

City of Ellsworth
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 26, 2023 5:30 PM

Vice-Chair Jennifer Sala, Members John DeLeo, Rick Lyles, Jon Stein, Nick Turner, Eric Marichal, Erin Witham, and Nancy Smith were present. Member Paul Markosian, Casey Hanson, and Chair Brian Langley were absent.

Eight members present

City Planner Matthew Williams and Assistant City Planner Elizabeth Ouellette attended the meeting.

Two staff members present

1.) Call to Order

Vice-Chair Sala called the meeting to order at 5:33PM.

Call to Order

2.) Introductions and Housekeeping

Keri Ouellette and Alison Tobey from BerryDunn joined the meeting via Zoom.

Introductions & Housekeeping

3.) Adoption of Minutes from the May 22, 2023 Regular Meeting.

Member DeLeo moved to adopt the minutes. Member Turner seconded the motion. **The vote to adopt to minutes from the May 22, 2023 Regular Meeting was UNANIMOUS.**

Adoption of Minutes

ADOPTED

4.) Discussion about Comprehensive Plan Logo

City Planner Williams started by explaining that the logo was made by the City's Communications Specialist, Maura Condon. Williams said that the logo was meant to encapsulate all of the different aspects of Ellsworth. Member Smith made the comment that there were no people in the logo and thought that it may be good to include people in one portion of the logo. Williams said that he can speak with Condon and discuss making some edits to incorporate some people or a boat on the water to represent the fishing industry. Member Marichal said that he was unsure about the color of the background since the logo may be going on clothing or the like. Williams said that there was a version that had a transparent background that would be used for printing purposes. Member Stein asked if there should be some language on the logo that said "Comprehensive Plan." Williams said that if it was printed on a banner or poster, it will have "Comprehensive plan" on it as well. Stein then asked about putting it on a T-shirt, which may be more difficult to determine the context. Williams said that the T-Shirts would have "Comprehensive Plan" on the back of them for context. Member Turner made a comment that if they were to add people onto the logo, they would need to think carefully about how they are representing the people so as to not be offensive to anyone. Williams said that he would speak to Condon about these comments and circulate an updated logo.

Comp Plan Logo

5.) Discussion regarding the Kick-Off Event and what was done well/could be improved.

City Planner Williams gave an overview of the event. The rough count for people attending was between 30 and 40 people. Williams said that there were a lot of sign-ups for more information regarding the subcommittee process. Williams said that there will be a second event of this type held in a different location on a weekend to get more people aware of the Comprehensive Plan process. Vice-Chair Sala asked about the location of this second event. Williams said that Knowlton park would be a good location since it would attract

Kick-Off Event

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more families and people passing by the park. Member Turner suggested passing out information at the Waterfront concerts every Friday when they begin in July. Turner said that these events are very well attended. Member Marichal said that he would be happy to go to any event and pass out information. Williams said that they could attend the Concert Band concerts as well. Turner also suggested that the group pass out information at the Thursday movies.

City Planner Williams asked the group if there was any feedback about the Kick-off event. Member Marichal said that he noticed that most of the people who attended the event are the people who are already very involved in the community and he expressed concerns about reaching a broader audience. Marichal also said that there was a couple from Bar Harbor who made a comment that the laid-back environment was a great way to have an event. Marichal then said that he had one person come up to his table who was a mayor in a municipality in the South and he was very impressed with what Ellsworth was doing. Williams said that he got a lot of good feedback about the volunteers at the tables and how engaging and helpful they were. He also commented that having those one-on-one conversations make people feel more included in the process. Member Turner said that there was a lot of conversation about families and how Ellsworth can be more “Family-Friendly.” Williams said that there was a public forum planned which would talk specifically about issues surrounding local families. Member Lyles reiterated Marichal’s point about finding a larger audience than those who are always involved. Lyles also noted that there were many people who were weary of signing up for more information. The group discussed emphasizing that anyone who signs up for more information would remain anonymous and also discussed explaining more clearly to people that they are not signing up to be on a subcommittee, they were just signing up for more information. Williams gave a few more comments about the set-up of the event and ways that the group can improve for the next event.

6.) Discussion regarding future public engagement events.

City Planner Williams asked the group if there was a particular date or time that would work for the next Expo event. Member Lyles asked if this event would be like the Kick-Off event. Williams said that it would be structured relatively similarly. The group discussed holding the event in late-July. Member Smith asked if the group should wait to hold the event until they are ready for people to sign up for subcommittees. Williams said that the group is still in the phase where they are making people aware of the process and getting people to sign up for more information. Williams said that during the Visioning process of the Plan, there will be a lot more public forums conducted by the group. Smith asked if the group would go to other people’s events and pass out information. Williams said that they are already doing that and urged the group to make suggestions of more places where they can attend.

Member Turner said that there are many different groups of people who attend different events. He said that the group will find different people attending the movies in the park from the people attending the waterfront concerts. He said that it is important to go to as many different types of events as possible in order to get the word out. Member Stein suggested that the group attend the Business After Hours for July. Turner suggested that

**Public Engagement
Events**

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the group attend the Chamber of Commerce's "Eggs & Issues" meeting in July. City Planner Williams said that the Library would like a representative to be a part of their speaker series. Vice-Chair Sala recommended attending a noontime rotary meeting. Stein said there was a concert event happening in Knowlton Park on July 9th which the group could attend called "Rock & Roots." Turner made the suggestion of holding a dedicated "Eggs & Issues" in collaboration with the Chamber.

