

Focus Group Notes

A. Report to 2023 Brooklin Comprehensive Planning Committee prepared by Si Balch

A Learning Discussion with 2003 Brooklin Comp Plan Committee members occurred on December 12, 2021, at the Brooklin Friend Memorial Library from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Two members of the 2003 Comprehensive Planning Committee attended in-person and two responded by email. Several others expressed interest in sharing their thoughts. Seven members of the 2023 Comprehensive Planning Committee attended in person.

Prior to the meeting, all 2003 Plan Committee members were provided the following sections of their 2003 Final Comprehensive Plan: Part N Summary, Section Two; Goals, Objectives, Implementation Strategies and Future Use Plan; and Section II C, Brooklin Capital Investment Plan. These were provided to them via email with the intention to “jog” their memories and give them some guidance for the discussion.

They were asked to consider two questions:

1. How do you think Brooklin has done in following/implementing the suggestions in the 2003 report?
2. Do you have any advice for the 2023 Comp Plan Comm in carrying out their tasks?

S. Balch did not summarize any of the discussion in an effort to provide a direct account.

Note: All Committee Members' answers are italicized.

First written response was as follows:

- *Here are a few thoughts as I looked through what we did back in 2003. I will start with your second question first...*

Do you have any advice for the 2023 Comprehensive Plan Committee in carrying out their tasks?

- *Social Media should be your friend during this process, you will surely get more than you bargained for, should be maybe a good in site. I would use the official town FB page as this is a town project and doesn't need to reinvent the wheel so to speak.*
- *Make sure your meetings are well advertised and open.*
- *I would have meetings where the whole Selectboard, you will want and need their feedback and input.*
- *Maybe a meeting with the whole Planning Board too to get their input.*

- *Meeting with these two groups it will be like all working forward together towards the goals of the Town.*
- *Other groups to meet with Fire Dept, PTF, Keeping Society, to name a few can't think of others off hand...maybe special invites of business in town?!*
- *Brooklin is a small community, full of a variety of people! It has changed a great deal from when I was growing up here. From lots of kids and hard-working families to more of a retirement community. But I think the population ages goes in waves, or maybe I am just getting up to that retirement age! You still have the old timers that grew up here and don't want things to change, "If it ain't broke don't fix it." attitudes and "Don't be telling me what to do!" So, you do have to keep that in mind, we are a small New England Coastal Town. (Stubborn, hard headed, and hardworking) That is one of the main reasons we all love and live here!*

How do you think Brooklin has done in following/implementing the suggestions in the 2003 report?

- *I think this plan was okay but certainly has many areas that needed working on way before this! Maybe or I know it should be a plan that just doesn't get written then shoved on a shelf until we need to re-write another one which has happened to this 2003 plan. Affordable housing is one area that I am afraid will never happen in this town. And I am really not sure how we can turn that around. Covid really played a big part in how affordable anything will ever be again!*
- *Really in looking it over it needs some tweaks and updating, but it is solid and a good base moving forward.*
- *Goals to work on: Transportation Goal - We really said paved bicycle shoulders haha like that happened! And a parking lot in the center of town!*
- *Public Facilities and Service Goal - Is it time for a town manager? Fire Dept goals not sure any of these got done, but I am sure they were. It would be nice to see them open and more welcoming to the community. Might bring in more volunteers. How to let the community know what they are spending their money on and that would go miles in getting more dollars and interest in really anything this town has to offer! As for the old town office, I think enough time has passed that it can actually be torn down and the Town Green can expand in a better way. Playground equipment, move Farmers Market to there - better parking and then there would be a parking lot in town!!*
- *Recreation and Open Space Goal - We do have adequate open space.*
- *Marine Resources Goal - As far as I know we never have hired a harbor master and do we have a Harbor Ordinance?*

Second written response was as follows:

- *I cannot not make the meeting but have reviewed the 2003 comprehensive Plan. I cannot speak to all the implementations that did or did not take place as I have not kept a close watch on the operations of our town Select Board. However I do have some thoughts to share.*
- *Maintaining the rural nature and quality of our town was most important to the committee. I do think that we have been successful so far and I would like to see anything that supports that be emphasized in any editing of the 2003 Plan.*
- *The large section devoted to Affordable Housing has become irrelevant. It became apparent that it was more costly to build than to buy. There was a good inventory of houses on the market (until recently) in all*

price ranges. The State also has programs to assist first time home buyers. We have seen a number of young families move to Brooklin in the past few years. Jon Hopkins was the head of this subcommittee.

