

## Notes from

July 20, 2016

### Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

**Present:** Joann Rogers, Donna Beretta, Kris Monzel, Liz and Ron Smith, Cat Cohen, Carla Jordan, Justin Steinbach, Dave Parsons, Sandra Riker

**Also Present:** Bob Green

**Minutes:** The minutes of June 29<sup>th</sup> were reviewed by the Group and approved for posting to the Town Webpage.

At the July meeting of the Town Board Sandra Riker provided them with a review of the Comp Plan Committee to dates activity. She provided the Board with a document put together by Frank Fish at the NYPF Conference earlier in the year along with the attached note from July 11<sup>th</sup> as well as her note to the Comprehensive Committee and Town Board of July 12<sup>th</sup> including a response by Councilman Stevens. It provides an outline on how to prepare a Comprehensive Plan. She asked that the Board look at that document and then at the notes regarding the past meetings of the Committee and asked if the Board felt the group was headed in the right direction. The Smiths were present at that meeting and expressed surprise that there was a problem with the current direction of the Committee. The 3 hour meeting previously planned for this evening was postponed and a regular 1 ½ hour meeting held in an effort to clear the air so the group can move forward.

Future meetings will start at 7:00 pm and will still be 1 and ½ hours in length.

Carla said we are fortunate to have 3 professional planners to help guide the group through the review and updating of the almost 10 year old Comprehensive Plan. We also have seasoned residents to provide history and some new residents with fresh eyes and ideas. Dave said he would like to have the old plan looked at in depth and then do whatever is necessary to bring it up to date and make it sustainable for future use. Carla said she thought there is a happy medium by updating the old plan and then we provide some improvements to it. Joann commented that the comprehensive plan is a tool for the planning and zoning boards to use when they encounter issues that are not clear cut in nature, so if the document is too long and flowery it will only sit on the shelf and not be a usable tool for the Boards so keep it simple. Kris asked the committee if all were in agreement on our road map (the process diagram provided by her). After some discussion all said yes, as long as it can remain flexible.

It was agreed that the Co-Chairs would provide the Town Board with a report of the activities of this group, the same as the other Departments of the Town Government. Councilman Dave Parsons suggested it was not necessary on a monthly basis but at least every couple of months. This is not the same as the original suggestion that this group meet with all 3 Boards (planning, zoning, and Town Board) at different times

through the process to provide them updates and possibly their input. This "special committee" will provide the Planning Board (Lead Agency) with a draft document that they will then review and provide recommendation to the Town Board for their approval to adopt the updated Comprehensive Plan. Public Hearings will be necessary along the way as well.

The group agreed they would like a chance to review the report the Chairs will provide to the Town Board prior to the actual presentation. The report will need to be submitted one week ahead of the Town Board meetings in order to be placed on the agenda. It should be short and concise as there are other departments reporting at the meeting.

#### Summer Schedule:

- Justin asks that we look at other communities plans for examples, look, feel general content, etc.
- Review the current plan to prepare for discussion and identify deficiencies
  - Carla will be making a spread sheet of the current plan and Sandy will help identify some of the areas that have been completed or are no longer applicable.
- It was agreed that the demographics need to be updated. Mapping and analysis tools are necessary to emphasis the changes being suggested. Carla said she would try and have Sheree Norton of GIS Services of Ontario County and Dr. Bruce Gilman from CCFL at our Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> meeting to advise the group what their services can provide as assistance for our updated Comprehensive Plan.
- There was discussion about moving the Community Open House to later in October. This will give the group time to organize its thoughts and know what kind of input we are asking the public for at this time. Councilman Tom Stevens at the July Town Board meeting said he would like to know this information prior to the group holding a community meeting.
  - Cat and the Smiths agreed to work on creating an advertising poster for distribution prior to the event.
  - Sandy will ask the Fire Department what dates might be available for this group to use the Fire Hall for their presentation.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sandra Riker*

Addendum as of September 19, 2016- additional email comments from Liz and Ron Smith dated July 13, 2016, and from Cat Cohen on July 15<sup>th</sup> as well as the response by Justin Steinbach on July 16<sup>th</sup>.

To The Town Board:

Town of Bristol

Regarding Comprehensive Plan Committee

July 11, 2016

In my opinion: this group is not headed in the right direction for addressing the need to update the Comprehensive Plan.

One of the very first steps to be taken should be a review of the existing Comprehensive Plan and where changes, additions, and new information should be added. To this date the group has met 6 times at a minimum of 1 and ½ hours per meeting. The first meeting was on April 7<sup>th</sup> and the most recent was June 29<sup>th</sup>. At the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting the group looked at the first four sections of the existing plan and on the 29<sup>th</sup> approximately 20 minutes were given to the next two sections.

