



## TOWN OF BAR HARBOR

93 Cottage Street

Bar Harbor Maine 04609

# Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting Agenda February 9, 2022, 6:00 – 8:00 PM Via Zoom Meeting Platform

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Members of the public may view the proceeding by joining the Zoom webinar. Instructions on how to join the Zoom webinar and to offer comment during the public hearing portion of the meeting are posted online at: <https://www.barharmoraine.gov/517/Comprehensive-Planning-Committee>.

In order to assure your full participation in this meeting, please contact Tammy DesJardin of any special requirements you might have due to a disability. Please call 288-3329.

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|---|-------------|
| 1. Call to order  | 6:00 – 6:05 |
| 2. Excused absences   | 6:00 – 6:05 |
| 3. Zoom logistic, review of meeting agenda and adoption                             | 6:00 – 6:05 |
| 4. Adoption of January 12, 2022 minutes   | 6:00 – 6:05 |
| 5. Public comment period  | 6:05 – 6:15 |
| 6. Public engagement:   | 6:15 – 6:30 |
| a. Updated outreach plan, draft website, newsletter to Boards/Committees, and flyer |             |
| b. Project video  |             |
| 7. Existing conditions:   | 6:30 – 6:40 |
| a. Overall update   |             |
| b. Online-form  |             |
| c. March visit  |             |
| 8. Land Use Discussion  | 6:40 - 7:10 |
| 9. Housing Discussion   | 7:10 – 7:40 |
| 10. Next steps  | 7:40 – 7:45 |
| a. May meeting date   |             |
| 11. Public comment period   | 7:45 – 7:55 |
| 12. Adjourn   | By 8:00 PM  |



# TOWN OF BAR HARBOR

93 Cottage Street  
Bar Harbor Maine 04609

## Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting January 12, 2022, 6:00 – 8:00 PM Municipal Building/Council Chambers

### MINUTES

Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) members present were Elissa Chesler, Jacquie Colburn, Greg Cox, Kevin DesVeaux, Cherie Galyean, John Kelly, Jim Mahoney, Calistra Martinez, Michael McKernan, Kristin Murphy, Misha Mytar, Val Peacock, Allison Sasner, Kyle Shank, and David Woodside.

Staff Present were Planning Director Michele Gagnon, Assistant Planner Steve Fuller, Code Enforcement Officer Angie Chamberlain, and Deputy Code Enforcement Officer Mike Gurtler. Town Manager Kevin Sutherland was also in the room via Zoom.

Consultants present by Zoom were Steve Whitman, Maggie Mills, and Liz Kelly.

The meeting started at 6:00 PM.

**1. Call to order**

As a chairperson had not yet been elected, Michele Gagnon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**2. Excused absences.** All members were present.

**3. Zoom logistic, review of meeting agenda and adoption.**

Assistant Planner Steve Fuller explained to the members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee attending in person that the consultants were participating remotely and that they could not see them, only hear them, and therefore it was important for people to state their name before speaking and to speak loudly.

On a motion by David Woodside, seconded by Elissa Chesler, the agenda was adopted (15-0)

**4. Adoption of Dec. 14, 2021 minutes**

On a motion by Elissa Chesler with a correction to the date of the public hearing being January 12, not the 19, and a second from David Woodside, the minutes were adopted (15-0).

**5. Role and election of Chair and Vice-chair**

Kyle Shank nominated Misha Mytar as Vice-chairperson and it passed (15-0).  
David Woodside nominated Kyle Shank as Chairperson and it passed (15-0).

**6. Public comment period**

None

**7. Public hearing/adoption Remote Participation Policy**

On a motion by Elissa Chesler, seconded by Jacque Colburn, the Remote Participation Policy was adopted (15-0).

**8. Public engagement**

**a. Outreach and Engagement Plan**

There was a discussion about how information was to flow from the Comprehensive Planning Committee to the boards and committees and vice versa. Steve Whitman said that for the boards and committees that have representation on the Comprehensive Planning Committee, those representatives can provide that feedback. Liz Kelly noted that the existing conditions feedback form should help with the transfer of information. There was a general agreement that a monthly brief could be written and distributed to the boards and committees, and that they could include a Comprehensive Plan update item to their agenda.

