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**Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting #5**  
**Tuesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Meeting Held at the Bristol Town Office**

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***Committee Members Present:*** Alfred Ajami, James Barnes, Alex Beaudet, Rebecca Cooper, Paul DiMauro, Jamie Doherty, Richard Francis, Brittany Gill, RoseAnne Holladay, Pat Jennings, Kenneth Kortemeier, Jason Sewall, Dan Sullivan, Jess Yates

***Committee Members Absent:*** Thomas Bishop, Robert Davidson, Leon MacCorkle

***Also present:*** Chad Hanna (Select Board), Chuck Hansen, Steve Jorgensen, Mary Piasecki

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Selectman Chad Hanna and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Doherty made a motion to approve the minutes from July 13, 2021. The motion was seconded by Barnes and passed, 14-0 of members present.

**Comprehensive Plan Process Visibility**

- Ajami shared the belief that the visibility of the Comprehensive Plan process needs to increase, and that there is a strong need to professionalize the process in order to help the Committee identify as a campaign. There are continued concerns about the difficulty with finding the Comprehensive Plan resources on the Town website; a banner and direct link with an associated tagline would be extremely beneficial. The Comprehensive Plan process needs a budget; Ajami will be attending the Selectmen's meeting next week to discuss possible costs. An outreach program will need to include municipal resources, consultants, a professional survey program, etc. Visibility is essential, as is a budget, in order to move forward.

**Data Requests**

- Doherty shared that the website is challenging and suggested that it be reorganized, or a map be created to help with navigation.
- Yates noted that she recognized the need to work on organizing the website and data repository, particularly in regard to the Subcommittee websites. She will work with the Town on this. Both sites are, however, open to the public and, although they are associated with Ajami's and Yates' personal Gmail accounts, no one needs specialized permission to access them.

### **Subcommittee Chair guidance (updated)/Communications**

- Francis reviewed the Subcommittee Chair Guidance. Subcommittee Chairs are responsible for communicating with the leadership team, sending data requests, organizing the Subcommittee meetings, addressing concerns with the Committee's Leadership Team, and communicating with the Committee, Subcommittee, and/or community members. He emphasized the importance of adhering to the published schedule/guidance.
- Doherty asked for clarification about when information should be made public. Ajami clarified that drafts worked in Subcommittees should be shared but individual drafts/efforts not shared at the Subcommittee level may be shared at the discretion of the individual.

### **Survey**

- Ajami reviewed the process of the development of the draft survey. First, he studied multiple other Towns' surveys and Comprehensive Plans. He then looked at two years' worth of conforming Plans, specifically the six Plans that were developed and approved during the pandemic. The Leadership Team then sorted possible questions and topics, investigated how they matched the requirements of the 208 Rule, and considered how they should be organized. (The questions asked in any survey must address these categories.) He is taking the position that, if a question appeared in a conforming Plan, as a preponderance of evidence, it is adequate – although we will still need to refine questions to meet the needs of individual Subcommittees. They will also need to be reviewed professionally by Bob Faunce and planners at the county level who have done multiple Plans. Lastly, he has contacted two consulting firms who have previously done municipal surveys and will eventually be obtaining an RFP quote.
- The Committee then shared various thoughts and ideas about the survey draft. Jennings observed that questions regarding transportation needed to be added/adjusted. Doherty shared concerns about the methods of ranking/ordering within questions, as the proposed draft does not allow for discrimination between levels of importance. Beaudet noted that people completing the survey might rank everything as important and thus create a data set that is not useful. Ajami assured the Committee that this does not happen in practice; however, if it did, it would be the job of the Committee to address the situation.
- Ajami encouraged those with concerns about the current draft to suggest revisions to the questions, change their words and formats, and then submit the ideas to the leadership team. He encouraged creative thinking, suggestions about missing topics, and even visionary perspectives.
- Yates emphasized the importance of Committee members submitting thoughts and ideas, in any form, to the Leadership team for consideration/inclusion in the survey draft. She noted that it would be the responsibility of the Team to adjust/coalesce input accordingly. To this end, suggestions and ideas should be sent to all three Leadership Team members (Ajami, Francis, Yates).
- A member of the public shared his confusion about whether he would be answering the survey for himself or for his vision for Bristol. He suggested this should be made clearer in the introduction. Barnes agreed, noting, for example, while education is a big part of the town budget and it serves a minority, that doesn't mean it isn't a good idea. He stressed the importance of getting the wording of the questions/introduction correct.

- Gill suggested it might be important for the Leadership Team to help the Committee understand why they included certain questions in the draft survey.
- Cooper shared that she liked the format of the draft survey. She also asked if the Committee would have access to disaggregated data from the survey when it was complete. Ajami noted this was one of the reasons it is necessary to pay for a survey from a professional organization such as Survey Monkey, which will provide all of the necessary statistical manipulations and graphics.
- Yates emphasized the importance of ensuring the survey is not overly long. Eastport is a good non-example of a survey due to its excessive number of questions. She noted it will be challenging to balance survey length with specificity of questions. Ajami concurred, observing that most towns' surveys were between 6-10 pages and contained 30-50 question categories.
- Beaudet shared a concern that the public may not have knowledge regarding specific terminology included in the survey (such as "growth area"). There are ways to address these concerns including revision of text, embedding supports in a digital survey, adding an appendix, etc.
- Chuck Hansen, a member of the public, commented that the survey draft was a good start. He asked for clarification regarding how members of the public could submit a comment regarding the survey or Comprehensive Plan process. Yates demonstrated the link on the website through which the public could submit feedback/questions/comments.
- Barnes noted that the survey would only provide the Committee with some information. It is the job of the Subcommittees to seek, and obtain, additional data as appropriate.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m.

The next meeting will be Tuesday September 13, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. at the Bristol Town Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Jess Yates