

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes



The CPAC meeting was Hybrid and YouTube Live Stream

CPAC Members Present: Jo-Ann Robotti, Sean Clark, John Kerr, Rebecca Mundy, Wendy Turgeon

Excused: Jay Card Jr.

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

Attendees: Lori Beard Raymond, Karen Kiaer, Stephen Jacobs

Zoom Attendees: Kim Noland, Ed Hydeman, Sandra O'Connor, Lily Hoffman

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

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

2. **Minutes**

- Motion to accept January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Seconded. Unanimously accepted.
- Motion to accept January 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Seconded. Unanimously accepted.

3. **Continue with Chapter 9 Comments** (*Quality of Life: Historic, Cultural & Community Resources*)

Public Comments: Quality of life on Shelter Island is currently under threat and more needs to be done to protect the historic cultural and community resources. The current draft of the Comprehensive Plan does not go far enough. There are many problems with wetlands permits application procedures and the Boards approving them. More professionals and community discussions are needed. The Comprehensive Plan has had limited community open public hearing forums partly due to the public trying to navigate the pandemic between 2020 & 2021 and there should be more of them now.

Open public hearings allow people to learn from each other and share ideas plus hear the pros and cons of all topics. We need hearings before the draft is completed and adopted. The current draft lacks specific data. Many areas are vague and does not guide the reader on intent.

The first governance recommendation is the Town needs to eliminate conflicts of interest. The Town staff needs civil service training on what it means to be a civil servant. FOILS are often incomplete, ignored or difficult to get. Town Clerks and Staff need to set and follow policies and be consistent in all areas.

Shelter Island Heights is both a National and New York State Historic District.

Improve the website postings of public hearing documents, legal notices, agendas, and discussion documents with the minimum of 24 hours before Town Board meetings and Work Sessions. Do not edit or add items to Town Board or Committee meetings agendas at the last minute.

Reestablish the Town's Capital Grants Committee as a a Public meeting so everyone can attend.

CPAC Discussion: Capital Grant meetings are internal workings of Town Hall and they are not subject to the Open Meetings requirement. All members are Town employees and no members of the public are involved.

Many of the comments and suggestions the Town has received for the Comprehensive Plan are projects that the Town is currently working on such as the new website that will be going live in a couple of weeks that will allow residents and guests to sign up for notices and updates thru an app called NOTIFY ME and all Committee meetings will have a link to the Agenda, Minutes, and YouTube recording of each meeting (some of the items the Public has asked of the Town).

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes



Public Comments: Many items in the adopted 1994 Comprehensive Plan are reiterated such as preserve the character and preserved natural resources through land use however when these items are brought up today in public hearing concerning new construction, these items are dismissed. The 2008 version of the Comprehensive Plan is more strict than this proposed draft, with the exception of the noise ordinance, which is less strict.

Professional oversight is needed for the many of the boards and committees as well as the building department. Especially the need for land use attorneys, environmental professionals, hydrologist, sanitarian, etc.

We should be supporting Town staff and volunteers with professionals trained in these fields paid for by the applicants, not the taxpayers. The health, safety, and wellness of the public is at stake in addition to the Town's environment and culture. The Town should have professionals who are trained in these areas.

ADA law was implemented in July of 1990. The town is seriously deficient in compliance and has liability exposure

CPAC Discussion: The Town is aware of ADA laws and we currently have a plan and are building ramps for the Legion, Police Department, and Justice Hall.

Recommend the coverage on each Shelter Island organizations regarding their future plans and initiatives be equal (includes Sylvester Manor, Mashomack, Library, Churches, etc.) so as to not single one out more than the others. Include the information collected about the The American Legion and the Community Center that appears was edited out.

Include details collected on Public Safety as it relates to the staffing levels of the Police Department, Fire Department, and Emergency Medical Services. Are the current number of employees in these agencies sufficient? Is the structure of how the volunteers are staffed for those services adequate? With limited members volunteering especially for EMS and the Fire Dept. this may become a very big problem in the near future in regards to providing acceptable safety to all the residents and guests on the Island. The supply of affordable housing for these volunteers is nonexistent. The Town needs to make a plan on how to manage these volunteer facilities. How to promote volunteerism to maintain a strong and self-perpetuating volunteer corps of ambulances and fire department members and request the Town do an assessment.

ADD: Ensure that Police Department, Fire Department, and Emergency Medical Services staff is sufficient and develop a long term plan or strategy to manage potential staffing issues in the future.

Currently a Full-Time paramedic is costing the Town \$400,000 + a year for 24/7 for 365 days a year. What would the cost be to hire an entire EMS or FD Staff for a year?