Members asked how will public television be used for outreach? Liz Kelly explained that this is typically used as advertisement for the project. Steve Whitman further explained that short educational videos advertising the purpose and progress of the Comprehensive Plan are being planned and that shorter/simpler clips for specific events could also be considered. He went on to add that we could consider doing a short video sooner, possibly featuring the Comprehensive Planning Committee chair and vice-chair to announce the project, how to follow the project and be engaged in the process. There was a brief discussion about stakeholders. It was said that neighborhoods should be seen as stakeholders.

There is an interest to make sure that we quantify the outreach, so we know how many people were engaged in each aspect of these outreach activities. It was suggested that we may want to focus on a more direct and creative approach to stakeholder outreach.

**b. Feedback Form**

There was a feeling that the Comment Form was not user-friendly (too jargony). Steve Whitman explained that at this time, the form was meant for internal use. If, and when, we decide that it will be for external use, then we will change the header to be more mainstream and less academic. The consultant will resend Existing Conditions Feedback Form with a PDF of this presentation.

At the February 9, 2022 meeting, the consultant will present the draft Comprehensive Plan website.

9. *There was no agenda item #9*

10. **Existing conditions:**

**a. Overall update**

Steve Whitman explained that we are starting the Existing Conditions phase of the project, which is the very beginning of the three phases of this planning process. He explained that when he provided a project update to the Planning Board on January 5, 2022, it was said that they did not want to just “update” the 2007 Plan. The consultants will provide the Comprehensive Planning Committee with topic-specific profiles by May to inform and guide this process.

**b. Discussion on Population/Demographics**

The comments on population and demographics are listed below:

- 2020 Census data will be used.
- To have a good understanding of trends, maybe we could include anecdotal information from employers and other stakeholders that can provide some context to accompany this data.
- The last two years have been atypical and really disruptive. They might not be representative of the population trends in Bar Harbor.
- How is full-time resident defined?
- Will we be using seasonal and daytime population figures?
- What is the rate of change in the community? We should talk to big employers. Bar Harbor is more diverse than surrounding communities, and that is a strength.
- What is the timeframe of the sampling? Annually? Quarterly? Micro-peaks within the seasonal season?
- We should consider the different ‘types’ of seasonal population. Seasonal residents, day tourists, employees.
- Data on summer population, daytime population, workers, etc. Maybe H2B visas would provide information on worker data.
- Acadia National Park does not count visitors. The data collected does show patterns of visitation over time.
- Curious about the high school kids graduating. Are they staying or leaving? In- or out- migration of residents?

**c. Discussion on Natural Resources**

The consultants noted that more than half of the land in Bar harbor is protected.

The comments on natural resources are listed below:

**What natural resources (terrestrial and marine) in Bar Harbor are most important to you?**

- Eagle Lake — drinking water source to the town, important destination in Acadia National Park as it is a major attraction and a very popular parking area.
- Public Access – specifically to the Shore Path. It is highly used by all. It was mentioned that overall, Bar Harbor has good access public access to the shore. It was also mentioned that public access to the shore is limited and often access points have no parking. Access to the water.

- Working waterfront and the pressure on workers and fishermen, and conflict between historical use (such as fishing) and other uses.
- Northeast Creek — important resources as a salt marsh, scenic, and for water quality.
- Viewsheds are important for both residents and visitors, alike. Used to have vistas on Route 3 but those are disappearing. Mountain views, of mountains and from mountains.
- Night sky — the impacts of lighting from projects outside of the town political boundaries, such as in Frenchman's Bay (Gouldsboro) – American Aqua Farms, should be considered. Night sky studies were done in the early 2000s. The annual Night Sky Festival (5,000 visits) held in September around the New Moon. Darkest sky east of the Mississippi River. Seek Dark Sky Preserve status. Glow emanating from Pirates Cove area.
- Connections between neighborhoods and open space.
- Crooked Road and Norway Drive farm area/agricultural space, good farmland soils. Salt marsh. These environments are limited in the Town but special.
- Bar Harbor Open Space Plan (not town-adopted).
- Neighborhood trails, Stone Barn, Great Meadow, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust land.
- Carrying capacity of resources.