- Working with the MDOT to someday have bicycle shoulders and pedestrian walkways as was suggested in the 2003 Plan.
- There is a lot devoted to subdivisions in the Plan. At the time, we thought that this type of development was imminent. It turns out that a few developers lost a bit of money subdividing land into multiple lots and not finding buyers.
- The old Town building was renovated for mixed use which has been very successful. Those using it are grateful for it. Word is out that the Town would like to sell it. Should the new committee address this and advise?
- Looks like the Lawrences took care of a regional recreation center which the Plan sited as a need.
- Continuing emphasis on public waterfront access, public rights of ways to the water, and preservation of open space is as important as ever for the committee to look at.
- What is happening with the suggestion for a Harbor Management Plan? Is this even possible when our main harbor is under the control of Brooklin Boat Yard. Look into whether a harbor ordinance as suggested was ever implemented.
- Under Fiscal Planning, sharing services with adjacent municipalities should continue to be encouraged. Unified and equitable high speed Internet access is an obvious one that would benefit from such cooperation.
- Thanking you in advance for your successful review and update of the 2003 Plan.

Below is a summary of the conversation that occurred at the library. The 2023 Comprehensive Planning Committee members were there to hear what the 2003 Comprehensive Planning Committee members had to say.

- The town has not changed as much as planners thought it would.
- Many things were not done.
- But, the town is in good shape.
- Jon was very involved in the affordable housing efforts. He learned a lot.
 - People want to own, not rent.
 - Financing is hard and changeable.
 - The 2008 recession really affected the town's efforts around affordable housing.
- Things in the plan were done, but many were not.
- Things that did happen were more the result of other actions, not the town.
- Nothing is in place to watch and check on progress
- Did not foresee the internet.

Advice for 2023 Comprehensive Planning Committee given by the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Committee:

- Get insight into the community.
- Bring in old families.
- Include summer people.
- Groups to include:
 - School Board

- o Planning Board
- o Fire Dept
- Pick important issues to pay attention to:
 - o Does the state want to shift RT 175 to a town road?
 - o Harbor management
 - o Water front access
 - Does the town own two lots on Flye Point?
 - o CEO transition after Judy Jenkins
 - o Collaboration with other towns:
 - Internet is good example
 - Nursing home?
- Site plan review is good.
- Housing and Land use should be redone.
 - o Need flexibility:
 - Reduce the minimum lot size for a single house to less than an acre.
 - o Subdivision Ordinance should be reviewed.
- Transportation- speed and safety are still an issue.
- Recreation:
 - o Land trusts work well and have addressed several aspects of recreation needs
- Capital Investment Fund should be reviewed.
- Regional cooperation is important.
- The most contentious issue was discussion around land use.

B. Brooklin Comprehensive Plan Open House Talking Points' Results

Re: Fiscal Capacity- the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. Do you feel Brooklin's property taxes are fair?
2. Do you have any suggestions regarding the School Budget?
3. Do you feel there are any capital projects Brooklin should undertake in the next ten years?

Responses:

- *Fair – hmmm? It feels like I pay a lot as a “seasonal person”, which I don’t mind. But I would like to vote on how spent!! And some recognition that one reason Brooklin is so well preserved is because of outside \$.*
- *With regard to the school budget, I believe home schooling parents should receive their portion of school tax back for purpose of investing in our home schooling. We pay for the school and have 5 children all homeschooled. Andrew Brown, 207.355.5145*
- *Yes, the taxes are fair.*
- *For us, the taxes seem fair.*
- *Not really (referring to taxes). For some reason mine seem a lot higher than the other houses in my area, and I have far less property.*

- *The (school) budget is a bit high. I would suggest Brooklin and Sedgwick combine schools which would lower the cost per child since right now classes are so small we're spending a lot on teachers who are only working with a few children at a time.*
- *Yes. I think Brooklin needs to have a lot more public water access. Now is the time to purchase or develop what the town already owns so that it's accessible. This would take the pressure off areas like Naskeag, which in the summer is an impasse of kayak companies, day trippers, and giant vans/campers. There are some great access points on the Benjamin River that could have kayak ramps put in. This would also mean fishermen would not be trying to shove their way into Naskeag harbor through the throngs of visitors. It would also be a good idea to put in a bike lane and sidewalks in town. Does someone need to die for the town to take this seriously? A number of people have been hit. All I see are more cars, bikes, and roaming children/teens on the road. I live on 175, and cannot safely walk my dog. The area by the store and in front of the library is particularly difficult and needs to be addressed. I do not see it getting any better now that the Morning Moon is going to be opening again. It's incredibly unsafe.*