The Town need to review and do a cost analysis for the PD, FD, and EMS. Residents have concerns about Police presence and safety. The PD has certain shifts where it is staffed with one Police Officer on duty.

4. Chapter 10 Comments (Utilities, Sustainability & Resilience))

Public Comments: Residents disagreed that the island's sole source aquifer has the capacity to meet the populations water needs for the foreseeable future, but only if it's protected.

How will the Town manage the increased need for electricity for heating and for electrical vehicles? The Town needs faster charging stations for electric vehicles in public locations near businesses. Put bike chargers at the beach.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes



Explore state and federal funding options for the need for comprehensive clean energy overlay to the Comprehensive Plan. Rehabilitate and redeveloped the Town Center.

Work on solving saltwater intrusion problems in peripheral areas. No new construction in the near shore overlay. Who says we have water for the foreseeable future increased density will make sure that we don't have enough water.

The Town needs drought management, including the drought impact evaluation for all zoning and land use projects.

Public Recommendations:

No to geothermal because of the fragile aquifer. No to the golf course taking a community resource for private use. Prepare for and adapt to the effects of climate change and rising sea levels. Develop a coastal resilience plan. Focus on extreme weather events such as category two and three hurricanes and what that would do to the island. Promote sustainable construction and design standards. Discuss green energy options to reduce our carbon footprint. Solar panels on the Recycling Center roof and School roof would be a benefit to the community.

CPAC Discussion: The CPAC Members discussed the options of vertical geothermal. The town is currently undertaking a ETIPP Grant (Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project) which provides technical assistance opportunities for remote and island communities. This is an educational and informational grant.

The Town is currently partnered with the National Renewable Energy laboratories, and they're looking at the Island to see what we can do as a town to help promote renewable energy i.e.: can the Town put solar at the landfill and on all the roofs of our municipal buildings ?

The Town wants to develop resiliency hubs in all of our primary emergency buildings instead of relying on diesel generator power backup. The full scope of the producing the guidelines and production will take up to 12 to 14 months to be completed.

Public Comments: Recommends establishing a group to investigate the energy independency and resilience to be able to maximize coordination among the Green Options Committee Members, the Town Board Members, and the activities that the ETIPP Committee is working on. We need more renewable energy. We need storage to get us through emergency power outages.

The island's sole source aquifer has the capacity to meet the populations water needs for the foreseeable future but only if it is protected. Shelter Island has an adequate drinking water supply system provided by individual private wells.

Water quality is an issue in parts of the island and most notably the elevated nitrates in the Town Center. Sea level rise will exacerbate saltwater intrusion into the aquifer in low lying coastal areas of the island. Protecting the town's water supply will require continual diligent action at all levels.

CPAC Discussion: Residents are using private wells unless they are located in one of the three water districts.

Public Comments: Support the goal of 70% of Shelter Islands electricity from renewable energy by 2030 and 100% by 2040. Shelter Island is uniquely vulnerable to climate change and sea level rise. The Town should consider limiting additional shorelines development and bulkhead replacement, and hardening. Reliable drinking water for all should be coordinated with development.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes



Guidelines should be established as the Town is responsible for allowing massive developments that threatened the quality and quantity of our water. The property owner needs to take responsibility for overdevelopment of their property.

Recommend restrictions on how many accessory structures are allowed to have water, the size of homes and accessory structures. Irrigation landscaping requirements submitted with all applications for permits, water saving equipment and fixture limitations, outdoor showers and kitchens restrictions.

Explore solutions to prevent personal care products that contain forever chemicals from entering into the groundwater.

Need better and clearer enforcement requirements. Need for effective and diligent monitoring regarding cross connection contamination devices. Need to regulate contamination and requirements for all residents on public water systems for pools, cisterns, irrigation wells, fire suppression systems, and commercial businesses.

New York State Department of Health requires annual inspections on some of these items.

CPAC Discussion: Some of the comments have been addressed in prior chapters. The Suffolk County just updated the irrigation law to require new technology. If homeowners put it in a new irrigation system, it has to be able to record the moisture of the soil and have a rain sensor.

There is no perfect solution to prevent personal care products from entering groundwater. If personal care products are used then they go down your drain and they will go into your destination underground area.

Public Comments: The Island's Internet services are slow and the service is disrupted during storms, rain, and wind. Additional outages sometimes for no weather problems.

***** NOTE: To hear all the Public Comments and CPAC Discussions please view the meeting by clicking here:**

https://www.youtube.com/live/FpkJH_Ds_yI?si=XwfvWpOnN09cLI2

Next Steps: Review of Chapter 11 (*Implementation and Action Plan - Working Draft*)

Adjourned at 8:06 pm

Submitted by,

Coco Lee Thuman

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Clerk

(Approved February 20, 2024)