**In your opinion, are natural resources in Bar Harbor well protected? Are these protections regulatory or non-regulatory?**

- Ballfields – not sure if they are well protected. It was explained that the fields are split into two different lots. One side was transferred to the town with restrictions. The athletic field, to the other side, is private and deeded for athletic use only.
- Hadley Point — Parking overload is hurting local public spaces such as Hadley Point as it was not designed for the use they are seeing. Funding for maintenance is needed.
- Access to information for tourists (e.g., Facebook pages) is increasing and knowledge of these local areas has and continues to spread. Puts burden on maintenance and carrying capacity. Also, the carrying capacity of Town infrastructure, as well as the carrying capacity of the natural resources, has been exceeded.
- Shore path is a privilege and not a right, as it is privately-owned with multiple owners.
- Protection is not just regulatory or non-regulatory.

**In your opinion, what is the role of the Town in protecting natural resources in Bar Harbor? How should the Town collaborate with neighboring communities and the National Park Service?**

**What threats to natural resources are you most concerned about?**

- Habitat fragmentation — As land gets developed it gets further fragmented and will require fire prevention. Need to balance these impacts with the need for housing.
- Burden of the number of people in Bar Harbor on a given day that don't live here. Residents are the tax base – trying to use residents to fund visitation.
- There are many people that use the infrastructure and the resources but do not contribute financially.
- The Land Use Ordinance can be used to help with some of this/lots of missed opportunities, for example the redesign of lighting on Route 3 would have been a

great opportunity to change lighting to adjust for the night sky. But too many hurdles to get the new lights approved and ended up re-installing the old ones.

- Policy fragmentation. Many different stakeholders in Bar Harbor who care about natural resources but doing different things. Very active community. Need to be unified.
- League of Towns and Acadia National Park. The park is part of the League of Towns which is a way to get information from the park to the towns and the Acadia Advisory Committee is a way to get information from the towns to park.
- Carrying capacity of the natural resources and built environment

#### d. Discussion on Historic and Archaeological Resources

The comments on historic and archaeological resources are listed below:

- The entire Downtown is what makes Bar Harbor, Bar Harbor. Big part of who we are/our character. The density, buildings, and activity all contribute to the character. Many sites have been lost, and those that remain should be protected.
- The fire of 1947 burnt a large portion of Bar Harbor. [*The Fire engulfed 67 seasonal estates known as Millionaire's Row on the shores of Frenchman Bay, as well as 170 homes and five grand historic hotels near downtown.*]
- There are a lot of old agricultural and fishing vestiges which gives us a sense of time and place.
- There are many layers to Bar Harbor from being a seasonal place with the rusticators, to a place for the middle-class, and now tourism.
- Three groups often identified: Who is a transient, a transplant, or a trustee of the resources in Bar Harbor?
- There is a depth/breadth of history and heritage around all the time. Including high level museums and iconic buildings.
- The lab has shaped who we are and has a long history.
- Some of the archaeological resources are not well understood and therefore not well protected.
- There is a lack of financial resources to protect old buildings
- Historic and archaeological resources in the park are protected but also under threat due to high number of visitors.
- The character of the downtown is eroding as buildings are being modernized.
- The Design Review Board is doing good work and the town is lucky to have it in place.
- Many historic buildings are owned by non-profits who may not have the funding to maintain them, and they are very well used with high visitation. In general, many of Bar Harbor's historic buildings have high levels of visitation and high costs with maintenance, making preservation a challenge.
- What do we mean by "protected," as far as historic preservation goes?
- It would be good to see the heritage of historic industries like fishing and farming preserved, but also consider how Bar Harbor is supporting the current uses of these practices that have both historical and contemporary significance. For example, how

is access for fishing being preserved, promoted, or restricted today? How are fishing rights being protected?

**10. Next steps**

- Continue discussing the Engagement Plan
- Draft website
- Announcement of project, at least in print
- Begin talking about land use
- Get the questions ahead of time so that the members of the CPC can get prepared.

**11. Public comment period**

Ruth Eveland, a member of the Planning Board, asked that consideration be given to being a Certified Local Government Program [“designed to promote preservation planning and cultural resources protection efforts at the local level that are consistent with state and Federal standards and guidelines”].

**12. Adjourn**

At 7:53 PM on a motion by John Kelly, with multiple seconds, the meeting was adjourned.

