

1. CPUSC Agenda

Documents:

[DRAFT_CPUSC AGENDA_FEB 6 2025.PDF](#)

2. CPUSC 11.7.24 Draft Minutes

Documents:

[CPUSC MEETING SUMMARY_DRAFT 1_110724.PDF](#)

3. Item #7 Bowdoin Housing And Real Estate

Documents:

[BOWDOIN HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE.PDF](#)



Town of Brunswick, Maine

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE
85 UNION STREET, BRUNSWICK, ME 04011

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE
AGENDA
BRUNSWICK TOWN HALL
85 UNION STREET
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2025
6:30 PM**

NOTE: Due to inclement weather, this meeting will be Zoom ONLY.

How to watch and comment via Zoom:

Use the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81033202314?pwd=QasXaymoJFaYviR0st3MwxqCSIC1v8.1>
Passcode: Q8j3Pm

Comments are allowed during the public comment period at the discretion of the committee chair. Public comments must be submitted through the Zoom platform by “raising your hand” and being acknowledged by the host or by entering questions in the Q&A chat.

1. Roll Call
2. Adjustments to the Agenda
3. Correspondence
4. Public Comment
5. Approval of Minutes
 - a. November 7, 2024
6. New Business
 - a. Status update from Haley Ward
 - b. Mapping and neighborhood centers exercise
7. Old Business
 - a. Bowdoin Housing and Real Estate
8. Other Business
 - a. Next regular meeting date: March 6, 2025
9. Adjourn

**TOWN OF BRUNSWICK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE
(CPUSC)
DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY
November 7, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Emilie Schmidt (Chair), Fred Koerber (Vice Chair), Alison Harris (Planning Board Representative), Meghan Kissling [via Zoom], Larissa Darcy, Steve Walker, Marcy McGuire, and Lisa Trombley.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Catherine Ferdinand, James Olson, Sande Updegraph (Town Council, District 4), and Steve Weems (Town Council, District 7).

STAFF PRESENT: Julie Erdman, Director of Planning and Development

Chair Emilie Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and called the roll. There were no adjustments to the agenda.

Public Comment

The public comment period was opened, and no members of the public provided comment.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the September 19, 2024 minutes as amended:

Lisa Trombley
Second Marcy McGuire
Unanimous of those present

New Business

Committee Handbook & Election of Officers

Chair Schmidt attended the recent Town Council Appointments Committee meeting and learned that the Town of Brunswick has the greatest number of committees than any community throughout the state. She shared there is a new amendment to the committee's handbook on page 18 and all committee members are asked to sign. Director Erdman will coordinate getting signatures from committee members. Chair Schmidt provided information about the committee handbook explaining that the existing language has been vague and describes town councilors as advisors or being nonvoting members on committees. Chair Schmidt plans to obtain clarification to address potential confusion given the various types of committees and that CPUSC is within an ad hoc/advisory category, so the handbook does not specify about the role of the town councilors in this setting. The Town Clerk plans to work with the committee to help clarify this after the election before the next meeting. Chair Schmidt also learned that every committee must have a Chair, Vice Chair, and a Secretary, and often town staff serves as the Secretary. Chair Schmidt explained that CPUSC has not formally elected a Vice Chair therefore she asked the committee if they would make this official.

Motion to elect Fred Koerber as the Committee Vice Chair

Lisa Trombley
Second Steve Walker
Unanimous of those present

Chair Schmidt asked if Director Erdman is willing to fulfill the duties of Secretary and Director Erdman agreed. Lisa Trombley offered that in the event Director Erdman cannot attend the meeting, that she is willing to act as Secretary in her absence. Chair Schmidt asked the committee if there were any concerns about this arrangement. No objections were raised by the committee.

Chair Schmidt adjusted the agenda so that Community Meeting Logistics will be the last item under Old Business.

Old Business

Inventory update

Director Erdman explained that so far staff have posted eight inventories online which have been reformatted. There are just a handful more to complete. Director Erdman reported that the link on the town website has been fixed so users will now be able to be redirected to the [2024 Updates](#) page. If difficulties persist, users should clear their browser cache and retry the link.

Consultant Update

Director Erdman explains that the town is currently awaiting a proposal from Haley Ward, and expects to have a condensed proposal by tomorrow so it can be presented to the Town Council. Chair Schmidt explained that since meeting with the two consultants, she met with staff to discuss what each could bring to the process. It seemed like Liz could help the town on a per diem capacity for assistance during meetings or public outreach. The town plans to ask her if she is comfortable providing assistance in conjunction with another consultant putting the plan together. The next step is the town is currently waiting to receive proposals from the two consultants to understand what each arrangement looks like from a financial standpoint. Ms. Harris asked for clarification on which consultant would be leading meeting facilitation. Chair Schmidt clarified that Haley Ward would be undertaking their own process, and the second consultant would be able to assist the committee directly on tasks such as developing strategies, action items, gathering, and synthesizing. Chair Schmidt explained that the Committee is waiting for the proposals before understanding if both consultants can be retained. Vice Chair Koerber acknowledged that it would be useful to be able to take advantage of the strengths that each consultant has to offer. Chair Schmidt anticipates having more information and updates on the topic at the next meeting.