Re: Public Facilities and Services, the following questions were asked of attendees:

Brooklin's public facilities include the Town Office, Fire Station, and school. Do you consider these facilities adequate and well maintained? What, if any, changes and/or new facilities should be considered?

1. How do you feel about Brooklin's town meeting form of government?
2. Are Town staffing positions and hours of service adequate?
3. Should the Town consider public waterfront access points to be public facilities?

Responses:

- *These three public facilities seem physically adequate and well-maintained. If anything, it would be great if the town website were more user-friendly, with more informational links to resources people might be interested in. Links to historical information would appeal to our generally older population who are interested in town history.*
- *Although not many people attend town meetings, it seems to work. As long as the people who do not attend to voice their opinions and votes are happy with the outcomes of the town meeting.*
- *Yes, town staffing and hours are adequate.*
- *The town should consider public water front access points to be public facilities on a case by case basis.*
- *Town meeting and town staff hours are fine.*
- *Not sure who cares for them (the public waterfront access points) currently, but it seems that the town should be involved in upkeep and improvements.*
- *Please consider safety needs on Naskeag Rd. Fishermen speed on it, and a few others. People walk on it, bike on it, walk dogs...NO ROOM ON THE ROAD TO DO SO SAFELY. Need dirt sidewalks.*
- *Need better signage to Bridges Point*
- *Need better publication and signage for the public facilities.*
- *Yes, facilities are maintained fine*
- *Town meetings seem to work*
- *Staffing positions and hours are adequate*

Re: Natural Resources, the following questions were asked of the attendees:

1. What do you consider to be the notable Natural Resources of the Town of Brooklin?
2. Which of our Natural Resources do you consider to be important? (e.g. ground water, soil, forested land, air quality, wild animal habitat, ponds and wetlands, streams and rivers, shoreline, intertidal shorelines, dark skies, others?)
3. Should Natural Resources be managed by the Town?

Responses:

- *Every square inch is precious*
- *Shorefront and inland walking trails.*
- *Ground water, soil, air quality, shoreline, intertidal shorelines, and dark skies.*
- *Not sure if our Natural Resources should be managed by the town.*
- *Sea and fresh water, marine life, woods, fields, all animals.*
- *All of our natural resources are important.*
- *Our natural resources should be protected as much as possible by the Town.*
- *Shorefront*
- *Yes, (natural resources should be managed) by the town and state agencies*

Re: Land Use, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. What land uses do you feel are appropriate for Brooklin?
2. Are there certain land uses that should be encouraged? Discouraged? Restricted?

Responses:

- *Would love to see more affordable housing. Less Air B&B's, please!*
- *Preserve natural areas and habitat corridors*
- *Preserve undeveloped land. Provide public access to that land.*
- *Hiking trails, Guided Wildlife Tours, Habitat, Woods and Water Tours*
- *Encourage: farming. Discourage: large industry, potential polluting land uses*
- *Encourage affordable housing but not mobile homes (or at least as a last resort)*
- *Private residences and public access are appropriate land use.*
- *More public water access and trails. Residents should be encouraged to put their property into farmland forever trusts to slow overdevelopment. I think large scale commercial enterprises that will have an impact on neighbors or the land, ie commercial composting, gravel pits, transfer stations, should not be allowed. I would also like to see restrictions on chain businesses, like Walgreens, Family Dollar, Irving etc. being allowed to set up shop here. I know it seems impossible that something like a McDonalds would open in town, but without restrictions anything is possible.*

Re: Economy, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. How do you think Brooklin is doing in relation to its economy?
2. Do you have any advice for the Comp Plan Committee about the economy in Brooklin?

