

Local Comprehensive Planning Committee (LCPC)

Minutes

Thursday, August 25, 2022 at 6:00 PM

2022 SEP 23 AM 04:41
BARNSTABLE TOWN CLERK

Elizabeth Jenkins, Director of Planning and Development, welcomes the committee and introduces herself. She opens the meeting by announcing that Steven Costello will be presiding and facilitating the elections, and then he will turn it over to the newly elected Chair. She introduces Genna Ziino, Administrative Assistant, who will be taking meeting minutes; Ryan Bennett, who is the Housing Coordinator and is playing an important role in town-wide housing initiatives; and Jill Slankas from the Barrett Group, who will be the Project Manager for this.

CALL TO ORDER

Steven Costello calls the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

Member	Present	Absent
Steven Costello – Chair	X	
Felicia Penn – Vice Chair	X	
Wendy Northcross – Clerk	X	
Cheryl Powell	X	
Mark Hansen	X	
Amanda Converse	X	
Sue Rohrbach	X	
Meaghan Mort	X	
Carlos Barbosa	X	
Fran Parks	X	
Lindsey Counsell	X	
Tom Lee		X
Jennifer Williams	X	
Bob Twiss	X	
Avery Revere	X (late)	

Also in attendance are Elizabeth Jenkins – Director of Planning and Development, Ryan Bennett – Housing Coordinator, and Genna Ziino – Administrative Assistant

NOTICE OF RECORDING

This meeting is being recorded and broadcast on Channel 18 and in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A Section 20, the Committee must inquire whether anyone is taping this meeting and to please make their presence known.

No response.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Before the committee begins addressing the agenda, Cheryl Powell asks for an introduction for Steven Costello, as the minutes from the prior meeting didn't include one for him. Steven Costello gives some background on himself: he's been a resident of Barnstable for 27 years; he has 3 children who attended Barnstable schools from kindergarten through high school; he is the second-longest-standing member of the Planning Board and served as Chair until recently; he lives in Osterville; he is currently working as an insurance broker for a firm out of Boston; he has some local initiatives and owns a commercial real estate building in Hyannis promoting minority business interests.

Steven Costello explains the voting process: he will ask for nominations for Chair, then Vice Chair, then Clerk. Amanda Converse asks for an understanding of roles and responsibilities for each title. Ms. Jenkins says she will derive the role explanations from the Town Manager memorandum to the Town Council that established the LCPC, as well as customary experience administering boards, committees, and commissions in the town of Barnstable. She explains that the Chair primarily presides over meetings, works with staff on agenda setting, and is the leader and guide for discussions. Vice Chair's primary responsibility is to act as Chair when the Chair is not able to, so they need to be an active member. The Clerk works with the record keeper to closely review minutes and make sure the committee is operating openly, transparently, and in accordance with open meeting law.

They begin the vote. Steven Costello asks for nominations for Chair. Lindsey Counsell nominates Steven Costello. Steven Costello asks the committee for any additional nominations. There are no additional nominations, and Steven Costello accepts the position and thanks the committee.

Vote:

Aye: Cheryl Powell, Felicia Penn, Wendy Northcross, Mark Hansen, Amanda Converse, Sue Rohrbach, Meaghan Mort, Carlos Barbosa, Fran Parks, Lindsey Counsell, Jennifer Williams, Bob Twiss, Steven Costello
Nay: None

Chair Steven Costello asks for nominations for Vice Chair. Cheryl Powell nominates Felicia Penn. Fran Parks seconds. Meaghan Mort nominates Wendy Northcross. Mark Hansen seconds.

The committee votes on Felicia Penn:

In favor: Steven Costello, Cheryl Powell, Felicia Penn, Carlos Barbosa, Fran Parks, Lindsey Counsell, Jennifer Williams

The committee votes on Wendy Northcross:

In favor: Mark Hansen, Amanda Converse, Sue Rohrbach, Meaghan Mort, Bob Twiss

Felicia Penn accepts the position and thanks the committee.

Steven Costello asks for nominations for Clerk. Cheryl Powell nominates Wendy Northcross. Steven Costello asks the committee for any additional nominations. There are no additional nominations, and Wendy Northcross accepts the position.