**Minutes approved by the Comprehensive Planning Committee on February 9, 2022:**

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**Kyle Shank**  
**Chair, Comprehensive Planning Committee**

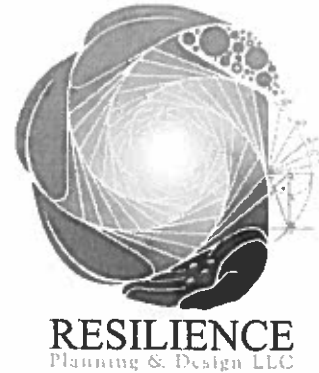
**Date**

MEMO

TO:  
Bar Harbor Comprehensive Plan Committee

FROM:  
Resilience Planning and Design

DATE:  
February 1, 2022



On February 9th, we will continue our discussion of the outreach efforts for this Comprehensive Plan, and discuss two new existing conditions topics. Given the full agenda and draft products created for your review we felt it was most efficient to clarify some details related to these items in this memo.

### **Outreach Related Items**

- **Updated Outreach Plan** (attached)
- **Draft Project Flyer for print and digital use** (attached)
- **Draft Project Newsletter for Boards and Committees** (attached)
- **Draft Website** - We've developed a draft project website for the Comprehensive Plan that includes a home page, an about page, a get involved page, and a documents page. To save time during the committee meeting, we ask that you provide your feedback using the attached "**Bar Harbor Website Editing Matrix**". Once you complete the matrix, please send it to us **by the morning of February 9th**. We will identify any edits that need to be brought back to the larger group for discussion.
  - <https://bit.ly/bar-harbor-comp-plan>
  - See Matrix for comments (attached)
- **Existing Conditions Feedback Form** – This is the updated form that Committee members, staff, and key stakeholders can use to submit topic specific ideas and questions that will further inform the consulting team.
  - **Understanding Bar Harbor Today**



## **Existing Conditions Topics**

For the existing conditions topic discussions that will follow we have provided a list of potential questions as requested:

### **Land Use:**

- Are a diverse set of land use types represented in Bar Harbor (e.g., industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, forest)? If not, what land use types are underrepresented and should the Town prioritize them?
- Are there areas of Town that you see as opportunities for new development or redevelopment? What is it about these areas that makes them suitable?
- Do you feel that the current zoning in Bar Harbor is effective? If so, what makes it effective? If not, what improvements could be made?
- In your opinion, is the downtown space used effectively? Should future development and redevelopment downtown target year-round residential use or tourists? Does downtown have sufficient open space, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and parking?
- Is the Town of Bar Harbor prepared for future residential growth and expanded tourism that may strain road infrastructure (traffic) and create further heavy seasonal use?

### **Housing:**

- What are the most pressing housing issues facing the community today? Do you see those issues getting worse with time?
- In what ways do you think the second home market and/or short-term rental market is impacting Bar Harbor? Either positively or negatively.
- Do you believe you have the available housing (types and price points) to support current residents and employees?
- If not, what tools does the town have to assist with housing production and/or the subsidy of affordable housing?
- Are there partner organizations we should be talking to/thinking about to assist in addressing housing challenges?
- Do you believe the zoning you have in place now is an effective tool for housing production? Are there any existing barriers in the zoning or in the approval/permitting process that we should know about?
- Are there locations in town where you think housing would work well or be desirable? Areas where it wouldn't? Would this depend on the type of housing proposed?