Responses:

- *Invite more residents to focus on what we want for the community outside our homes. How can we excite the town.*
- *Looking ahead 10 to 20 years what will draw visitors year round – small numbers, disposable incomes and interest in the special features or opportunities in Brooklin.*
- *Internet!*
- *What is the living wage in Brooklin?*
- *What kind of economic base is best for the town.*
- *Money comes from outside the town. That is good.*
- *Improve internet.*
- *We're thrilled that the owners of the Brooklin General Store were willing to rebuild and to stay pretty much open year-round. Also, that Anne bought the store that became Leaf & Anna. The Brooklin Inn appears to be doing well, especially in the summer months. I'm sure small businesses struggle here, but we try to support those businesses as much as we can so that we have a vibrant, if small, center of town.*
- *Encourage small businesses*
- *Outside money keeps Brooklin going*
- *Economy is fine*
- *Maybe tax AirBnBs to generate some extra income?*

Re: Climate Change, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. Do you feel the Town of Brooklin should play a role in mitigating climate change?
2. Have you personally had to make changes to your home or land due to the effects of climate change?

Responses:

- *If we can begin to see more examples of the kinds of things that can be done at the household level and the differences they make, we could be exemplary.*
- *More innovative energy producing/sharing*
- *Would like to see education on solar panels. Possibly also small wind mills.*
- *We have not had to, but we have made decisions and changed behaviors because of climate change.*
- *To the extent that the goals of mitigating climate change and cost-efficiency, make sure the public buildings are as energy-efficient as they can be. (Use of heat pumps? Not sure what else.)*
- *Personally, have installed heat pumps and solar panels.*
- *Yes, wherever possible. Allow solar farms, especially if they are able to be hidden somewhat from sight (to preserve the beauty of our town). Ask vehicle owners to not leave their engines running when going to the*

Post Office, stores, etc. in order to protect our air quality (and, particularly for people who are sitting outside near them). Don't know if the town can require this, but maybe there is some way to encourage it.

- *When we bought our property, it was 3-season. Solar and geothermal didn't seem to be reasonable for our situation, so we put in heat pumps. This year, we decided that we could put in solar which will be partially in our view, but not in our primary view.*
- *Yes, the town should play a role*
- *No, haven't personally had to make any changes*
- *Station leader's notes:*

"The most significant contribution to my own education was HCPC Director Jim Fisher's introduction of the map resources of HCPC for Brooklin. You probably know all this, but it was an eye-opener for me. I shared this with several visitors to the table, who were intrigued. List of maps below.

One visitor—a new resident of the town—was appalled at how much undeveloped land there was in the center of the town. In spite of the fact that much of this land is swampy, some of it designated as wetlands, he felt that it was "money going to waste; should be developed".

Several visitors were challenged by what role the Town should/could play in climate change mitigation. The only suggestion that kept coming up was a Town policy limiting wood stoves and burning generally. None of those making such suggestions used wood for heating. One visitor pointed out that certain types of wood-burning stoves were in fact more efficient than oil furnaces, and that wood (unlike oil) was a renewable resource.

Although it is my own greatest interest, no one was particularly concerned about sea level rise and its effect on shoreland development in Brooklin. The general observation that sea level might rise (conservatively) 3 feet by the end of the century was beyond participants' imaginable horizon, even though several lived on coastal sites almost certain to be affected. All visitors who touched on this aspect of climate change expected that Brooklin would be an island by the end of the century as the Benjamin River made contact with the Salt Pond—and were tickled by the idea.

The fact that sea level rise would have effects on the Town's shoreline cumulatively over the next 75 years seemed to be lost: it was as if folks think that sea level will stay where it is until 2300, then suddenly rise 3 feet. This is an aspect, of course, of the challenge of climate change in Town Planning.

My general impression was that "Climate Change" was simply too large a topic for anyone to chew on, and yet—except for the gentleman who wanted more development in town—everyone felt she or he was being affected by climate change, and needed to make personal adjustments, but was unclear about how the Town might support such adjustments at the level of policy/ordinance."

Re: Water Resources, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. Do you have any concerns when it comes to your drinking water?
2. What role, if any, do you think the town should play in protecting our fresh water supply?
3. Do you utilize surrounding bodies of fresh water for recreation or otherwise?

