

**TOWN OF BRUNSWICK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY – APPROVED  
OCTOBER 1, 2019**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Larissa Darcy (Steering Committee Chair), Catherine Ferdinand, Alison Harris, Fred Koerber, Elizabeth Kohler, Marcy McGuire, Anthony Sachs, Jacqueline Sartoris, Sande Updegraph (Planning Board), Christopher Watkinson (Town Council, District 5), Kathy Wilson (Town Council, At Large)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** John Perreault (Town Council Chair, District 4)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jared Woolston, Town Planner

A meeting of the Town of Brunswick Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee was held on Tuesday, October 1, 2019, in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 85 Union Street. Steering Committee Chair, Larissa Darcy, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Continuing a discussion from their last meeting on September 12, 2019, the Steering Committee continued individual members' reviews of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update. The reviews focused on what was done well and what was not done well in the 2008 Plan, what is still relevant and what is now irrelevant, and what may have been missing that needs to be addressed in the 2020 Plan Update.

Marcy McGuire listed items that are in the 2008 Plan that are still relevant and new items that should be added to the 2020 Plan Update: the landfill is due to close in April 2020 and it is important to identify the next solid waste solution; the Town Recycling and Sustainability Committee report on recycling costs and its effort to launch a Waste Reduction and Education program; Maine State Legislative Document 1431 (Resolve, To Support Municipal Recycling Program) and the implementation of a product stewardship law for packaging; review of the recently updated Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan; a Master Traffic Plan, the amount of residential development within the Rural Area; affordable housing, Land for Brunswick's Future Board; and open space impact fees. Important items that are missing from the 2008 Plan include: climate change and the Governor's proposal to create a Climate Change Council; greenhouse gas emissions; separation of sewer and rain water; composting; LED lighting; solar panels; aging in place; transportation; and attracting young families to the Town.

Sande Updegraph added that the 2020 Plan Update should provide more focus on the potential for regional approaches to municipal facilities, and the use of other municipal resources. The impact of tourism and how it can impact the local economy is also an important element that is missing from the 2008 Plan that should be included in the 2020 Plan Update. Sande also suggested that individual Steering Committee members could provide a review of one of the Town's other long range planning documents such as the Master Plan for Downtown Brunswick and the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Catherine Ferdinand's list of items that are in the 2008 Plan that are still relevant included: the appropriate role of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update in regards to eliminating educational programming and focusing on school infrastructure and facilities; eliminating overlap of items in Policy Areas 2 and 4 and creating a new and broader policy area called Public Facilities and Services; the potential financial impact to the Town for Brunswick Landing infrastructure needs; Policy Area 5 should be broadened to include homeless shelters; and Policy Area 6 is overly broad in that it combines natural resources, open space, land use, and outdoor recreation. Catherine stated that policy areas that are missing from the 2008 Plan that should be incorporated in the 2020 Plan Update include transportation, sustainability, and carbon neutrality.

Anthony Sachs stated that the growth control measures outlined in the 2008 Plan were not successful and he suggested that if there is going to be development in the Rural Area the 2020 Plan Update should include green building and green infrastructure requirements and best practice recommendations. Anthony also mentioned that affordable housing is an important element that needs to be further addressed in the 2020 Plan Update, especially as it relates to attracting workers and young families to Town.

Jackie Sartoris concurred with the items on other members' lists and then referenced research from the United Nation that there is a biodiversity crisis. As such, the 2020 Plan Update should not only focus on the built environment but protection for the unbuilt environment, including connected habitats and maximizing their value. Jackie suggested that the Rural Brunswick Smart Growth Provisions should be reassessed as it contains goals that try to incorporate education as to how plants and animals use the land. Aerial maps and data are now more readily available from the State to conduct an assessment of where the Town is in regards to undeveloped lots, essential habitats, and connectivity. The 2020 Plan Update should explain the difference between open space and habitat as essential habitat cannot be protected just by protecting open space. Invasive species are also an issue that should be addressed in the 2020 Plan Update.

Liz Kohler asked who will be responsible for writing the 2008 Plan Report and was informed that Matt Panfil, Director of Planning and Development, is preparing the report. Chair Darcy stated that there is a three (3) part plan to completing the 2020 Plan Update: the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update Report to be completed by December; development of the new 2020 Plan Update including vision and goals; and finally addendums after the initial 2020 Plan Update has been approved by the Town and State. Liz stated that she felt the 2020 Plan Update should better prioritize policy areas to guide the work of Town staff and volunteer committees, boards, etc. Liz added that she too feels it is important to include climate change in the 2020 Plan Update.

Alison Harris stated that the Town needs a better way to communicate with residents about what is going on in the Town. She suggested maps and inventories of meeting spaces, public parking locations, and a comprehensive event calendar. Alison added that Town-wide wireless internet should be included under the infrastructure policy area.

