

Monroe Comprehensive Plan Committee

Minutes

August 14, 2025 6:00pm

Attendees: Rebecca Fee, Ray Wirth, Eric Bunker (arrived at 6:36pm), Grace Johnston-Fennell, Ryan Wing, Lyndsey Marston

Lyndsey called the meeting to order at 6:11pm.

Action Items:

- Lyndsey will request maps from the Maine Municipal Planning Assistance Program
- Everyone will read the planning docs and sample plans in the Google Drive
- Everyone will read the draft committee charter before the next meeting
- Lyndsey will download base maps and put them in the Google Drive
- Lyndsey will add more info to the website
- Grace will create a google doc for email contacts

Old Business:

A. Appoint acting Chair and secretary for meeting

Ryan **made a motion** to elect Lyndsey as temporary chair. Ray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Review/approve May meeting minutes

Rebecca **made a motion** to approve the May meeting minutes. Ray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

A. Feedback on comprehensive planning docs and sample plans

a. Conversations with stakeholders/other Towns

Ryan reported back on a conversation with Ray Quimby and noted that Brook's comprehensive plan has been a useful tool during recent town topic of solar ordinances. Brooks hired someone who resides in Searsport to assist in the plan process. Brooks also used the Maine Council of Governments (MCOG), and Ryan noted that their staff has been helpful in other partnerships as well.

Ryan suggested using AI/ChatGPT to generate content for Monroe's comprehensive plan draft.

Lyndsey reported back from a conversation with David Doak, chair of the most recent Monroe comp plan process. The State had funds available at

the time the plan was made, which allowed the Town to hire a consultant to help with the process. David noted that there was nothing controversial and the plan passed fairly easily. He also said the State had funds available to help draft ordinances, which was brought to the Town meeting at the time and voted down.

Lyndsey reported back from a conversation with Tom Miragliuolo, who works for the State Municipal Planning Assistance Program and spoke at a public informational meeting about comprehensive plans last year. Lyndsey learned that 85% of State data is available online, and that the rest is available via request to Tom.

Ryan **made a motion** to approve Lyndsey to request additional State data from Tom Miragliuolo in the October phase of data inquiries. Ray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Lyndsey also reported back that she spoke with Mathew Eddy from MCOG. Discussion ensued about MCOG membership, related annual \$1551 membership cost, and membership benefits (access to maps, plan process support). Lyndsey will put a power point from MCOG on the google drive for all to review.

Lyndsey asked for feedback on the resource documents or sample comprehensive plans she shared online. Ray noted that he liked the clear definitions of what a comprehensive plan is within the Friendship plan. Lyndsey noted these could be helpful to add to the website, if not the plan itself.

Lyndsey noted that she particularly liked the five step planning process (assessment, develop vision, identify goals/objectivites, map out the future, make it happen) outlined in the Vermont State Planning Manual.

Discussion of strategies for gaining input from Monroe residents via visioning sessions, engaging the local school and youth in visioning projects, by holding events in different locations such as the park, church, school.

Eric noted that the Select Board is looking into pursuing designation as a "village" which is dependent on having a plan and may impact the comprehensive plan scope.

Lyndsey also noted the visual elements of Belfast's plan which highlighted key topics and Bowdoinham's plan, which had an excellent vision statement and a structure that put the "action" items of the plan up front

with the analysis and data afterward. Lyndsey asked that the group continue reviewing other towns' comprehensive plans.

B. Committee Charter

The committee charter was tabled until the next meeting.

a. Finalize day of the week for meetings

Rebecca **made a motion** to select the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6pm as the committee's regular meeting day and time. Eric seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Determine officers

Eric **made a motion** to elect Lyndsey as the committee chair. Rebecca seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Grace **made a motion** to elect Rebecca as secretary for the committee. Eric seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ray **made a motion** to elect Grace as vice committee chair. Ryan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Next Steps/Timeline

- a. The next committee meeting will be held Thursday September 18 at 6pm.
- b. Voting on the charter will happen at the next meeting.
- c. Lyndsey will access base maps from the State website. She would like to spend the next meeting reviewing maps and determining what information we need, and who/how we will obtain the information.
- d. The question was raised over what other planning documents might be available (businesses, farms, etc). Eric will look into what information the Town might already have access to.
- e. Lyndsey would also like to put more information on the website about comprehensive plans and what the committee is working on. The group was generally agreeable to having as much helpful information available as possible.

D. Other

Ryan noted that he has received spam emails from other committee members listed on the website and requested that his email be removed. Lyndsey explained that this has been a frequent issue with anyone listed on the website. Spam emails often come through using the names of anyone listed as "Chair". Grace offered to make a google doc with everyone's emails that can be linked to the website rather than posting individual emails.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11pm.