

Notes from
November 15, 2017

Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

To Do List

Sub-committees continue on topics and develop policy framework

Sub-committees provide drafts of already completed work to both Base Camp and Sharon for review prior to next meeting

Next Meeting: December 6, 2017 at Town Hall

Future meetings time will be 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Present: Nicole Cleary, Justin Steinbach, Dave Parsons, Joann Rogers, Cat Cohen, Liz & Ron Smith, Donna Beretta, Kris Monzel, Bob Green and Sandra Riker

Absent: Carla Jordan and Sharon Lilla

Review of Draft Policy Framework Documents:

Nicole provided the group with changes she and Sharon had worked on since the last meeting on the following sections:

- Economic Development (ECD)
- Agricultural Resources (AGR)
- Infrastructure (INF)
- Recreational Resources (RRS)

Economic Development (ECD):

Kris commented that she did not feel the objective listed under ECD-1 Action Item "Commission a professional feasibility study for the development of a town-wide micro-grid project" belongs here.

Objective E reads to "Encourage business development in the hamlet of Bristol Center." Kris would like to see this opened up to encourage home based businesses throughout the whole town.

Objective D reads to "Encourage the development of an independent not-for-profit Bristol Valley Foundation, to help leverage available outside funding for community projects." It was suggested this should be move to an action item possibly under Objective A. Objective A reads "Explore revenue-creating projects to generate funds for Town operations and to off-set taxes.

Objective B reads "Broadband connectivity to all homes and businesses where feasible and affordable." Cat mentioned she would like to see the verbs pursue and promote added to this objective.

Objective C reads "Strengthen Bristol's ability to capture tourism dollars for local businesses by becoming ~~the~~ a Finger Lakes Go-To destination for outdoor family recreation.

Agricultural Resources (AGR):

The group asked if definitions and innovative terms could be included in the final document. This was prompted by the term Hobby Farms listed under Objective B. which reads "Encourage and seek opportunities for new agricultural ventures at varied scales which would include, but not be limited to, agricultural support businesses, specialty uses, agri-tourism and residentially driven hobby farms. A good example of this already under way in Bristol is <https://www.karmasauce.com/> located on Baptist Hill. It also fits with Action Item AGR-

13 that reads “Review local trends and regional needs for opportunities for agriculturally supportive businesses such as small scale processing facilities or community supported agriculture (CSAs).

Sandra Riker contacted the AG & Market Bureau in Albany and was advised they did not have a specific definition for “hobby farm” Matt Brower sent her Article 25-AA of the Ag & Market Laws section 301-definitons that describe what a farm is and went on to tell her they would consider a “hobby farm” anything that did not fit the description. Upon further research she actually found some guidance for the term on Wikipedia that reads “In the U.S., a high proportion of farms might be classed as hobby farms. In 2007, over 40% of farms reported less than \$2500 in income and over 10% of farms had less than 10 acres (4.0 hectares) of land. Over 50% of primary farm operators reported that their main income was a job outside of their farm; although, this figure includes some farm operators who do not personally participate in farming and some quite large and productive farms.^[2]

In the US, as farms grow in size, older farms become less economically viable. Some are purchased and most of the land combined with larger nearby farms, however the large farm has little use for the buildings. These can be sold off with only a building lot of real estate, but are much more saleable if a modest area, 5 to 15 acres (20,000 to 60,000 m²) is sold along with them. These are usually snapped up quickly by people with well-paying city jobs who wish to live in the country, or to retirees, who wish to be active as part-time farmers. ^[citation needed]

Some, especially in developed areas, are used as [truck gardens](#), with their own produce stands, or a regular stall in a local [farmer's market](#).”

Kris asked if Community Solar would be an allowed use. Sandra directed her to the newly adopted “Solar Energy Code Law” that can be found on the Town Webpage under Local Laws. The question was asked if Community Solar would be considered under the Right to Farm Law and the answer is no unless it is used to support a working farm, otherwise it would be considered a Commercial Endeavor.

With regard to action item AGR-12 “Encourage opportunities for the introduction of new crops (i.e. hops, industrial hemp)” Liz asked why there are not more grape farms in our Town as in South Bristol. Dave and Bob both explained that the soils of Bristol are clay in nature and not suitable for grapes. The other advantage that South Bristol has is the proximity to the lakes controlling the freeze and frost cycles that are affective in grape production.

Infrastructure (INF)

It was suggested that the policy statement should read “The town will pursue & promote transportation which is safe, efficient, convenient and environmentally responsible as the first sentence; and/or will maintain its local town roads in a way that networks and coordinates with the County and State Roads which is safe, efficient, convenient and environmentally responsible...

Under Objective(s) A. to read maintain an appropriate transportation network.

Under Objective D to read Environment that encourages renewable energy at an appropriate scale?

Action item INF-10 reads to “Revise the Town’s Zoning Code to provide details relative to the desired scope of renewable energy systems. Justin suggested the group review the town of York’s solar regulations. It was suggested that more work needs to be done on Infrastructure.

Recreational Resources will be addressed at the next meeting on December 6, 2017.

The meeting was then concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Riker

Town of Bristol

Planning and ZBA Secretary