



Town of Ashland , Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting (Hybrid)

Ashland Public Library
66 Front Street
Ashland, MA 01721
April 17, 2025, 7:00 PM
Meeting Minutes (*Draft*)

Present:

Town Manager:	Michael Herbert
Sustainability Project Manager:	Samantha Riley
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 (Absent)
Open Space and Recreation Representative:	Roberta Soolman
Sustainability Committee Representative:	Chuck Lidz
Affordable Housing Trust Representative:	Alan Galiwango (Remote)
Board of Health Representative:	Ed Burman (Remote)
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 (Remote)
DEI Task Force Representative:	Moala Kitayimwba (Absent)
Econ Dev Advisory Committee Representative:	Beth Reynolds
ZBA Representative:	(OPEN SEAT)
School Committee Representative:	Mike Caira
Town Forest Committee Representative:	Cara Hulme
Design Review Committee:	Bill Novakowski (Absent)
Precinct 1:	Jacob Coolberth
Precinct 2:	Leah Suarez

Precinct 3:
Precinct 4:
Precinct 5:
Precinct 6:
High School Representative:

David Evancho
Aroon Manoharan (Absent)
Rajashree Ghosh
Lisa Churchill
Hasini Reddy (Absent)

Others Present:

Jenn Goldson, JM Goldson Associates
Austin Smith, JM Goldson Associates

Members of the public

Mark Dassoni

Call meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

Approve MoM from prior meeting

The meeting minutes from the March 20, 2025 meeting were approved unanimously.

Introduction to Strategy Finalization & Survey Review

Jenn Goldson discussed how hard the group has worked over the past 14 months and the progress they have made. There is still a lot to discuss, tonight is the last meeting of Phase III. Ms. Goldson thanked the Subcommittee, who have taken the time to continue where the Committee left off. The Subcommittee has met twice since the last Committee meeting and did quite a bit of work; Subcommittee members agreed that in regards to the strategy list:

- There should be more specificity in the language;
- Don't plan just to plan, turn it into an action;
- Leave in ideas, even if only aspirational;
- Consider a second Subcommittee.

Report on findings and recommendations

Austin Smith reviewed the shortlist and the recommendations made by the Subcommittee. Some revisions were made to the list. Committee discussions included:

- Implementation of a Trash fee; as well as looking at other funding mechanisms;
- Using Mass Saves for sustainability and efficiency improvements;
- Developing a sustainability checklist, continue to evolve and update;
- Expanding EV charging stations throughout Ashland, including higher density rental properties;
- Working towards implementation of a zero waste policy for municipal facilities;
- Continue to prioritize efficiency upgrades for municipal facilities and schools;
- Invest in sustainability-related education and training, ensuring sustainable practices are integrated into Town projects;
- Tree planting initiatives;
- Developing a shared streets program;

- Allowing outdoor seating in restaurants by-right;
- Exploring changes to the Town’s stormwater management program.

Finalize strategy shortlist

Mr. Herbert explained that Jenn Goldson had inquired as to the addition of four extra meetings being added. Ms. Tesmenitsky noted that given there would be a cost, she believes the Subcommittee can work together without the need for a moderator; Ms. Greaves agreed to act as moderator. Ms. Goldson suggested two additional meetings, every two weeks, to keep the conversations moving a little quicker. The Committee agreed to two additional meetings with JM Goldson, the Committee will do additional homework; JM Goldson will narrow down the list.

Public Comments

Mark Dassoni, resident, would like to see the Town’s Comprehensive Plan be a strong document by everyone working together.

Committee Comments

- The Committee had discussion regarding sending emails to Committee Members who have been absent from meetings regarding meeting attendance, or stepping down.
- The Committee had discussion regarding reaching out to community for public attendance/participation at Comprehensive Plan meetings.
- Subcommittee Meeting Minutes Approval, April 7, 2025 – Unanimously approved by the Subcommittee Members.
- The Committee Members discussed the Town Planner position.

Adjourn

The Committee adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Documents Referenced During 4/17/2025 Meeting

Meeting Agenda, 4/17/2025

Ashland CP Subcommittee Strategies Comments/Recommendations