



Town of Ashland, *Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee*

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting (Hybrid)

Ashland Public Library

March 7, at 7:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Approved June 25, 2024

Present:

Town Manager:	Michael Herbert
Planning Director:	Peter Matchak
Select Board Representative:	Brandi Kinsman
Select Board Representative:	Yolanda Greaves
Planning Board Representative:	Catherine Jurczyk
Planning Board Representative:	Anna Tesmenitsky
Library Trustee's Representative:	Claire Goss
Open Space and Recreation Representative:	Roberta Soolman
Sustainability Committee Representative:	Chuck Lidz (Absent)
Affordable Housing Trust Representative:	Alan Galiwango (Absent)
Board of Health Representative:	Ed Burman (Absent)
Cultural Council Representative:	Stacey Grant Lewis
Historical Commission Representative:	Karen Coleman (Absent)
Ashland Upper Charles Trail Committee Representative:	Tony Lewis
Conservation Commission Representative:	Carl Hakansson
Council on Aging Representative:	Steve Mitchell (Absent)
DEI Task Force Representative:	Moala Kitayimwba
Econ Dev Advisory Committee Representative:	Beth Reynolds (Absent)
ZBA Representative:	Nathan Band (Absent)
School Committee Representative:	Mike Caira (Absent)
Town Forest Committee Representative:	Cara Hulme (Absent)
Design Review Committee:	Bill Novakowski
Precinct 1:	<i>Vacant</i>
Precinct 2:	Leah Suarez
Precinct 3:	David Evancho
Precinct 4:	Aroon Manoharan
Precinct 5:	Rajashree Ghosh
Precinct 6:	Lisa Churchill (Remote)
High School Representative:	Hasini Reddy (Remote)

Others Present:

Mark Dassoni
Claudia Bennett (Remote)
Liz (Remote)
Amanda W (Remote)
Luba Z. (Remote)

Call meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Vote to approve meeting minutes from December and January

JM Goldson Presentation

- **Project Schedule**

Kadineyese Paz welcomed all to Meeting #5, Ms. Paz noted that we are now in Phase II of the Project Schedule. Ms. Paz reviewed the Agenda and the Schedule; she noted that the Committee had discussed extending the timeline for engagement to allow an additional four weeks. The Committee will vote on this tonight. Ms. Paz offered two schedules based on whether the timeline is extended.

Under the current schedule, they will present the Final Vision & Goals, and Future Land Use Map to the Committee, Planning Board, Select Board, and take public comment on Vision and Goals on **July 18th**.

Under the Extended Schedule, they will continue to collect data for an additional four weeks, they will have a second meeting in March and will present the Final Vision & Goals, and Future Land Use Map to the Committee, Planning Board, Select Board, and take public comment on Vision and Goals on **August 15th**.

Ms. Greaves inquired, in regards to engagement, how they think Ashland is doing, if we need this additional time. Ms. Paz noted Ashland is at approximately 1/3 of their goal; they will need to pick things up to meet their goals.

- **Existing Conditions Summary & Workbooks**

Ms. Paz noted that she sent drive links to the Co-Chairs for the Existing Conditions with the Summary and Workbooks to review. Comments were due back by March 1st. Some Members expressed not having a clear understanding of what was expected. Ms. Paz asked that Members send back responses as soon as possible. Ms. Tesmenitsky noted there is a great amount of interesting data that has been compiled in the Workbook. Ms. Paz noted this information was taken from the raw data they collected during the survey and from the census, as well as during interviews. Ms. Paz asked that the Existing Conditions responses be returned by next Friday.

- **Engagement Updates (MIAB, Survey, Crowdmap)**

Ms. Paz noted that we have 727 participation points, which is about 25% of the total outreach goal. We received 369 Survey responses; we have 42 Meeting In A Box participants with 5 Meetings in a Box. The Crowdmap number is 316 points, which is high. Most survey respondents are full-time Ashland residents living in single-family homes, over the age of 24; there are no responses from anyone under 18. Ms. Kinsman noted she will be working with Hasini Reddy to target students, Ms. Reddy suggested she will send the survey to students through the school daily emails. Ms. Paz discussed other outreach opportunities, such as Town Offices, Libraries, Schools, Supermarkets, the Housing Authority, and Farmers Markets, as well as including information in New Resident Welcome Packets. Committee Members discussed having a shared document that all Members can access and update with their outreach efforts.

Ms. Kinsman noted the Clocker Club is having their Annual Breakfast on March 17th, she suggested having a table and handing out information. Members suggested getting a list of upcoming School events;

Ms. Greaves noted a list has been requested from the Schools. Ms. Tesmenitsky noted that she and Ms. Jurczyk are targeting underserved communities; they will be meeting with residents from Residence at Valley Farms for a Meeting In A Box, as well as the Park Street Apartments / Housing Authority. Ms. Grant Lewis agreed that the using the Buddy-System for outreach has been effective. Ms. Paz noted that she can see the uptick in Survey responses each time there is a Social Media posting, or the Newsletter comes out, etc.

- **Discussion/Vote on Extending Public Engagement Period**

The Committee agreed to extend the public engagement period to Friday, April 26th.

The Committee discussed using group emails to keep everyone up to speed on events; this is not an Open Meeting Law violation. Ms. Tesmenitsky will create and share one document with two tabs with the Committee.

- **Next Steps, A look at Gloucester's ACES**

Ms. Paz explained that ACES takes all the Survey responses, all the Meeting In A Box responses, and the Crowdmap; this data is reviewed and put together in an analytical summary with key findings and is used to create the Vision, Goals and Future Land Use Map. Ms. Paz shared an example from Gloucester.

Updates on Newsletter and IG

Ms. Kinsman noted that she did not do a February Newsletter as there really wasn't an update to give since they did not meet in February; she is currently working on a draft for this month's Newsletter. If any Members would like to advertise their Meeting In A Box they should reach out to her. Ms. Kinsman noted two articles on the Comprehensive Plan were included in the Local Town Pages. Member Profiles this month will be Ed Burman and Karen Coleman.

Other Publicity (WACA)

Ms. Greaves noted she is hoping to interview Ms. Ghosh and Ms. Grant Lewis next week for the Around the Clock program on WACA-TV.

Updates on Town Events

Mr. Herbert noted the Ashland Indians will be holding a Holi Festival at the Corner Spot on April 6th.

Rolling out Surveys and MIAB

Mr. Herbert noted that we have kiosks set up at the Community Center, the Community Center staff is available to assist residents; Ms. Ghosh suggested Members may volunteer to offer additional assistance.

Precinct 1 Representative due to resignation

Mr. Herbert reported that Kortni Wroten had to step down from the Steering Committee; the Committee now has the option to go with the second choice Precinct 1 Representative.

Motion: Ms. Greaves made a motion that we, as the Steering Committee, take the second recommended person from Precinct 1 that the Project Management Group had and present to the Select Board and Planning Board as our new Precinct 1 Representative. Ms. Goss seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion was approved by a majority of the Committee.

Mr. Herbert will reach out to that person, and this will be included on the next Meeting Agenda.

Adjourn

Motion: Ms. Grant Lewis made a motion to adjourn which was seconded.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.

List of Documents:

- Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting Agenda, March 7, 2024
- JM Goldson PPT Presentation 03.07.2024