November 13th Community Meeting Logistics

Chair Schmidt shared a draft brochure that could be used during the public outreach process to help share information during the community meeting about the plan. She asked for guidance from the committee about what the start of the vision statement should be, as shown on the provided draft cover. The committee agreed to list, “A Vision for the Future,” instead of “In 10 Years Brunswick Will be...” Chair Schmidt shared the inside of the brochure. Ms. Darcy provided a suggestion about reconfiguring the layout for better alignment and other formatting changes were discussed.

Chair Schmidt shared that she and Ms. Trombley are planning to record a video providing a short introduction message to share with the community meeting attendees as they enter the event.

Motion to Approve the Informational Brochure, as Amended

Larissa Darcy
Second Lisa Trombley
Unanimous of those present

Motion to Authorize Emilie Schmidt and Lisa Trombley to Create Informational Video for Event

Larissa Darcy

Second Steve Walker

Unanimous of those present

Ms. Darcy shared a floor plan she drafted showing where attendees could enter the event space and engage at the respective key policy area tables. The committee continued to discuss logistical procedures for organizing the event space, added supplies to a checklist, and assigned tasks to staff and committee members in preparation for the upcoming community meeting.

Ms. McGuire recommended that during the Planning Board meeting preceding the event that the Board promote the event when opening the meeting. Ms. Harris responded that this is a great idea. Chair Schmidt also discussed that promotion via social media and road signage will occur leading up to the event.

Director Erdman explained that the Environmental Planner, Ashley Charleson, asked if the event could host a table in the lobby with information about the Climate Action Plan. The Committee agreed that Climate Action Plan may share information but that given the number of other community groups that may seek this arrangement, asked that the table remain unstaffed so the event could have a clear focus on the comprehensive plan. Chair Schmidt asked if there would be any other information to share with attendees in the lobby related to the comprehensive planning process. The Committee agreed that to answer questions like, “what is a comprehensive plan,” greeters should refer attendees to visit the website for this information.

Vice Chair Koerber suggested that before the event commences all volunteers gather so they can be reminded that they may share basic information but that the goal of the event is to obtain information from the public attending the event. He asked is there is an opportunity for people who cannot attend or have an afterthought to send comments. Director Erdman suggested that emails can be sent to the planner@brunswickme.gov email. Chair Schmidt says she will look into what the other options are for obtaining public feedback.

Ms. Darcy reported that volunteers handed out over 700 flyers about the comprehensive plan on election day.

Chair Schmidt summarized that on November 13th committee volunteers should arrive at the event at 5:00 p.m., and all other volunteers should arrive by 6:00 p.m. Ms. Darcy described that around 6:15 p.m. volunteers will gather for the pre-meeting huddle.

Motion to Adjourn

Larissa Darcy

Marcy McGuire

Unanimous of those present

NEXT MEETING: December 5, 2024 6:30 PM

JDD

Information on Bowdoin College – Off campus housing and other real estate

Response to comments at the 1/2/2025 Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

Enrollment: While annual enrollment varies with population/class size demographics and other factors, the average Fall enrollment at Bowdoin over the last ten years has hovered at around 1,850 students. There was some significant variation in recent years due to the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a low of 1,776 students in 2020, followed by a high of 1,948 in Fall 2021 reflecting deferments due to Covid. Most recently, the Fall 2024 enrollment was 1,873 and will drop to an estimated 1,825 for the Spring semester as more students traditionally choose to study abroad in the spring.

Off-campus housing: While Bowdoin is primarily a residential college, there has historically been some number of upper class students who choose to live off campus, generally between 110 – 150 students. During the first part of the last decade, the number of students living off campus increased, and in the fall of 2016, there was a high of 217 students living off campus. This led to an effort by the administration to reassess the state of, and options for upper class housing on campus, and to revise the Off Campus housing policy. The result of this initiative was the construction of two new upper class residence halls that featured apartment style living, reconfiguration of other upper class dormitory spaces to offer more single rooms, and establishment of new limits on the number of students who would be granted permission to live off campus. For AY 2017-18, the limit was set at 200. That limit decreased over the next two academic years to 185, and then to 150 where it has remained since 2019. The new residence halls came online in 2019 and 2020 and in the past 3 years, the number of students living off campus has hovered around 100. We have 1809 assignable beds in our residence halls, which includes some reasonable cushion for swing space, thus requiring only 67 students to live off campus this fall, which is comfortably below the average number of off-campus living requests received each year.

Real estate: The college owns a number of properties within close proximity to the campus that are rented to new/visiting faculty. The college pays property tax on these properties, and they are subject to the same valuation process as any single-family home. Property used for academic purposes, including residence halls for students, is exempt from local property taxes. If the College purchases a property for faculty housing, that property remains on the tax rolls. For the example of the Boody Street property purchased by the College, not only did the property remain on the tax rolls, but the sale triggered a revaluation of the property, increasing the Town's tax revenue as a result of the sale.

The College is not buying single family houses and converting them to residence halls. There has been the rare occasion when the College has purchased a property that was on the tax rolls and converted it to a college use, making the property eligible for tax exemption. This occurred in 2023 with the office building at 240 Maine Street. Consistent with College policy, Bowdoin increased its voluntary contribution to the Town by the amount of the real estate tax assessment, offsetting any impact of the acquisition to the Town's revenue.