Much of our time to date has been directed by Ms. Monzel regarding processes, ground rules, and pet projects. This is all well and good but I feel the current plan needs to be looked at more thoroughly with emphasis on needs and pet projects should be addressed at a later time.

I have provided you with a document put together by Frank Fish at the NYPF Conference in Saratoga this past April. It outlines how to prepare a comprehensive plan I would ask the Board to read it and then read the notes regarding the past meetings of the committee for the update of the Bristol plan. They are listed on the town webpage under Comprehensive Plan on the homepage. I am asking the Town Board to look at it and see if they feel we should be headed in a different direction.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sandra Riker*

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**Subject:** Re: comprehensive plan committee

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**From:** Justin S (jwsteinbach@hotmail.com)

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**To:** catcohen@frontiernet.net;

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**Cc:** elizsmith@frontier.com; smithrond@frontier.com; krismonzel@gmail.com; djberetta@hotmail.com; bristolcar1@frontiernet.net; joannrogers64@hotmail.com; carla.jordan@co.ontario.ny.us; townsupvbristol@frontier.com; jhb87@aol.com; thomas.kilimanjaro.stevens@gmail.com; acfavro@gmail.com; bill@kenyonandkenyonlaw.com; pzsecbristol@frontier.com;

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**Date:** Saturday, July 16, 2016 1:09 AM

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All,

In light of the recent communications and such, Kris, Carla and I have discussed and decided to postpone the round table speakers planned for this coming week.

Instead we will have an internal discussion regarding our work, goals, schedule and such. I invite everyone to review their original "welcome" letters from the town. Together we'll come to a better conclusion for where we need to go and where the committee collectively would like to lead the project for the good of the town. This is still a great opportunity for us all provide some community-based direction over the next decade and help identify the potential in Bristol, we just need to be sure we're all on the same page with everything. Sound like a plan?

Come prepared to chat on Wednesday at the normal time (6:30-8, Donna please make note of the change.) Any questions or concerns, please let me know. I hope you the regular committee members can attend. If there's anyone I missed, please forward it in to them (I'm camping I the Adirondacks and don't have great web access!!).

~ Justin

*(Sent mobile)*

On Jul 15, 2016, at 8:54 AM, "Cat Cohen" <catcohen@frontiernet.net> wrote:

Dear all,

Like Liz and Ron, I, too, was surprised to find out that the Comprehensive Plan Committee is going in the wrong direction and/or may have misunderstood its charge. At the Sept. 29, 2015 meeting of the three Boards it was mentioned that the project could take 2-3 years. Similarly, the requirements for committee members that were listed on the town's website included a commitment of "a minimum of one to two years" and cautioned that "this could be the hardest job you will ever have...". These wordings created the distinct impression that the committee would be involved in a major review/revision of the current plan, not merely a tweaking. In order to do that job well, of course the committee needs to gather data, and get

input from Town/County services and others---and especially from the community (hence the planned Open House as part of our outreach).

In my opinion, everything that has been done so far has helped move our work forward. Brainstorming ideas in order to create a list of "pet projects" was, as co-chair Kris Monzel repeatedly stated, a way to get them on the table and from there to the back burner while the committee focuses on gathering data and input from others. At that point the plan calls for the formation of focus groups to get more deeply into various areas to be addressed---which will be determined through careful analysis of the current Comprehensive Plan and of all the new data and input received.

It may be helpful to take a look at the process diagram that was created by Kris Monzel several months ago, based on what the committee discussed during its first few meetings (see below). This "road map" has been serving us and should continue to serve us throughout the process, with possible modifications of time line etc. as needed.

I join Liz and Ron in the hope and expectation that the committee can feel free to discuss its direction and progress at our next meeting. I hope that any future concerns can first be brought up and discussed during committee meetings so we can reach consensus and move forward.

Sincerely,

Cat Cohen

On Jul 13, 2016, at 11:57 AM, Elizabeth Smith wrote:

Dear Fellow Citizens of Bristol,

We attended the Town Board Meeting on July 11 and were surprised to hear that the Town of Bristol Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee is headed in the wrong direction, according to several people. As members of the Committee who have attended all CP meetings but one, we want to say that we have not seen evidence that any members of the Committee have objected---in the meetings, to the rest of the group---to our path and progress on this difficult task that we

have all volunteered our time, talents and efforts for. Thus our surprise to first hear of this in a public setting with only 3 members of the Committee present and no opportunity for response from the other members.

We started in April on a task that was predicted to take 2-3 years. We have, as members of the Committee, three professional town planners to help guide us (quite a unique opportunity in a tiny town), thus allowing us to work without the expense and outside influence of a costly consulting firm. They have helped us lay out the groundwork for our task, using tools and methods that perhaps are different than in the past, but we feel that real progress is being made toward our goal of an updated, viable Comprehensive Plan for the Town.

