

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes



The CPAC meeting was Hybrid and YouTube Live Stream

CPAC Members Present: Sean Clark, John Kerr, Rebecca Mundy, Wendy Turgeon

Excused: Jo-Ann Robotti, Jay Card Jr.

Comprehensive Task Force Members Present: Meg Larsen (*Councilwoman*) **Zoom:** Amber Brach-Williams (*Town Supervisor*) **Excused:** Julia Weisenberg

Town Officials Present via Zoom: Albert Dickson (*Councilman*), Benjamin Dyett (*Councilman*)

Zoom Attendees: Karen Kiaer, Kim Noland, Ed Hydeman, Pam Demarest, Sandra O'Connor, Stella Lagudis, Lily Hoffman

Press via Zoom: Julie Lane (*Shelter Island Reporter*)

1. **Call to Order 6:33 pm:** Meg Larsen

2. **Welcome New Comprehensive Plan Task Force Member:** Amber Brach-Williams

3. **Minutes**

- Motion to accept December 5, 2023 CPAC Meeting Minutes. Seconded. Unanimously accepted.
- Motion to accept December 15, 2023 CPAC Meeting Minutes. Seconded. Unanimously accepted.

4. **CPAC Meeting Dates:** February 9 and 20

5. **Comprehensive Plan Process for 2024** (Meg Larsen, Amber Brach-Williams)

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee will continue to review the remaining chapters. Once completed the final review is submitted to BFJ Planning consulting for review and to implement revisions. The Plan is then returned to CPAC to confirm all recommendations have been incorporated. Once that review is completed the Comprehensive Plan DRAFT is submitted to the Public and the Town Board. The Town Board will review the Plan chapter by chapter. Once that is completed it is submitted to BFJ Planning again to incorporate the Town Board changes. Then it will be submitted to the Suffolk County Planning Commission to review and return with comments.

The Town will then schedule as many Public Hearings as needed.

The goal is to have the Plan adopted by September 30, 2024, which would allow the Town to apply for a Grant by July 28, 2025.

6. **Review of Chapter 8 (Parks, Open Space & Waterways)**

Public Comments (01/12/24 List emailed to CPAC)

Continue to preserve lands with high-quality natural resources, including wetlands, watersheds, shorelines, significant trees and woodland, and wildlife habitat; those lands with recognized scenic values; and smaller parcels that could provide for village greens or neighborhood pocket parks.

Continue to purchase open space parcels. Purchasing land for preservation remains one of the surest ways to protect the land. The Town continues to have a steady stream of income for land preservation from the Peconic Bay CPF program. In addition, the Town continues to receive grant funds and participate in partnerships with other entities to purchase open space.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes



a. Prioritize the existing parcels for open space in a public process and using the following parameters as a guide: Parcel will help to create a contiguous block of open space to improve the habitat values of natural lands; Parcel contains environmentally sensitive areas/Parcel will help protect surface and/or groundwater quality; Parcel provides meaningful access to the water in areas that lack public boat ramps and beaches; Parcel provides a trail extension or connection and enhances the Town's trail system; Parcel contains scenic values; Parcel is in the 100-year floodplain; Parcel provides value as a village green in or near a hamlet center; Other criteria. b. Identify other financing opportunities and mechanisms to protect land including additional local bonds, partnerships, and other financing tools, including bargain sales and estate planning. c. Ensure that information about options for landowners regarding land preservation is readily available on the Town's website, as well as in the Planning and Land Preservation Departments.

CPAC Discussion:

- Should this list be prioritized?
- Water quality should be the number one issue to solve.
- We are making these manicured spaces that do not absorb water naturally like they should.
- We want to preserve the land but then where is the the land stewardship plan for the Town to follow?

Public Comments

Land Stewardship: (Summary) Land stewardship is an important aspect of the land preservation program and involves managing Town-owned land, as well as monitoring the Town's easements on lands where development rights were purchased or where preservation was a condition of a subdivision approval. The purpose for managing and monitoring land preserved with Town funds is to ensure that the use of those lands meets the purpose(s) for which they were preserved. **Continue to manage Town-owned open space/nature preserves through a land stewardship program:** The Town manages the open space/nature preserves it owns through routine maintenance and stewardship plans. The stewardship plans outline the uses for each preserve, the trail system (if any), and other appropriate uses, as well as steps the Town should take to responsibly manage the property for the purpose it was preserved, including creating and maintaining parking areas, wildlife habitat management, and trail maintenance. ETC.

