Plan, Land Use and Shoreland ordinances could be integrated into one, with new ordinance that would require that the PB to consider the "look and feel" of the community in all land use decisions. The principles of FBC would be incorporated into the ordinance (based on the Comp. Plan) so that the look and feel of the community would be maintained. Ron Raines agreed with Bruce's idea to

update/combine current ordinances, as developing a new FBC would take much more time and expense, and there is no guarantee that it would pass at a town meeting. The committee discussed the subjective nature of an ordinance that gave the Planning Board responsibility for maintaining the look and feel of the community (e.g., "beauty is in the eye of the beholder"), as well as its usefulness to developers in planning new developments and legality of such a subjective ordinance. The option of an overlay ordinance that would provide guidelines, based on principles of a FBC was discussed.

A flip chart discussion on "what do we [i.e., the committee] want" ensued in relation to the 'look and feel' of the Town. Adam Nelson began the discussion noting that development is coming up the coast, that Brunswick and Bath are experiencing growth, and that it won't be long before it reaches Damariscotta, specifically mentioned the proposed develop at 435 Main, Adam as an example. Adam expressed the importance to preserve the look of Town along the C2 Zone with infill along the Route 1B corridor all the way to NC Hunt Lumber. He noted that two stories should be required for buildings facing Main Street (retail on first floor, business/apartments on upper floors), and sidewalks required for all new building on Route 1B. Other ideas included

- mixed use on Main Street
- affordable housing
- integrate the three main land use ordinances into one
- flexibility for performance standards
- walkability
- follow the Comp. Plan (likening the Comp. Plan to the Constitution for the Town)
- conduct community conversations about development, both the educate the public about land use issues (what is contained in the ordinances) and to let them know of proposed/approved new development
- add "form" to land use ordinances, either through the use of FBC principles or design standards.

There was not a quorum so no votes were taken. Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.