

## Town of Machias

Town Office, Suite 1  
P.O. Box 418  
Machias, ME 04654

### Machias Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting Notes

January 13, 2025 @6PM  
At the Machias Tele-Business Center

Ann-Marie Evans called the meeting to order at 6PM. Also in attendance committee members Aaron Ackley, Sarah Dedmon, Chris Meroff, and Carole Porche. Board members Wendy Schoppee and James Jackson were not in attendance due to illness. Andrew Mulholland as resigned from the Committee..

The purpose of this first meeting was to gain an understanding as to the purpose for this committee,

Attendees introduced themselves and gave a little background on themselves

How big of a team do we need? After some discussion, it was **decided that 8-10** was a good number. This means we need to continue our search for a few new members keeping in mind the Board of Selectmen must approve any new members.

Who wants to lead? Generally, towns hire a planner to assist with the process of creating/updating Comprehensive plans. The planner is someone who knows the process and what is needed to build a successful plan. The Selectboard is scheduled to discuss the options at a meeting to be held on January 22. Once they make the decision we will reach out to the new planner and begin the coordination. **Decision: The planner will then be in charge of facilitating the meeting, scheduling future meetings, and generally guiding us through the process.** The choice is between the Musson Group and SCEC.

We also decided that meeting once a month was not sufficient. A **decision was made that we meet twice a month, the first and third Mondays of the month.** (we will change the meeting date when a holiday falls on a Monday we regularly meet on.) These meetings are open to the public and we need to try and encourage folks to attend.

Who wants to take notes? Discussion around how hard it is to take notes and participate in the meeting effectively. We talked about having an outside member taking notes or just recording the proceedings. A **decision was made to record all future meetings** and have them posted to the town website.

Brainstorming: How do we move the ball forward?

A Comprehensive plan is good for 12 years however we need to look out 20 years and discover what we want to be and then determine the steps to achieve that goal.

Businesses use a town's comprehensive plan to understand where the town is headed so they can determine, if and when they can invest and what direction they need to go with their products and services.

Need to determine where we are now. Where does the community want us to be 10 years, 20 years out? How big do we want the town to grow?

Are we shooting for increasing the population to 5000??? Expanding the local tax base in order to achieve some growth? Impacts employment, needs mixed residential housing,

A big topic of discussion was how do we effectively get community engagement. We need to engage the community in conversation, something that is not easily done.

Where are Some suggestions: Online surveys, paper surveys, informational and discussion sessions, Hang out at the dyke and restaurants and talk to folk. Go to the college and high schools and meet with the kids. Involve them in the discussions. Get their ideas. What would keep them here after they are done with school. What do we need, where do we need to grow.

Since we are the county seat, may want to reach out to folks on surrounding towns and talk about what Machias has and what Machias needs.

Will need to include climate resilience in the updated plan.

Need to envision advancements within the power of the community.

When do we meet next? **Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 6PM in the temporary Town Office.**