Responses:

- *We are testing the well water at the library and will send it to the Augusta Lab on Monday.*
- *PFAS (posted multiple times)*
- *Arsenic, Manganese, Iron, PFAS*
- *We have a well; I do wonder if it will ever go dry! Tested – ok arsenic, but higher than I would like.*
- *The town should consider helping certain landowners of limited means to test and treat their water.*
- *Consider outreach/education for land preservation/conservation/management possibilities.*
- *No concerns about my drinking water.*
- *Given that homes have individual wells drawing from an underground body of water that would be difficult to measure or control, I'm not sure how the town could protect the fresh water supply. I assume the dumping of toxic substances is already illegal. Perhaps information on the town website about measures individual homeowners can take to protect their well water?*
- *Don't use bodies of fresh water for recreation.*
- *Our personal well is doing fine. We're on a ridge and far away from polluting sources. We have concerns about PFAS (not at our property), especially due to hearing about the school's water issue.*
- *The Town should do whatever is possible to protect our fresh water supply!!!*
- *We use bodies of salt water for boating, sailing, rowing, kayaking, visiting islands. We rarely use freshwater areas.*
- *No concerns about my drinking water*
- *The town should play a role in protecting our fresh water supply*
- *Don't use fresh water bodies for recreating*

Re: Population, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. What does it mean to be a resident of Brooklin to you?
2. What brought you here to live/spend part of your year here in Brooklin?

Responses:

- *Peace, connection to past, hope for future. I feel my best when here.*
- *This is a community of amazing people, living together in a place of great beauty and (almost) always tolerant and respectful of differences.*
- *Access to salt water and great sailing.*
- *Natural beauty and surroundings. Peace and Quiet.*
- *My grandfather was born in Sedgwick, generations before, came in through Brooklin, Maine. Retired here...we bought our place 20+ years ago!*
- *To be part of a town with a rich history and a vibrant, entrepreneurial, and artistic population.*
- *Family history, rural lifestyle, and physical beauty brought us to Brooklin.*
- *I love being part of a small town.*
- *We had always wanted to live on a larger piece of land, so found 20 acres in Brooklin around 9 years ago. We love our privacy, but also knowing that we have good neighbors nearby. We love watching deer, bears, turkeys, birds, bobcats, snowshoe hares, and even the coyotes.*
- *To be part of a local community. To live in a place where the town takes care of the land.*
- *For some reason Brooklin hooks you. It's a wonderful and beautiful place.*

Re: History, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. How has Brooklin's history shaped its current being?
2. How will Brooklin look 10 years from now?
3. What role if any should the Town plan in conserving and providing access to historical and archeological records?

Responses:

- *Would love to see more town/library coordination with the Keeping Society. (Proper HVAC/climate control are needed to preserve historic documents and books \$\$\$)*
- *Concerned about big project started and bad effect on community.*
- *Starting 6-7000 years ago, the indigenous peoples held seasonal trading "fairs." Naskeag point became the largest trading village in Maine. Without impeding on private property of, can't we build on the ancient history of Brooklin?*
- *We need to know much more about Naskeag history before Europeans came.*
- *Keeping Society is great, very important and should be supported.*
- *The town should support the Keeping Society. Seek additional info/history of the town and families.*
- *Certainly the rich history of boatbuilding and craftsmanship has shaped the current focus on the boatbuilding industry, along with WoodenBoat.*
- *I hope that Brooklin will have more younger residents who have chosen to live here full-time and raise families here. We need more tradesmen (electricians, plumbers, contractors, carpenters) desperately, here in Brooklin and on the Blue Hill Peninsula in general. We need more moderate-priced homes so the tradesman employed by Brooklin enterprises don't have to commute long distances.*
- *It would be great for the Town to conserve records, but it's not a critical need compared to some other needs.*
- *Boat building, fishing and art are a major part of the town's charm.*
- *The population will definitely increase*
- *The Town should do whatever is possible, regarding the records.*
- *I don't see much of history shaping the current Brooklin.*
- *Hopefully it will be a town with lots of waterfront access, like Stonington and Deer Isle, and there will be sidewalks and bike lanes to help protect the residents.*
- *The keeping society seems to be doing a great job!*

Re: Housing, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. What is your opinion on the state of housing in Brooklin?
2. Do you think there are adequate options for housing in Brooklin?

