



City of Auburn, Maine

Office of Planning & Permitting

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Draft Minutes

Comprehensive Plan Committee

March 25, 2025 at 6:PM

Council Chambers Second Floor Auburn Hall

1. **ROLL CALL:** Committee Members, City Staff and Consultants

Rex Rhodes, Heidi Bertels, Riley Bergeron, Paul Jacques, Dana Staples (Vice Chair), John Cleveland (Chair), Jeff Harmon, Rick Whiting, Matt Duvall, Bruce Rioux, Virginia Keel, Kelly Butler - Becky Conrad arrived at 6:40

Committee Members Absent: Jane Costlow, Denis Bergeron, Tim Cowen, Adam Lee

Staff Members present: Dave Hediger, Eric Cousens, Natlie Thomsen, Phil Crowell and Denis D'Auteuil

Consultant Members present: Alison Tobey and Kevin Price

2. **MINUTES:** Minutes from February 25, 2025

Motion to approve: Dana Staples Second: Paul Jacques

Vote: Unanimously approved

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Public Present

4. **DRAFT PROJECT SCHEDULE:** Review and Comments

Alison Tobey shared the proposed timeline and breakdown of tasks and deliverables with the committee. The tasks coming up in the coming months

include producing the draft of inventory chapters for the committee to read and review, determining subcommittees based on interests and knowledge among the committee members and some initial outreach efforts to engage the community.

The committee, consultant and staff discussed the inventory chapters and inquired about the best way to provide input into the chapters. The consultant has already made an information request to the city and city staff has been sharing relevant documents and resources with the consultant to aid in the drafting of the inventory chapters. The consultant is also meeting with department heads to interview them and gather information.

Dana Staples inquired about subcommittees and the commitment involved in participating in those meetings. Expressed interest in having access to the data provided for the drafting of inventory chapters.

Dave Hediger offers to have the staff share the list of documents that Berry Dunn has requested as part of the data collection with the committee and if committee members want to see any of the documents or information that has been shared to make a request to staff and that information can be shared.

17:02

5. **DRAFT ENGAGEMENT PLAN:** Review and Comments

Alison Tobey shared the engagement plan with the committee. She touched on various ways that the committee, staff and consultant can engage with the community and stakeholders such as online resources, social media outlets, in-person events, meetings, workshops, print materials, etc.

Target audiences include Auburn residents, local businesses, community organizations, boards and committees, social service providers, regional organization and visitors.

Social Pinpoint website will be able to capture information from visitors, collect opinions and suggestions and can morph and develop throughout the process based on the type of engagement and feedback we are looking to receive at that point in the process.

24:58

6. **DRAFT SOCIAL PINPOINT WEBSITE:** Review and Comments (Here is the link: <https://engageberrydunn.mysocialpinpoint.com/plan-auburn> shortened link: <https://tinyurl.com/plan-auburn>)

Alison Tobey walked through the draft version of the Social Pinpoint webpage. She showed the various features of the platform to capture engagement and

feedback. The webpage will be updated throughout the process based on the type of feedback we are looking to capture from the community. Activity on the website can be tracked to see how many people engage, where they are coming from, how long they spend on the page, etc.

Heidi Bertels asked about how information posted on the website is moderated. Alison shared that there is an automated monitoring tool that will filter out strong or inappropriate language or non-relevant information that is posted on the site. Staff also has the ability to remove comments that don't meet guidelines.

John Cleveland asked about other engagement tools and more details on those tools, Auburn Facebook page and other social media. Eric Cousens mentioned that there are thousands of followers on the official Auburn social media sites and those will be used to direct people to the Social Pinpoint page through links and QR codes.

John Cleveland asked about engagement opportunities with students and youth in the city. The consultant mentioned that they will be meeting with school representatives this week for department interviews and can discuss opportunities to engage with students. Staff also mentioned that the city has student representative members on both the City Council and Planning Board, and they can engage those student members to run meetings or events within the school.

Matt Duvall inquired about ways that the committee or community members can engage in topic-related discussions (examples Planning and how that relates to the environment, etc). Alison Tobey mentioned that Bangor, as an example, held a series of meetings that discussed various parts of Planning and how that relates to land use and development and Auburn could explore holding some of those sessions if there is interest. GIS map features also will allow the consultant to create story maps that will pull information out of the GIS map layers that will allow people to explore parts of town.

50:00

7. OTHER DOCUMENTS

- a. Strategic Plan – accomplishments to date
- b. List of Inventory Chapters
- c. Subcommittee options

Alison Tobey shared the list of inventory chapters and suggested groupings for subcommittees.

Dana Staples asked about the charge for subcommittees and what deliverables are expected from the subcommittees.

The board and consultant discuss that subcommittees can focus their efforts on the various chapters related to their topics and provide edits, insights, comments on chapters related to those topics as well as to run meetings or discussions later in the process that focus on the various topics later in the process.

Subcommittees also provide some focus and ownership from committee members over parts of the plan which can be helpful to the process.

The committee determined they would like to use the 3-subcommittee structure proposed by the consultant.

Bruce Rioux expressed appreciation for the amount of work that the consultant has put into planning out this process so far.

1:06:30

8. NEW MEETING DATE: April 2025

The regularly scheduled meeting for April would fall on Tuesday, April 22nd, but the City Council meeting will be held that day since April 21st is Patriot's Day. The committee voted to move the meeting to Thursday, April 24th.

9. ADJOURMENT –

Motion to adjourn: Paul Jacques

Second: Dana Staples

Vote: Unanimous

1:09:56