

**CITY OF BREWER
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
OCTOBER 21, 2013**

Dan O’Connell, Chairman pro-tem, called the meeting to order at the Machias Savings Bank community room at 8:14 a.m.

The following were in attendance:

Kevin Birch	Absent
Allen Campbell	Present – arrived at 8:54
Jim Donnelly	Present – arrived at 9:02
Michael Fitzpatrick	Absent
Nicole Gogan	Present
David Hanna	Present
Frank Higgins	Present
Linda Johns	Present
D’arcy Main-Boyington	Present
Richard Manzo	Present
Janet McIntosh	Absent
Daniel O’Connell	Present
Bev Uhlenhake	Present
Andrew Varisco	Absent
 Consultant Rich Rothe	 Present

Minutes of the October 7, 2013 Committee meeting were unanimously approved as written.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the Committee agreed that Dan O’Connell would chair the meeting.

Dan O’Connell reported that the Brewer Business Alliance recently met in which he was asked to speak on the Comprehensive Plan update. Also attending the meeting from the Comp Plan Committee were Allen, Bev, D’arcy, and Nicole. Dan explained what a comprehensive plan is, and the Committee wants public input, particularly with respect to the waterfront, Wilson Street, and the extension of I-395. He also noted that the Comp Plan Committee meetings were open to the public to attend. It was a good meeting with feedback. Dan described two comments: 1) a potential new high density affordable housing project may be located on State Street. A person suggested the money to construct that project should be given to current landlords in order for them to upgrade their existing buildings and 2) others want to make sure young professionals stay and/or come to Brewer. Trails were encouraged in order to keep the young people.

David Hanna reported that the Brewer Historical Society recently met in which Janet spoke on the Comprehensive Plan update. She noted that it was important for people to get involved in the process and that information is on the City website. Janet talked about the Brewer Community School and how it

is a “living history museum” of Brewer. Also in attendance was Brewer School Superintendent Jay McIntire. Janet and Jay discussed the Brewer school system and how the Comprehensive Plan is connected with the school plan.

Committee and public contacts. Rich noted it is good that other groups and organizations are discussing the Comprehensive Plan. Specific points of view should not be discussed at those outside meetings as it could be construed that it is a Committee opinion rather than the individual opinion. It is best to explain the process and suggest people use the City website for additional information.

This Committee decided future outside meetings should be discussed with this Committee prior to the event. The Committee would then know of the event, partake in the event if possible, and perhaps assist with information. If it is short notice, at a minimum, Linda should be contacted as she is the point person for the City Comprehensive Plan. Linda can then send out an email to Committee members informing them of the meeting.

It was suggested that a handout be prepared with general information to be used in outside meetings. A PowerPoint presentation would also be helpful. Linda and Rich will work on these.

The next Committee public meeting has not yet been scheduled. Brewer Winterfest will take place the end of February and perhaps a public meeting or information station would be appropriate at that time.

Natural Resources Goals, Policies, Strategies: Rich noted this handout is the latest draft based on previous meeting discussions. The Committee reviewed and made the following comments:

[Allen arrived at 8:54 am and assumed Chairman responsibilities.]

- Should there be a policy or strategy on agriculture even though Brewer does not contain much agriculture? Add a policy to “continue to allow”.

[Jim arrived at 9:02 am.]

- Goal #1 – remove “define Brewer’s character”.
- Explain what Tree Growth Tax Law and the Farm and Open Space Law is in the inventory.
- Strategy #3B – Revise responsibility to Environmental Services Director.

Introduction to land use planning process. Rich noted that the last meeting gave an overview of what zoning is and now the Committee will begin discussing specific items related to land use. It is very important to think as a Committee member and not on a personal level. Members need to think of the issues as what is best for Brewer and not to promote something for a specific project or because they do not want it in their backyard.

The Committee will discuss various land use issues with both pros and cons. Rich and Linda will then take the outcome of those discussions to include in future Comprehensive Plan documents.

Condominiums.

- Good idea. Condominium Associations usually maintain common grounds and can look after the property when owners are away. Great for people who leave the area for extended periods of time.
- Current Brewer Land Use Code does not address condominiums because the Land Use Ordinance requires that certain with dimensional requirements (i.e. minimum lot size, minimum road frontage, etc.) be met, whereas in a condominium development, one or more persons own a specific unit, but not the land around it (which is typically held in common).
- Time shares should be considered a business (similar to hotels) rather than residential.

In-law Apartments.

- Current Brewer Land Use Code restricts occupants to family members. This is difficult to enforce.
- Does it really matter who lives in the apartment as long as items such as parking and noise are addressed?
- Accessory apartments might not detract from a single-family home neighborhood if the size and amount of occupants is regulated. Current ordinance does address size and number of occupants.
- Bank financing may depend on whether the apartment is located in the same building or separate building. Over a detached garage might be considered within the same building.
- Old Town and Orono may have very strict language for their main streets.
- The Land Use Ordinance attempts to make a distinction between an in law apartment, which is allowed wherever single family dwellings are allowed, and a two-family dwelling, which is not allowed in all zones where single family dwellings are allowed. The MDR-1 and Rural zones allows single-family dwellings, but not two-family dwellings.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for November 4th at Brewer City Hall.

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.