Vote:

Aye: Steven Costello, Cheryl Powell, Felicia Penn, Wendy Northcross, Mark Hansen, Amanda Converse, Sue Rohrbach, Meaghan Mort, Carlos Barbosa, Fran Parks, Lindsey Counsell, Jennifer Williams, Bob Twiss
Nay: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lindsey Counsell has a correction for his introduction: he was formerly the Chairman of the Conservation Commission and the Land Bank Committee. It is also noted that Steven Costello's introduction needs to be added to the minutes. Meaghan Mort requests to receive the minutes as an attachment rather than just a link, as some members did not realize what the link was.

Cheryl Powell makes a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Felicia Penn seconds.

Vote:

Aye: Steven Costello, Cheryl Powell, Felicia Penn, Wendy Northcross, Mark Hansen, Amanda Converse, Sue Rohrbach, Meaghan Mort, Carlos Barbosa, Fran Parks, Lindsey Counsell, Jennifer Williams, Bob Twiss
Nay: None

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Group guidelines for conduct and decision making

Elizabeth Jenkins explains that down the line, this group will be charged with synthesizing a lot of complex information and translating that into actions for the community. It's fundamental the committee has a dynamic that allows for productive discussion. It's a very big group with different perspectives and she wants to make sure everyone's voice is heard—that's why she wants the committee to talk about their discussion methodology up front to ensure that discussions remain respectful and productive. There are also fundamentals and ground rules that come with being a public body: they need to comply with open meeting law and conflict of interest law, etc. She wants to let the committee know a few things they can expect from staff: as planners and public servants they're committed to continually pursuing and faithfully serving the public interest and safeguarding public trust; they have special concern for long-range consequences of past and present actions; they pay special attention to the interrelatedness of decisions and perhaps their unintended consequences; they uphold equity principles and strategies including economic, social, and racial. She asks the committee to discuss ground rules for discussion and how they want to vote.

Chair Steven Costello says he is a proponent of each member voting and stating a position for why they're voting that way, because it allows them to understand where the other members are coming from. He recommends a majority vote vs a two thirds vote—he thinks that makes sense in terms of productivity for such a large committee. Carlos Barbosa seconds using majority vote.

Cheryl Powell asks Elizabeth Jenkins if there are any guidelines for this committee that they should know about. Ms. Jenkins answers that this is an advisory committee so it doesn't have any specific voting thresholds called out in statutes the way regulatory committees do—the purpose of this discussion is to establish consensus on what that voting threshold will look like for this committee and how they will handle debate and disagreement.

Felicia Penn agrees with majority vote, but thinks it should be clarified that it's the majority of those present.

Sue Rohrbach asks if they need to establish quorum. Elizabeth Jenkins says quorum for this committee is 9.

Member Avery Revere arrives.

Chair Steven Costello establishes that the committee will be operating on a majority vote basis.

The Chairman steers the discussion towards the Code of Conduct. Amanda Converse wants to make sure everyone has a voice and feels comfortable giving their input. She is in support of the Code of Conduct but wants to make sure meetings aren't dominated by one person or another. Steven Costello agrees and asks the members to state their opinion when they vote, to help understand one another's position and reasoning.

Fran Parks requests that committee members wait to speak until they've been recognized by the Chair. Mark Hansen agrees.

Felicia Penn wants to clarify a line on the last page of the Code of Conduct, which says, "refrain from giving instructions or requesting assistance from town staff and channel all activities through Town Manager." Is that correct? Elizabeth Jenkins says the Code of Conduct is more a reference document and that line does not apply to this committee—staff is always happy to help. She notes that if there are requests of their consultant, please run those through staff. It is established that Jim Kupfer, Senior Planner will be the committee's point person.

Meaghan Mort asks if the documents the committee receives are public and if members are allowed to share them on social media. Elizabeth Jenkins says all documents shared with this committee are shared with the public. Social media has different policies so she'll have to talk to the Communications Director for an answer to that. She recognizes that social media is an important communication tool with the public.

Sue Rorhbach says sections A and B are very specific and cover a lot. She supports that and thinks it's important that the committee establish up front what is expected of them. She asks if the committee has received a copy of open meeting law and conflict of interest. Elizabeth Jenkins says she will recirculate those. Lindsey Counsell suggests that staff send around the link the legal department has for members to get their certificate.

Cheryl Powell suggests that all committee communication should be directed through the Chair. Chair Steven Costello would rather not do that—he would prefer each person handle their own communication.

2. Presentation and discussion on Community Engagement Plan for public input on the town vision and growth statement, including community connections, and roles and responsibilities of Committee, Advisory Committee, and others with respect to outreach

Carly Venditti from Barrett Planning Group walks the committee through a presentation of the engagement plan for the Local Comprehensive Plan (LCP), and explains that through discussion with the committee, she hopes to build out the plan. The goal is to outline the committee's responsibilities as they engage the public.