Responses:

- *Assisted living for elderly*
- *The free market works. We moved here because we found an affordable housing option. If the town caters to visitors and summer folks, you will get the town you have. Keep regulations low and let people be creative. Thank you.*
- *Need more affordable housing to encourage younger people/families to stay/come to area.*
- *Affordable Housing! Please! We need young people to stay!*

- *I think there needs to be a gathering of people who have a lot of income with trades people and contractors to start making plans to make more housing for working class folks.*
- *Housing is too tight in Brooklin. To have a diverse community, we need affordable, well-built homes. To attract employees and younger, enterprising individuals, housing needs to be available.*
- *More adequate (?) housing. Clustered housing can reduce costs*
- *I don't think there are adequate housing options. I need to attract employees and this is the most significant obstacle.*
- *It's heading into the unfortunate situation of not enough homes for moderate-income people.*
- *Inland land may be relatively inexpensive, but not much land is for sale. Once land is acquired, it can take a long time to find a contractor and build a home. The demand for scarce housing and land is pushing prices to the point where young people who are hoping to find jobs here can't even contemplate buying a home here or nearby. Businesses are suffering as a result – they can't fill job openings easily.*
- *As everywhere, I can imagine that affordable housing is difficult to find for many.*
- *We have too many short term rentals and not enough housing for people who want to live and work here year round.*
- *I do not think there are adequate options for housing in Brooklin.*

Re: Transportation, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. Please share any opinions you have on Brooklin's transportation network.

Responses:

- *Stop sign needed on Flye Pt Rd where it meets Harriman Pt Rd.*
- *Pedestrian Safety needs more attention*
- *Consider bike lanes and bike paths*
- *Love Brooklin Errands as an informed network for sharing rides, saving gas, for errands, etc.*
- *Pave Periwinkle Lane – Please make it a town road*
- *Future parking at library*
- *In village parking? Need for stores, library, café, etc.*
- *Is it possible to examine some sort of “path” along the curve by Tut and Juanita Wood's house? That is one crazy curve for walkers and bikers.*
- *I've noticed, on Facebook, that someone runs a business of running errands for people. I volunteer for At Home Downeast, which helps people (especially elderly) with rides to appointments, to the grocery, etc. – or doing or picking up the groceries and delivering them.*
- *Parking is an issue.*
- *Increased speed enforcement is needed.*
- *Is there one (referring to transportation network)?*

Re: Marine Resources, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. In your opinion, can you point out on these maps where you think notable marine resources are located?

Responses:

- *I think all Marine Resources are important.*
- *More invasive species monitoring*
- *Restrict rockweed harvesting*

Re: Recreation, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. What is the most important recreational opportunity (private or public) for you in Brooklin?
2. What, if anything, do you do for recreation?

Responses:

- *Would love to see safer way for biking/walking; especially "in town."*
- *More places to walk safely.*
- *Enjoying quiet natural areas.*
- *I wish more trails! Once there was a trail talk of a trail from town center to Naskeag point – wish there was!*
- *Dog walking is very recreational, too! Wish some place for dogs to run freely!*
- *Hiking and Walking*
- *Boating. Biking is dangerous (and sometimes walking).*
- *Kayaking*
- *Hiking, Walking, Ice Skating, Boating, Swimming*
- *Boating, hiking cycling*
- *Saltwater access*
- *Kayaking, rowing, sailing, motor boating, visiting islands. Biking, somewhat – I wish it were less dangerous to bike around here. I stick to just some back roads with less traffic.*
- *The trails and public access to water are very important to me- and my dog!*
- *Taking walks*

Re: Agriculture and Forestry, the following questions were asked of attendees:

1. In your opinion, can you point out on these maps where you think notable agricultural and forestry resources are located?

Responses:

- *Preserve natural areas (and habitat).*
- *A little crazy, but could the "portable grazing" of sheep and goats be encouraged on land that deserves "passive" reclaiming?*
- *Not sure about where the agricultural resources are, but certainly they and any of the forested areas are important.*
- *The town should promote farming*

C. Minutes from the Joint Climate Response Committee and Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting on November 16, 2022:

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm.

Introductions and purpose of meeting discussed – to make sure the Comp Plan committee captures the goals, objectives and strategies of this climate change group that was formed in June 2022. These will be incorporated into the Climate Change chapter of the Comp Plan and various other relevant chapters such as Transportation and Public Facilities. Results from the Comp Plan’s public opinion survey and the Open House were shared with the group. A personal goal/objective to the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance of a moratorium of any new construction in areas projected to be subject to sea level rise in the near future was expressed. Various other attendees agreed that adaptation strategies need to be part of the goals as well.

