

Alfred Comprehensive Planning Committee – Minutes

Thursday, April 21st, 2016

Alfred Town Hall, 2nd Floor, 6:30 p.m.

Facilitating: Amy Sprague

Members present were Amy Sprague, Amy Titcomb, Arthur Karcher, Stephen Gile, Seth McCoy, Jon DeFrance, Jim Allaire, Tom Plummer, Howard Dupee and Lee Steele. Also present were Kathy Connor of SMPDC, Selectman Tony Palmentari, Al Carlson of Planning Board, Barbara Carlson, John Sylvester and Darcy Hobgood, Secretary.

Amy called the meeting to order at 6:37pm. Stephen moved that we enforce the **public comment policy**, limiting comments to two minutes at the start of the meeting and two at the end. Seth seconded the motion and all voted in agreement.

The **minutes from April 7, 2016** were reviewed. Howard moved to accept them as written, Jon seconded and all were in favor.

During the **Opportunity for Public Comment**, Tony stated that the CPC is tough committee to work on. There is already opposition to the plan and that to move forward the committee needs to promote understanding, explaining that the plan is a recommendation and the committee has no authority to carry out these recommendations. He stated that the CPC will have to sell the plan and recommends having a booth at the Alfred Festival staffed by committee members available to offer information, answer questions and distribute handouts.

Old Business consisted of a discussion of **Communication with the Public**. Amy T has updated the Town website adding 2016 DRAFT Goals, Policies & Strategies Chapters, 2016 DRAFT Inventory Chapters and minutes. Copies of the GP&S's are also available in the lobby of the Town Hall. Lee suggested that an ad be put in the Smart Shopper stating that the website has been updated. Amy S reminded CPC members to share this information with the public.

The Committee agreed that Tony's suggestion of participating in the Festival on July 16, 2016 was worth pursuing. Amy T stated that she would start a sign-up sheet and Jim volunteered use of a tent.

Kathy Connor, SMPDC confirmed her schedule of meetings with the CPC. She will attend the May 5th and 19th meetings, the June 2nd and 16th meetings, and then every other meeting.

New Business commenced with a review of the **Agriculture and Forestry GP&S**. Kathy reviewed GPS's one by one discussing additions and changes to this chapter. After discussion of Farm and Forestry Policy 1, Strategy 2, the Committee agreed to keep wording as is and site current building code.

Seth questioned how Tree Growth and Farm Tax programs affect town's revenue. Kathy explained that Tree Growth is an annual program and does not offer long term tax breaks. It is not permanent protection and the property can be removed from the tree growth or open space programs and returned to the tax rolls at any time. Al Carlson suggested that the Committee not lose sight of what the goal for this section is, "To promote the continued viability of the Town's resource-based businesses...."

Howard asked about the amount and location of prime agricultural soils in Alfred. Kathy replied that we do have some. The Burn's property (Colin's Meadow) and the "corn field development" are on prime Ag soils. Discussion of Policy 5, Strategy 2, concerning a local ordinance modeled on the State's Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program ensued. This program allows a farmer to place a 20-year agricultural conservation easement on the land in exchange for full or partial reimbursement of property taxes on the farmland and

farm buildings. Amy S said that speaking as a farm owner, she's not sure she'd be interested in it. Kathy added that it is one way to prevent a large farm from being sold for development.

Al Carlson suggested that the CPC may want to look into mentioning farmland protection through agricultural easements in a strategy. Amy S suggested a strategy, "Encourage people to look into easements", could be added to Policy 5.

Kathy moved on to review **Land Use GP&S**. Amy T pointed out that the Committee had decided to eliminate the word "extensions" from Policy 2, Strategy 1. It was suggested that Goal 2, Policy 2, Strategy 1a also be reworded, changing "Chapter 9" to "Critical Natural Resources". Suggestions to clarify Strategy 2 were also discussed. The time frame for p3, Policy 3, Strategy 2 was determined to be too ambitious due to the fact that a Design Review Board has not yet been created. The committee voted to change it to 2018. The term "redevelopment" (same section) was clarified.

Tom suggested changing the wording referring to a Historic District, making it less stringent. Kathy explained it was up to the Town to determine how restrictive they want possible requirements to be. The issue is also addressed under Historical Resources. It was decided to leave the wording as is and to make sure everyone understands it only says "Consider creating..."

Amy S reminded committee members to do their "**homework assignment**" for the next meeting which is to read updated chapters and contact Co-Chairs ahead of time regarding items that they wish to discuss with the group. The CPC will take official votes on each chapter as to whether it's finished or not.

During the final **Opportunity for Public Comment** John Sylvester questioned the wording on Land Use table, p 4 asking if "Village" and "Center Village" were used interchangeably. He feels it creates confusion. Lee agreed stating it should not be confusing and needs to be clarified. Amy S and Amy T felt that it should all be changed to "Center Village".

Al Carlson stated that "Growth District" is a misnomer. It is not a likely growth area. Amy S agreed saying the CPC would like to correct that. John S explained that in 2002, the State mandated that the Town designate such an area. Kathy will address this at the May 19th meeting when discussing the Future Land Use Map. Howard moved that the meeting be adjourned at 8:20. Lee seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 5th, 2016

Kathy Connor will be present

Regional Collaboration GP&S

Final discussion and approval of all GP&S chapters