Chair Darcy stated that she would like to invite a representative from the School Board and Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRA) to the next meeting.

There was a brief discussion regarding some of the logistics of the 2020 Plan Update. Liz Kohler asked if there is a budget for the 2020 Plan Update. Chair Darcy stated that she will check with Matt Panfil regarding the actual budget, but she does know there are some funds available. Councilor Watkinson asked if the School Board has already reviewed the relevant sections of the 2008 Plan. Chair Darcy stated that she will have to check with Matt regarding this item. Jackie Sartoris suggested that the Town's other long range planning documents should be made readily available on the website.

Chair Darcy began a discussion about the public survey. Matt Panfil is still looking for recommended topics. Steering Committee members do not have to write the questions themselves, but suggested topics are helpful. Liz Kohler suggested that some of the original survey questions be eliminated as they are no longer relevant. Jackie Sartoris suggested that there should be a component that allows for a more open visioning format. She asked if there are other communities that have recently conducted a survey as part of a comprehensive plan update. Specifically, she would like to get information regarding what makes Brunswick attractive to live. Alison Harris stated that she has a list of several topics for questions, but keeping the survey short is important. Councilor Watkinson asked about the mechanism for distribution of the survey. Chair Darcy replied that it will be distributed randomly by mail and also be available online. Catherine Ferdinand emphasized that the survey should be crafted carefully so that the questions are not leading and they solicit usable data for the policy areas. Sande Updegraph stated that the survey is tedious and cumbersome because the questions are all structured differently. The new survey should be written in such a way as to make it easier to use. Fred Koerber stated that there are now many ways to solicit community feedback. He would prefer a dynamic approach that includes mailing, online, and in public at events. Chair Darcy reviewed some of the public outreach measures that have been proposed. Liz Kohler asked if there was an opportunity to conduct multiple surveys. Alison Harris asked if there was an interest in expanding public outreach to people who work in Brunswick but live elsewhere. Chair Darcy agreed and Jackie Sartoris added that it would be beneficial to know what non-residents like and dislike about the Town. She added questions for Matt upon his return regarding the potential use of a Town email list and how the documentation is being pulled together. She also stated that although the 2020 Plan Update is a ten-year document, the vision should be for a longer time period.

The Steering Committee held a lengthy discussion pertaining to public outreach in general and the logistics of the November 5 Launch Party. The goal is public input and to obtain a preliminary vision as to what Brunswick look like in the future. The Steering Committee reviewed the basic details for the Launch Party and it was suggested that a subcommittee be formed to meet on a different date to finalize the details of the event.

The Steering Committee agreed that the [planbrunswick.org](http://planbrunswick.org) website should add an email list signup option and an opportunity for people to express their interests and priorities for

the Town. It was also suggested that there should be an Instagram account for the 2020 Plan Update.

Chair Darcy suggested the Steering Committee discuss the next few public events. It was decided that the subcommittee would work with Matt to identify events through March.

Chair Darcy opened the meeting for public comment, but there were no members from the public present.

Fred Koerber brought up Sande Updegraph's idea regarding the review of the Town's other long range planning documents. Chair Darcy asked if the Steering Committee were to review all of the other plans, she is unsure as to what the next step would be as the Steering Committee is not responsible for updating the plans. Jared Woolston stated that the focus of a comprehensive plan is to provide a basis for land use decisions, but it may be too time consuming to review all of the other long range planning documents. Chair Darcy stated her agreement that she understood that the Steering Committee is responsible for identifying plans that need updating, but not updating the plans themselves. Jackie Sartoris stated that the 2008 Plan formally adopted some of the other planning documents. She feels it would be best to ask the various committees that developed the other planning documents to provide an update and presentation on their progress implementing the plans. It was discussed that individual Steering Committee members could select a planning document and provide a brief summary to the rest of the Committee. Jared Woolston suggested that the Brunswick Naval Air Station Reuse Master Plan is an important document for the Steering Committee to understand.

A motion was made by Councilor Watkinson and seconded by Anthony Sachs to approve the minutes from the August 6, 2019 Steering Committee meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by those present.

Jackie Sartoris suggested that the minutes would be more appropriately termed meeting summaries.

A motion was made by Marcy McGuire and seconded by Alison Harris to approve the minutes from the September 12, 2019 Steering Committee meeting, with adjustments as outlined by Chair Darcy. The motion was approved unanimously by those present.

Jackie Sartoris asked for Matt to provide them an email with organizations that may have email lists and groups that the Steering Committee can reach out to for input.

A motion was made by Councilor Wilson and seconded by Sande Updegraph to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:06 PM.