Member Lyles said that he thought the group should continue to use the index cards to leave comments. City Planner Williams said that they will continue to do that. Member Turner mentioned that he did not believe that Business After Hours would be a good event to attend. Member Lyles asked if there were many people using the Social Pinpoint website. Williams said that there was some website traffic, however most of the comments put on there were gathered at these other public engagement events. Williams also said that the BerryDunn consultants have put together a survey which will be included on the website. He said they are still working to determine the best time to launch the survey. Williams said that he would like to do more public engagement events to get people to participate in the survey. Member Turner said that he will make sure the QR Code is included in The Grand's slideshow and shown in the kiosk which can be seen from Main Street. Lyles asked if the QR Code has been in the Ellsworth American. Williams said that the American did an article about the Comprehensive Plan which mentioned the website and explained where to find it. Williams also said that he will put out some more press releases in hopes of it being in the newspaper again. Lyles said that it would be nice if there was a piece about the Comprehensive Plan every week.

Member Lyles asked if any members attended the Friends in Action lunch. Vice-Chair Sala said that she and City Planner Williams attended. Sala said that the main piece of feedback that they got at that event was that the roads need to be better maintained. Lyles noted that this group of people will have vastly different needs than the rest of the community so it is important that they are included in the process. Williams and Sala noted that many of the people who attended the event do not live in Ellsworth and only come specifically for the Friends in Action events. Williams then went on to discuss a joint public forum with the Economic Development Department which is working on a Business Attraction and Retention Plan. Williams said that this forum will be on July 18th and the theme will be retention of workforce and quality of life. There will be a presentation from the consultants and smaller focus groups where people can discuss various issues. Williams said that this event has not been publicly advertised, however it will be shortly. Williams also mentioned that the seating will be limited given the location, so a registration system will be created. Williams said that he will be reaching out to employers around the City and urging them to encourage their employees to attend. Williams then said that there will be some additional focus groups meeting with the consultants when they are here for the July 18th event and commented that he will be scheduling those soon. Williams said that these will be focused on business, downtown, developers, and schools.

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7.) Discussion regarding the beginning of the subcommittee process.

City Planner Williams discussed the beginning of the subcommittee process. He said that the focus groups that are being held with the consultants are helping to let them know where the focus areas are for the community. Williams said that based off of that information, he can then start to form the subcommittees and discuss those focus areas. Williams then asked the group if anyone had any thoughts about whether to have a subcommittee for each chapter or to combine some. Vice-Chair Sala said that there is a community member who is interested in participating in a committee on aging population. Williams said that that could fit into the population and demographics subcommittee. Member Lyles said that the aging population is the fastest growing group in the City. Lyles then asked when Williams expected the subcommittees to begin. Williams said that he expects the subcommittees to start by the end of the summer. Member Smith said that she thought it would be best to have a subcommittee per chapter. Smith then made the comment that it will be very important to stay connected throughout the subcommittees so the group can know if there are similar things being discussed. Smith also made a note that all of these chapters are interconnected so the subcommittees should also be interconnected and communicate with each other. Williams said that if there were any topics that were overarching that they would hold a public forum about those topics in addition to the individual subcommittee meetings.

Member Lyles asked when they should expect to see a draft of the Inventory and Analysis portion of the plan that the consultants have been working on. Keri Ouellette said that a draft will be provided for review at the end of August. Member Turner asked about the structure of the subcommittee meetings. Williams said that they will not be as formal as the Steering Committee meetings, but they will be structured. Lyles mentioned that all of the subcommittees should be structured in the same way so there is continuity in the process. Vice-Chair Sala asked if the subcommittees would be answered the questions that are required by the State to be answered in the Comprehensive Plan. Williams said that they were going to inform the consultants about the topics and issues that are important to the community and the consultants will include those in the required sections of the Plan. Member Smith said that there was an event held by GrowSmart Maine in October that will focus on how communities are built impacts loneliness. She recommended that the group consider attending this event. Sala recommended that Smith reach out to Friends in Action about the event.

8.) Public Comments

Cara Ramano, Executive Director of Heart of Ellsworth, was present and had some recommendations of public events to attend. She recommended that the group attend the Chamber of Commerce's next "Eggs & Issues" which will be held on July 13th. Ramano said that the topic will be centered on energy. Ramano also recommended that the group attend the Heart of Ellsworth's "Concerts in the Parklet" which will be beginning at the end of August. Ramano said that these events attract different groups of people than most other community events. Member Marichal noted that several hundred people attended these events last year and they are very popular.

**Subcommittee
Process**

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9.) Staff Comments

There were no Staff Comments

10.) Adjournment

Member Lyles made a motion to adjourn. Member Stein seconded the motion. Vice-Chair Sala adjourned the meeting at 6:23PM.

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth Ouellette, Assistant City Planner.

Public Comments

**Meeting adjourned
at 6:23PM**

*Agendas and minutes
posted on the City of
Ellsworth's website:
ellsworthmaine.gov*