<b>2.12.22 Draft Bar Harbor Comprehensive Plan Outreach and Engagement Plan</b>				
<b>Outreach Techniques</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Jan - July 2022</b>	<b>Aug - Dec 2022</b>
<b>Publicizing the Project and Getting the Word Out</b>				
Print and digital flyers - announcing project, linking to website, and displaying how to participate, printed versions can be hung up in public places and on community bulletin boards, digital versions can be shared via social media and through e-newsletters	Consulting Team, Town Staff, Committee			
Project Website - Landing place for all information related to project including background, educational resources, draft materials and relevant documents, details on how to participate, an email subscriber list sign up form, and contact info. Post a link to this site on a highly visible, clear spot on the Town's website.	Consulting Team	Launched in Feb, updated regularly throughout project		
Direct Communications - To other boards, departments, committees, organizations, and other stakeholders - send periodic announcements about project and participation opportunities through project e-list, Town's email list, school newsletter, etc. Provide regular updates to town boards.	Consulting Team will draft announcement(s), Town Staff/Committee members assist in delivering communications			
Social media communications - Ongoing updates, engagement opportunities, etc. - utilize the Town of Bar Harbor FB Page and the Town of Bar Harbor Planning and Code Enforcement FB Page, encouraging sharing on pages managed by partners	Consulting Team will provide content, Town Staff and Committee help distribute			
Public Access TV - Create a project video and plug website/how to get involved	Consulting Team, Town Staff, and Public Access Staff			
Press Releases - On project updates, announcements, events, etc. for local newspapers	Consulting Team			
Direct Mailings - The consultant and committee will create a postcard ahead of Forum 1 for mailing by the Town	Consulting Team, Town Staff, Committee			
Town Newsletter - Periodic newsletter articles sent out through Town providing project updates				
<b>Soliciting Feedback and Active Community Engagement</b>				
Surveys and Polling - Through Polco, both online and print versions	Consulting Team			
Direct Outreach to Stakeholders - Meet people where they already are, host or attend a number of smaller group conversations at key locations with key groups, populations, etc. including meetings at large employers, with community organizations, neighborhood groups, people with communication and transportation challenges, etc. Utilize Bar Harbor's Stakeholder List for this project to target specific groups. Explore creative ideas to interact and engage with Bar Harbor community members regarding the town's future.	Consulting Team, Town Staff, Committee			
Focus Groups - As needed, small group conversations that invite specific stakeholders/area experts to discuss complex town issues and to refine implementation actions	Consulting Team and Town Staff			
Community Forum #1 - Existing Conditions - held in multiple locations (consider online and in person), decentralized approach	Consulting Team, Town Staff, Committee		June/July 2022	
Community Forum #2 - Visioning, Future Land Use, and Actions - held in multiple locations (consider online and in person), decentralized approach	Consulting Team, Town Staff, Committee			Nov/Dec 2022
Public Hearing for Adoption	Consulting Team, Town Staff, Committee			

LET'S SHAPE OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

# 2035 Comprehensive Plan for Bar Harbor, Maine

Bar Harbor is creating a **COMMUNITY DRIVEN**, long-range plan for the future growth, development, and protection of our community! We need your help articulating what a **VIBRANT FUTURE** for Bar Harbor should look like!

Visit our **PROJECT WEBSITE** for public participation opportunities!



Scan Me with your phone or  
use this website address:  
[https://bit.ly/  
bar-harbor-comp-plan](https://bit.ly/bar-harbor-comp-plan)



# 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2022

The Town has begun the process of developing a new Comprehensive Plan with an outlook to the year 2035. The project is overseen by the Comprehensive Planning Committee, which consists of 15 Town Council-appointed residents with a variety of backgrounds.

## PROJECT UPDATE

The Comprehensive Planning Committee, along with our team of consultants (Resilience Planning and Design, FB Environmental, and RKG Associates), is working to get topic-specific profiles ready for public review in May. The team is presently sifting through state-provided information and 1,900 data files specific to Bar Harbor. The Town Assessor is working to provide the team with 60 GIS data layers and aerial photos. They are also reviewing the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, for reference (the plan being worked on now will be a brand-new plan, rather than an update).

The team is also constructing a dedicated Comprehensive Plan web page that will be live sometime in February. At its January 12 meeting, the Comprehensive Planning Committee began a conversation on population and demographics, natural resources, and historic and archaeological resources. Subjects including housing and transportation are set for upcoming months..

*"We have the darkest sky easily accessible to people east of the Mississippi River."*

*Elissa Chesler, speaking about one of the natural resources that makes Bar Harbor special*

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kyle Shank, Chairperson

Misha Mytar, Vice-chairperson

Elissa Chesler

Jacquie Colburn

Greg Cox

Kevin DesVeaux

Cherie Galyean

John Kelly

Jim Mahoney

Calistra Martinez

Michael McKernan

Kristin Murphy

Val Peacock

Allison Sasner

David Woodside

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting,  
Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 6:00 PM**

*The public is encouraged to attend. Zoom information can be accessed through the Comprehensive Planning Committee's webpage:*

<https://www.barharbormaine.gov/517/>

[Comprehensive-Planning-Committee.](https://www.barharbormaine.gov/517/Comprehensive-Planning-Committee)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Michele Gagnon, Planning Director

P: 288-3329 E: [planner@barharbormaine.gov](mailto:planner@barharbormaine.gov)

### WEBSITE

<https://www.barharbormaine.gov/501/Comprehensive-Plan>