The presentation covers the timeline, public outreach, stakeholders, special interests, committee responsibilities, what Barrett will be providing, and different types of engagement.

Ms. Venditti asks the committee who the stakeholders, advocates, organizations, advisors, and decision-makers are in order to get the public engaged. The committee recommends Amplify POC; Health Ministry; Love Live Local; civic associations; small business advocacy organizations; Home Builders and Remodelers Association; PTA organizations; churches; village associations; Community Action Committee of Cape Cod & Islands; historical societies; fire districts; town departments; police and associated social workers; cultural institutions; social service agencies; NAMI; Bay Cove; anyone providing services for the disabled or those with mental health or substance use issues; health organizations; treatment centers; homeless housing; businesses that operate in the waterfront district or the town; Cape Cod Hospital; airport; regional transit authorities based here; outside developers for large projects in the pipeline; Housing Assistance Corporation; those building new housing in the town; young business professional associations; nonprofits.

Ms. Venditti tells the committee there will be more opportunities for them to submit any other ideas they think of, and explains that these stakeholders will get more specific as they move forward and plan actual engagement opportunities.

Chair Steven Costello notices two audience members are recording and asks them to please name themselves. The first says his name is Wandering Hippie. The second says his name is Nunya Business. The Chairman welcomes them.

Asynchronous engagement (display boards, social media campaigns, comment walls, surveys, etc.)

Ms. Venditti asks the committee about where they'd like to see asynchronous engagement. The committee recommends community centers in town both adult and youth; wherever there's parental interaction; Town Hall; sports games at schools; any place with parents that wouldn't normally have time to attend meetings; post office bulletin boards; school lobbies; libraries; sending flyers home with students if that's allowed; healthcare facilities; SEIU – union in Cape Cod Healthcare; YMCA; JFK museum, Cape Cod Community College; golf courses; Cape Cod Mall; village association events.

Mark Hansen comments that for engagement, you usually need a message you can deliver in under a minute that is going to follow up with an action. Members of the committee need to identify where they have a sphere

of influence where they can then go out with a message in mind to deliver quickly and that will make people want to take action or follow up.

Meaghan Mort asks if committee members can go to places where there's a lot of housing and talk to people in those communities who might not otherwise have access to this information. Ms. Venditti answers that yes, part of the process is identifying the pockets where people may not be able to attend meetings or get this information elsewhere and being an advocate for them so their voices are heard.

Carlos Barbosa says he plans to gather all pastors and ministers of the immigrant community and have them take a message back to their churches and speak to their whole community that way. Cheryl Powell suggests utilizing a meeting of the Council of Churches.

Chair Steven Costello wants to identify what they are asking of people—what is the core message? The committee is identifying very different places with very different audiences, so the Chairman wants to ensure the core message is one that will resonate with all kinds of people. Ms. Venditti says right now they're at a visioning stage, but a good question to start with is, "What is your vision of Barnstable over the next 10 years?" She says a core message will be part of the materials that staff prepares for the committee. There will be an elevator pitch and a FAQ page to help members navigate different situations. She also explains that their plan will be engaging technology, whether QR codes or comment cards, which will help places with lots of foot traffic.

Amanda Converse suggests that in addition to inside message boards, outside message boards or displays on main streets would be a good idea if it's possible. Felicia Penn suggests a way to reach people who don't have time to attend meetings is the 6:10 HyLine ferry—it's workers who commute to Nantucket but live here. She's not sure about the first ferry for Steamship Authority, but thinks it's worth looking into.

Cheryl Powell wants to ensure that all materials will be uniform and have consistent branding—members should not be creating anything themselves. Chair Steven Costello agrees that members should only use approved content. Ms. Venditti assures the committee that across all marketing materials there will be consistent branding, and there will be translation options.

Carlos Barbosa takes a moment to thank the committee because this is the first time in his 35 years of living here that he feels a portion of the immigrant community has been included in a conversation like this. He's excited to be able to take this back to his community and bring their ideas back to the committee.

Informational engagement (tabling activities, site visits, coffee hours, etc.)