Difference between Peninsula Tomorrow and Climate Response Committee (CRC) was discussed, but both are relevant regional organizations that should be mentioned as potential collaborators in the Comp Plan. The CRC explained that their next step is to choose 3 main action points from the list of 72 to choose from provided by the state. Members of the Comp Plan expressed interest in examining the list and the chair of the CRC said he would send an electronic version out to the group. A joint member of the CRC and the comprehensive planning committee pointed out several select action points that the CRC group was leaning towards and that they would be a good starting place for goals and objective for the Climate Chapter. These included upgrades to the school’s energy efficiency, growing jobs that protect our natural resources industries and working towards healthy and resilient communities by taking a risk assessment. The risk assessment includes such things as making sure the local food economy is supported and mentioned the community garden can be one of the strategies.

The chair of the CRC expressed that at this point, the number one priority is eliminating carbon emissions from the Brooklin School and Town office buildings as quickly as possible. Members of the CRC have been attending the school’s renovation meetings with the project’s architect on how to remove the use of fossil fuels in the new building, including installation of solar panels and heat pumps. He sees the group as acting as consultants to the town to help public and private properties reduce their dependency on fossil fuels. Once approved by the State, Brooklin’s CRC chapter is eligible for grant funding to help with things such as school renovations (above mentioned solar panels and heat pumps), the purchase of electric buses, electric vehicle charging stations, etc. Another high priority of the CRC group is to express to the town that there is still hope and there are actions we can take right now. They want to be both an example to the youth of the community and to let them know that they are here to fight with them.

Other potential goals and objectives were raised by the joint group including:

- How to deal with Solar Farm Siting
- Completing Maine's Flood Resiliency Checklist which would include updating culverts and areas that are already prone to storm water flooding
- Supporting the Fire Department as flooding and wildfires may become more of an issue
- Making Brooklin more walkable and bike-able and electric vehicle friendly
- Assessing Brooklin's capacity for more electrification of the grid
- Examining ordinances that may hinder Cluster Housing
- Supporting more locally grown food
- Making sure residents know about the Open Space and Tree Growth programs
- Collaborating with local land trusts
- Assessing health issues the community may face with extreme weather and an aging (aged) population
- How climate change will affect Brooklin's marine resources industries

The comprehensive planning committee's advisor from the Hancock County Planning Commission recommended having 2 main goals for the Climate Chapter – one dealing with Mitigation efforts and one dealing with Adaptation practices. The chapter's assigned author will take these goals, objectives and strategies to incorporate into the Climate Change chapter. The joint group also agreed that the chapter as written by HCPC's consultant is too technical and not specific enough to Brooklin at this point, so assigned author will work on those revisions. The CRC was invited to attend the discussion of the Climate Change chapter on November 30th at 5:30. The chapter's author agreed to have a revised draft sent out to the group ASAP.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

D. Brooklin Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Questionnaire Results

Question #1: Please share your opinion, if any, of the suitability of these suggested growth areas.

Responses:

- *All Good*
- *Brooklin Village – Yes; Expand Further on Bay Rd, Reach Rd and Naskeag; North Brooklin – No*
- *None*
- *Sounds good*
- *I think the two areas shown on the Brooklin Future Land Use map dated October 7, 2022 are suitable and appropriate for future growth areas.*

- *I am unclear as to your definition of “growth”, so this is hard to answer. Commercial enterprises should continue to grow in “downtown”. We need affordable housing to grow anywhere it can, especially in the two areas indicated (to the extent possible). I am assuming that most of the parcels in those areas are privately owned, so I don’t even know how you can encourage owners to support growth??*
- *Thank you, great job and yes, let’s try to keep development clustered as you have it here.*

Question #2: Do you have any suggestions for other possible areas that are suitable for growth?

Responses:

- *No*
- *South end of Old County Rd; Folly Rd to Bridges Point; East Rd at Naskeag Pt*
- *Naskeag*
- *No*
- *No, I do not have any suggestions. Future growth should be limited to the two areas shown.*
- *Big issue we need to deal with: as of now, homeowners can’t connect solar arrays to Versant grid! What can be done about this? Could we become an Energy Sovereignty Town?*
- *Leave wetlands alone!!!*
- *Benjamin River as an option*