Gathering information, listening to and talking with experts from our local County and Town services, and most importantly, involving our fellow citizens in the process, through various forms of outreach, is all part of our charge, and it takes time to do a good job.

We are proud to work with such a diverse group of citizens, with varying ages, occupations, experiences and talents who are selflessly lending their time and expertise to the task. The Town needs to have faith and trust that we are doing our best to work through a difficult project. Yes, there may be mistakes or missteps made, but isn't that part of the learning process which in the end leads to an ever-improving outcome?

We hope the members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

can openly discuss any and all topics of concern at our next meeting on July 20th so that we can move on and get the work done.

Sincerely,

Liz and Ron Smith

<Process Diagram for Bristol CP - May 2016.pdf>

### How to Prepare a Comprehensive Plan

#### What Planning Board & ZBA Members Should Know

Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Frank S. Fish, FAICP  
Principal, BFJ Planning  
115 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10003 212.353.7476  
www.bfjplanning.com

BFJ Planning

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### A Note on the History of Comprehensive Plans

- New York State followed most other states until the mid-1990's
- Legislature changed the power to adopt
  - from: the Planning Board
  - to: the Elected Officials
- The George Raymond rationale

BFJ Planning

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### Comparison with Other States

- Our neighbors:
  - ❖ Q: P&Z's adopt the Plan
    - ✓ Must be updated every (10) ten years.
  - ❖ NJ: Planning Board adopts re-evaluation
    - ✓ Every (6) six years
- New York State: No time requirement to revisit the Plan

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### Lessons from Other Places

- Port Chester Village
  - CPAC (Comp Plan Advisory Committee with no Trustees)
  - Plan is being redone.
- Mamaroneck Village
  - 25 member advisory committee
  - Long meetings
  - Needs leadership and patience
- Nassau County
  - Change of administration
  - Give Planning Board of committee a deadline

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### Content of Plans

- The Town plan may include:
- 1) Goals & objectives
  - 2) Regional needs & plans
  - 3) Land Use
  - 4) Environmental & natural features
  - 5) Population & socioeconomic
  - 6) Transportation
  - 7) Utilities/Infrastructure
  - 8) Housing
  - 9) Public/Cultural/Historic facilities
  - 10) Parks & recreation
  - 11) Commercial & industrial
  - 12) Future Land Use Plan/Recommendations

Final Chapter: Implementation and anything else you want.

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### Some Lessons

- 1) The encyclopedia:
  - Port Chester
  - Solution: 100 page goal
- 2) The non-physical plan:
  - Newburgh
  - Solution: Incorporate a land-use plan
  - "Zoning must be based upon a well-reasoned plan"



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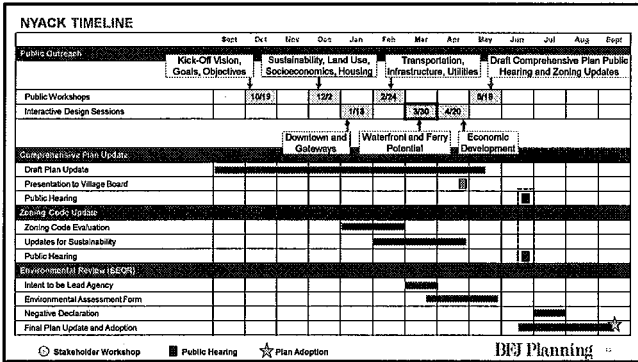
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### Public Hearing

- If there is a committee, it must hold a public hearing during preparation of the plan.
- Legislative body must hold a separate hearing within 90 days.

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- No committee. Legislative body holds two hearings.

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### Adoption

Make SEQR work:

- The Neg. Dec.
  - "No significant adverse impact on the environment"
- Comp Plan as GEIS
  - A town plan may be designed to serve as a GEIS
- "No further compliance with SEQR is required for subsequent site specific actions that are in conformance with the conditions and thresholds established."

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**Subject:** Re: addition to notes July 20 CP meeting

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**From:** pzsecbristol@frontier.com (pzsecbristol@frontier.com)

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**To:** catcohen@frontiernet.net;

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**Date:** Thursday, September 8, 2016 1:56 PM

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Thank you will include.  
Sandy

On Thursday, September 8, 2016 12:39 PM, Cat Cohen <catcohen@frontiernet.net> wrote:

*in minutes*  
Hi Sandy,

As discussed last night, I'm submitting an addition to be included in the notes of the July 20 meeting:

"Kris asked the committee if all were in agreement on our road map (the process diagram). After some discussion all said yes, as long as it can remain flexible."

Thanks!

Cat