Ms. Venditti asks the committee to think from the public's perspective and consider where in town they would like to be engaged. She asks the committee what events they have on their schedules now that could be opportunities for this. Suggestions from the committee include the JFK museum, farmers markets, first Fridays, Live Love Local, Hyannis Open Streets in September and October, local garden centers and local markets, post offices, coffee shops, libraries, places where locals do their shopping, Centerville shopping centers, Osterville Farmers Market, restaurants.

Ms. Venditti asks the committee to think about which members would be comfortable tabling and having walkup conversations with the public, and when they are available or not available.

Group engagement (open houses, special interest, gathering people in larger numbers, etc.)

Ms. Venditti asks the committee if they currently know of any events where they could see this as an opportunity. Cheryl Powell suggests that the committee think about this as homework.

Amanda Converse asks for the timeframe for this, and Ms. Venditti clarifies that it is September to October. Elizabeth Jenkins adds that the plan is iterative so as the process goes along, the committee can assess how it's going. There's flexibility with timeframes.

Chair Steven Costello mentions that a September/October timeframe misses a potential window of opportunity because many people are in flux that time of year—summer residents may no longer be available, for example. If anyone has things on the horizon that are valuable, he thinks those should be considered now.

Felicia Penn says for group engagement, jumping on events that are already established makes sense: civic associations, village associations, houses of worship, rotary clubs, etc. Another option is voluntary drop-in SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in the Selectmens Conference Room.

Wendy Northcross suggests trying to get a breakout session at the upcoming Housing Summit with the Housing Assistance Corp. Sue Rohrbach says she can help with this.

Chair Steven Costello mentions that the Osterville Village Library's golf tournament in September would be a good opportunity: they could have a handout with a QR code at the registration table.

Avery Revere thinks acting fast in order to capture feedback from summer residents is important. She recommends getting some simple marketing materials with an action request ready within the next two weeks if possible, to pique the interest of summer people. In response, Cheryl Powell wonders if the committee needs to meet more often in order to get a plan in place in time. Elizabeth Jenkins asks Ms. Venditti what she thinks are appropriate next steps for the committee, to which Ms. Venditti replies that she will be collecting information via Doodle poll that will help identify which members are available when and for what. From there it will be easier to align opportunities and plan engagement. Chair Steven Costello says he does not feel the need to have additional meetings. He would be more inclined to fully understand the mission and the deliverable so he's comfortable talking to anyone about it.

Mark Hansen asks Ms. Venditti if the committee should be thinking of these engagements as information gathering, or more passing along information to residents. Ms. Venditti responds that it's both—it's telling people about the process and the timeline, but it's also about listening.

Wendy Northcross suggests that when people are going through town registration or renewal processes, there could be a note about LCP with a link. Sue Rohrbach adds that information could also be included when the town sends out tax bills, water bills, etc. Meaghan Mort thinks the committee could ask political committees to boost this message or include LCP information in their newsletters.

Mark Hansen asks if there is a metric for how many people they're trying to engage at this point. Do the consultants require a certain amount of information to make an assumption about data? Ms. Venditti answers that there is no number. Judi Barrett of Barrett Group joins the conversation to add that from experience, it becomes obvious once you have a representative amount of information. They do track metrics for larger events (where people live, what age group they are, whether they're seasonal, etc.) which they then compare against census data to see if engagement aligns with the demographics of the town or if it's leaning any one way.

Meaghan Mort requests a dedicated LCPC social media page for each platform. Ms. Venditti agrees that that's a good idea, and Elizabeth Jenkins confirms she will work with Communications to get that set up.

Bob Twiss suggests that staff periodically send the committee updated lists like the religious organization list Ms. Venditti previously created. He feels that instead of the committee starting from zero to make a list like they've done today, it would be easier and less time consuming for the committee to see an existing list and identify what's missing. Ms. Venditti responds that she will send the committee the draft of the engagement plan with the lists she has, and once the plan is updated, she will send the committee an updated plan with updated lists.

Avery Revere mentions that she might be able to stand somewhere in Barnstable Village on the Saturday of Labor Day Weekend to talk to people about the LCP and wonders when staff will have marketing materials ready. Ms. Venditti responds that she will get materials for Ms. Revere. Amanda Converse asks what the call to action will be on those materials. Ms. Venditti responds that it will have a link to the LCPC website and social media, and an online comment card or directions to physical comment cards. Sue Rorhback requests a document where she could capture names and email addresses, which Ms. Venditti says staff can create.

