

**CITY OF BREWER
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2013**

Vice Chairman McIntosh called the meeting to order at the Brewer City Hall Council Chambers at 8:05 a.m.

The following were in attendance:

Kevin Birch	Absent
Allen Campbell	Absent
Jim Donnelly	Absent
Michael Fitzpatrick	Present
Nicole Gogan	Absent
David Hanna	Present
Frank Higgins	Present
Linda Johns	Present
D'arcy Main-Boyington	Absent
Richard Manzo	Present
Janet McIntosh	Present
Daniel O'Connell	Present
Bev Uhlenhake	Present
Andrew Varisco	Present
 Consultant Rich Rothe	 Present

Also in attendance: Brewer Code Officer Ben Breadmore.

Minutes of the November 4, 2013 Committee meeting were unanimously approved as written.

Linda reminded the Committee that meetings in December would be on the 2nd and 16th, and requested that everyone bring their calendars to the next meeting so that meetings beginning in January can be set.

The Committee continued their discussions of various land use issues with both pros and cons.

In-law Apartments (continued from last meeting).

- Allow for apartments with the provision that one on the units (either the main house or the apartment) is owner-occupied (there was general concurrence on this point).

Density (continued from last meeting).

- Should there be an area of greater density?
- What type and amount of density is needed? Is there a current problem?

- There is an ongoing need for affordable housing and we have an aging population. Brewer has done a lot for senior housing over the years.
- What do developers want? The answer from developers may be to increase their revenue.
- We could ask the people in high density housing what they want – perhaps by doing a survey at the food pantry.
- What does the City want for its future?
- Areas of higher density should be located on public utilities, on public transportation bus routes.
- Higher density could potentially be addressed using contract zoning rather than traditional zoning. This would give more control on a per-project basis and also be reviewed by both the Planning Board and the City Council.
- Conversion of existing dwellings into higher density may need to be addressed separately from new construction.
- Existing homes which were grandfathered in higher density and are now vacant are a problem with new owners assuming higher density is permitted. Need better use designation at Assessing Office so that their records and Code Office match. Perhaps could be handled with a higher density contract zone if standards are met.
- Higher density projects would include all types of housing (ie. affordable, elderly, general, condos).
- There did not appear to be a consensus on whether or not to allow increased density.

Multi-family density bonus.

- The Committee discussed both good and bad scenarios.
- Do not want to negatively impact an existing neighborhood to give a developer a density bonus.
- Density bonuses can also be used to enhance a neighborhood, such as an additional subdivision lot if the developer donates or creates a public park.
- Financing can be a component. Some funding sources require green space.
- Density bonuses can be restricted to certain locations, such as growth areas or certain zoning districts.

[Mike left at 9:06 am]

- Density bonuses can be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- Density bonuses should be allowed with regulations and review.

Building height.

- There have been inquiries at the Code Officer for homes taller than 35 feet.
- There have been problems with shorter buildings with metal roofs reflecting sun into windows or adjacent homes or melting vinyl siding.
- Taller buildings not as much of a fire department concern as used to be. Building height needs to meet safety concerns.
- The ordinance currently allows for taller than 35 feet on uninhabited structures such as chimneys.
- Perhaps allow for taller buildings as long as further away from property lines.

- Perhaps allow for taller buildings on larger lots.
- Building height measured from average grade.

Transient housing.

- Motels/hotels being used as affordable housing causes a problem with the school. Many children in Brewer are enrolled, with a motel address, and then leave in a few weeks. Also a problem as the school then has to track down the people in order for the books and laptops to get returned.
- Life safety issues with motels being used as affordable housing. Often the rooms are very cluttered, extension cords used beyond safety standards, and make-shift kitchens.
- Land Use Ordinance could be tightened up to minimize the problem.
- Need to provide an adequate amount of affordable housing so that the people live there and the motels are truly used as motels.
- There is new legislation in which motels have the ability to remove guests.
- Long-stay accommodations are needed, such as when a business needs temporary housing for workers.
- Definitions of different types of transient housing needs to be adopted and their standards need to be enforceable.

Parking requirements.

- The amount of required parking for residential uses seems appropriate.
- The City currently requires the following parking spaces: multi-family= 1.25 spaces/unit; two-family= 1.75/unit; single-family= 2/unit; elderly= 1.2/unit.
- The City currently has regulations against parking on the sidewalk.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for December 2nd at Brewer City Hall.

Rich and Linda will prepare updated copies of the revised documents as discussed at this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.