CPAC Discussion

- Give information to land owners regarding options to preserve their land and make sure the list is available on the Town's website.
- The Town doesn't have a land preservation department other than Community Preservation Fund Board.
- What responsibility does the Town have regarding Town property maintenance? Some management plans like the West Neck Preserve are very proactive. The Town needs have a plan in place on how to manage invasive plant species. How is the Town removing these plants? What is the cost?
- The Deer and Tick Committee submitted a proposal to do habitat management and restoration to remove invasive species so it would help remove tick habitats and manage the tick population.
- The Town Board recommended that they work in coordination with CPF to develop stewardship plans for habitat management and restoration on each CPF property. These are major projects that have to be completed in conjunction with the Highway Department.
- The timeline for removing invasive species and replacing the area with new plants is critical.
- Some areas can be maintained by regular mowing.
- Make certain there is a plan in place before starting a habitat restoration project to reach the target dates. Establish a timeline and coordinate with interested parties so that the project is effective and timely.
- Consider making a reference list of restrictions for each property.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes



Public Comments

Active Recreation (Summary)

Shelter Island Town offers numerous recreational opportunities on its land and waters and has acquired and managed many acres of land through its Community Preservation Fund. To promote a healthy and vibrant community the Town shall engage in the following: **Maintain Existing Facilities and Grounds:** Enhance utilization of existing park lands, open spaces, beaches, and recreational facilities through ongoing maintenance, stewardship, and facility improvement; Conduct a survey or needs assessment to evaluate whether existing recreational resources are adequate; **Create New Recreational Opportunities and Facilities:** Conduct a feasibility study that would include researching the availability of funding (public and private), operation (public and private) and suggested location of a year-round gymnasium and swimming pool facility. ECT.

CPAC Discussion

- There may be real conflict within the Plan as more people demand high end recreation construction because the Town risks losing land it wants to protect. There has to be a balance between people that want open space and the people that want to be healthy and need space to exercise.
- The Town is putting in kayak support mechanisms and Town landings for recreation but they have to clear the land to put them in.
- The Town should make more trail bicycle routes and walking/jogging trails.
- People want Dog parks so they can walk their dogs in a safe place. It would be better than having the dogs using the bathing beaches.
- Many people prefer to walk their dogs on the beach because there are no ticks.
- Add create new opportunities to develop community gardens with vegetables and flowers within designated Town facilities.
- Many groups have approached the Town Board to lobby for a Town swimming pool (this request has been discussed for years).
- The FIT Center will have to be removed from the school grounds in the near future.
- Produce a feasibility study for a multi-complex health center (apply for State/Federal grant monies).

Public Comments

Ensure Diverse Programming (Summary): Provide a variety of recreational, educational, and leisure experiences and programs to meet the diverse needs of the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

~ Recreational, educational, and leisure activities evolve with time, and it is important to remain current as well as satisfy the needs of a diverse population of seniors, youth, and part-time residents. Technological advances require that the facilities and activities remain compelling and instructional for all Town residents.

~ Partner with existing entities that provide cultural programming to offer educational classes, performances, art exhibits, concerts, and other leisure activities.

~ Expand the Town's use of social media and the website to inform the public about new programs and activities at the Recreation Department and to gather feedback on program offerings. Create a central database of recreational offerings that include activities not sponsored by the Town and post on the Town's website. ETC.

CPAC Discussion

- The Deer and Tick Committee is trying to set up like a permanent archery area so people have a safe place to practice practice and teach new comers.
- Make programs affordable to attend like The Educational Foundation does.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes



- Explore opportunities for updating the Legion bowling alley and create different types of memberships.

7. Review of Chapter 9 (*Quality of Life: Historic, Cultural & Community Resources*)

Public Comments

- ~ Shelter Island needs to be better prepared for major weather catastrophes such as category four hurricanes.
- ~ Shelter Island population is getting older and the Town should ensure all residents have access to resources and the support they need to thrive.
- ~ Make zoning changes to preserve the rural character.
- ~ The Town does not need to create a Historic Advisory Commission because the Historical Society covers that role.
- ~ We need a community center and more after school programs for school children of all ages.
- ~ The Town needs to add leaf blowers and not just amplified noise to the Town noise code.
- ~ There needs to be sound ordinances in place and enforced for places of amplified music in residential areas.
- ~ Address food insecurity on the Island and the high poverty level on the island.
- ~ Island kids have a lack of things to do after school on the island. They need a better community center because they can't hang out at the library 24/7. Kids need to move their bodies and the Town should offer more physical activities.

CPAC Discussion

- We are all concerned about preserving the historical nature of the island. Everything was given to the Historical Society to manage.
- We are not addressing the need to preserve our grid, our agriculture and aquaculture programs like preserving trees, the Town's historic houses, and the historic buildings. Anyone can buy a historic house and level it because the Town does not have a registry for these properties.
- The problem could be with the Town's floating zones.
- Consider making a historic district zone or educate people on how they can designate their home as historic even if it doesn't meet the national register regulations.

8. Next Meeting: Continue review of Chapters 9.

Adjourned at 8:19 pm

Submitted by,

Coco Lee Thuman, CPAC Clerk

(Approved February 9, 2024)