Felicia Penn asks if something Storycorps-esque would be an option—where people could talk directly into a recording device (name, age, where they live, their vision for the town in a minute or less, etc.). Steven Costello agrees that that is a great idea. He also requests a QR code that will direct people to an online survey that allows people to be more thoughtful and allows us to gather critical, digestible data.

Ms. Venditti mentions that she expects materials to be available next week. She will also have virtual office hours next week (hours TBD), in case committee members have any questions for her.

Avery Revere mentions that she had trouble downloading the meeting materials using Firefox on a Mac. Sue Rohrbach also had a problem on her Mac. Elizabeth Jenkins confirms that PDFs should work.

Elizabeth Jenkins presents the committee with some potential LCPC logos. The committee has a brief discussion about the different logos and additional ideas.

3. Discussion of existing conditions work: interviews, committee participation, etc.

Ryan Bennett, Housing Coordinator, provides an update on the Housing Production Plan (HPP), which kicked off earlier this month. A HPP is a community's proactive strategy for addressing their housing needs and challenges. It's a required component of a LCP, so she and others will be ticking off that part of the LCP for the committee. They've just finished their initial public outreach (10 focus group sessions with 8 members in each session) and have a community forum on September 21 at 6 PM at the Adult Community Center, where the consultant team will give a presentation on what they've learned from the focus group outreach sessions and will provide information on the needs assessment. The meeting will be in person but there will be an online poll available as well. There will be another meeting in November (date TBD). Steven Costello adds, as a member of the Planning Board, that once they understand what the goal is in terms of housing production, they plan to create a sort of dashboard to track progress and make sure they are reaching the goals they set.

Jill Slankas gives an update on interviews they've held with town of Barnstable staff to gather information on the existing conditions and have staff think about what they need to feel fully equipped going forward. They met with DPW, wastewater, the new school superintendent, the community center leader, and the town engineer. They have a few more interviews in the coming weeks. They've gathered a lot of helpful information to put together the existing inventory and assessment portion of the LCP update.

Carlos Barbosa makes a point to say that over the past few months he has been in multiple meetings about the housing crisis, but he feels that people just continue talking about it rather than taking action. He says the issue is not just affordable housing—it's housing in general. He feels that something needs to be done about it now.

Lindsey Counsell asks about the previous LCP: he noticed that there are many actions and commitments to review/study something, etc. and wonders if anyone kept track of that progress. Elizabeth Jenkins answers that that review process is part of the process for updating the LCP and is happening now—it's something town staff is working on, and that analysis will be brought forward to the committee in the upcoming existing conditions meetings. Lindsey Counsell reiterates that some of those actions are very pertinent to the committee moving forward. Elizabeth Jenkins assures the committee that there are concrete dates (set by the state) for updating the plans, which is why they are running the HPP concurrent to the LCP. They will be bringing Hazard Mitigation in front of the council in the next month as well. As plans develop, she will loop in the committee.

4. Next meeting date

The committee discusses availability for their next meeting. They land upon Thursday, September 22 at 6 PM in person and Thursday, October 27 at 6 PM in person. Felicia Penn, Wendy Northcross, and Lindsey Counsell will not be able to attend the October 27 meeting.

Steven Costello notes that if there is an agenda a member feels strongly about but they can't make the meeting, the member can provide comments prior to the meeting and the committee will include those in the discussion.

Avery Revere confirms with Ms. Jenkins that meetings are recorded and available online. Cheryl Powell confirms with Ms. Jenkins that there is no rule that members who didn't make the previous meeting need to Mullin in.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark from West Barnstable would like members to have name plates. He thinks Channel 18 would be the best way to get information out to the public, if they could air it at crucial times (6 AM, 9 AM, 12 PM, 3 PM, 6 PM, and 9 PM). He also notes that the town transfer station has an antiquated board where they post closures—he thinks the Town Manager should be asked to revamp that board to create an electronic board that has public information, so the thousands of people who visit the transfer station daily could see what's going on in town.

MATTERS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Cheryl Powell makes a motion to adjourn.

Vote:

Aye: Steven Costello, Cheryl Powell, Felicia Penn, Wendy Northcross, Mark Hansen, Amanda Converse, Sue Rohrbach, Meaghan Mort, Carlos Barbosa, Fran Parks, Lindsey Counsell, Jennifer Williams, Bob Twiss, Avery Revere

Nay: None

Respectfully submitted,
Genna Ziino, Administrative Assistant

Further detail may be obtained by viewing the video via Channel 18 on demand at <http://www.town.barnstable.ma.us>