

Monroe Comprehensive Plan Committee

Minutes

February 19, 2026 6:00pm

Monroe Comprehensive Plan Committee

Attendees: Rebecca Fee, Ray Wirth, Eric Bunker, Lyndsey Marston, Ryan Wing (arrived at 6:10pm)

Lyndsey called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

Action Items:

1. Grace will continue to look into historic research, connecting again with archivists, contacting Charlie Biebel, and posting a notice in the Midcoast Villager.
2. Lyndsey will continue to follow up on aquifer risk and farm/forest acreage data.
3. Lyndsey will follow up with City of Belfast and City of Bangor for community forest information.
4. Ryan and Eric will try to quantify seasonal residences based on tax commitment.
5. Eric will look into how to vote on the plan on election day 2027.
6. Review the Economy checklist questions, and plan requirements.
7. Review Brooks and/or other local plans for the sections above.

Old Business:

A. Review/approve January meeting minutes

Rebecca **made a motion** to approve the January minutes. Eric seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Updates on Water Resources Focus Group Meeting

Troy provided an update on the Water Resources Focus Group meeting. Lyndsey noted that the slides are up on the website for anyone to review and the actual data discussed is in the information checklist. Eric also noted that there was a discussion on culverts and which ones are potential barriers to wildlife. Troy shared that the Planning Board is now looking into culverts and plans to photograph/inventory them in the spring. Rebecca noted that this could be a budget item for the June Town meeting, and Troy also requested that the Conservation Commission assist.

Lyndsey also shared that Beginning with Habitat and IF&W provided additional descriptions of water resources. She has had no response from the State regarding the “moderate risk” land use on significant aquifers. She also reviewed the State’s list of spills and found there are no frequent offenders. There is a list of

underground storage tanks. The code enforcement officer confirmed there are no licensed junkyards, but Eric did note that there is a consent decree on one at this time.

C. Updates on January Action items

1. Grace was not present so there was no update on historical resources.
2. Lyndsey provided an update on resources already discussed:
 1. The State provided additional current use data for 2014.
 2. The Forest Service doesn't share parcel data and referred us to the district forester. Lyndsey contacted the district forester who had no additional information to share other than the fact that the Town can view forestry operations notifications if it creates an account with a municipal email.
 3. Soil and Water Conservation District did not respond.
 4. Maine Tree Growth did not respond
 5. Dept. of Ag doesn't have a list of farms and referred us to our assessor. Lyndsey spoke with Jacki Robbins, who did not have any information beyond current use data.
3. Lyndsey also researched the question of what defines a community forest. She uploaded documents from Trust for Public Land, which focus on community involvement, public access, and permanent protection. The protection could be deed restrictions, conservation easements, ordinances, or something else. She has reached out to the City of Belfast and City of Bangor to see what they use to protect public lands.

New Business:

A. New Committee Member:

Kitty Wilkin has expressed interest in joining the Committee. Lyndsey shared some background information that Kitty had included in an email. Rebecca **made a motion** to approve adding Kitty Wilkin to the Committee. Ray seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Information Checklist review:

The next topic area is Population and Demographics. Lyndsey had uploaded information from the 2020 Census and the Office of the State Economist. The Committee reviewed the information checklist questions, noting that the rate of population growth is expected to stay at 5.8% for the next 10 years. There isn't a huge demand for housing or more services at this time, based on the last period of growth. The school is at capacity at the moment. Municipal services are stable, but may be stretched in the future with an aging population. Committee members were uncertain how many seasonal residences there are in town. Eric and Ryan will try to quantify based on the tax commitment, but we may also need to check with staff.

C. Next Steps/Timeline

- a. Lyndsey noted that we'll move on to Economy section next month. There is a list of Monroe businesses on the drive that could use updating. It originated from a fundraising list, so it includes businesses associated with residents, but not necessarily in Town.
- b. Based on our trajectory, we'll continue to review 1 topic per month. Troy asked if we have anything planned for the June meeting. We'll want to provide an update in the Town report, but will not have anything to vote on, unless we have budget items. If we finish our inventory/assessment this fall, we'll then move on to visioning and addressing strategies and objectives after that. Lyndsey would prefer to vote on the plan on an election day rather than at the Town meeting, if it could encourage better participation. Eric will look into how to make that process legal.

D. Other

- a. Lyndsey noted that she was able to get a login for the Maine Municipal Association website based on the Town's membership. It includes legal resources, trainings, etc. She encouraged everyone to sign up as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05pm.