

Approved August 11, 2016

**City of Rockland
Comprehensive Planning Commission
Minutes for July 28, 2016**

Commission Present: Chair Eileen Wilkinson, Adam Ackor, Callie Black, Michelle Gifford, and Julie Lewis

Staff Present: Attorney Kevin Beal, Code Enforcement Officer William Butler, and Code Secretary Roxy LaFrance

Guests: Eric Galant of Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission

Meeting Called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Previous Meeting Minutes: July 14, 2016

ACTION: Callie Black made a motion that the minutes be accepted without amendment. Vote 4-0. Michelle Gifford not yet present.

Presentation by Eric Galant on Natural Resources Chapter

Eric Galant explained Natural Resources used to be a large chapter, but in the new version it has been separated into Natural Resources, Water Resources, and Marine Resources. Eric explained map of natural resources in Rockland as shown on page 8 as well as the following State required maps. Eric explained that the answer to *Analyses (1)* on page 1 currently includes blanks that will need to be filled in to complete the chapter, and that it includes his opinions expressed in the answer which are based upon previous trends. Eric explained that the Commission may decide that the answer to *Analyses (3)* could include an assessing map showing lands with conservation easements. Eric explained that *Conditions and Trends (2)* currently lists public parks at a minimum and that the Commission could expand this list quite a bit. The list of scenic views should be from public, not private lands, however scenic views in private hands can be listed with a goal of purchasing to preserve the view. Eric explained that the *Strategies* listed on page 5 are the State's minimum required strategies. Eric explained that on pages 6-7 he has excerpted 2002 strategies for consideration in including in the revised chapter's strategies.

Presentation by Eric Galant on Housing Chapter

Eric Galant explained that the Housing chapter revisions include 2014 US Census and 2015 Maine State Housing Authority data, and that there is a known margin of error in both sets of data. This margin is greater the smaller a city or town is. Eric explained that the answers to the *Analyses* are guesses based upon trends. Blanks need to be completed with data from the Code Office or Planning Board. Eric has asked for the data from the Code Office before and will reach out again to obtain the needed data.

Callie Black stated that there are currently in Rockland 96 total short-term vacation rental units, of which 15 of them are rooms in someone's home and 81 are whole apartments or houses. Eric Galant expressed that the data of informal rentals should be included in the Housing chapter as an estimate.

Eric Galant explained that the State's goal is that 10% of housing be affordable. Affordable means spending 30% of household income or less. Subsidized housing is a voucher from the State which pays for rent in excess of 30% of income. All subsidized housing is affordable by definition.

Kevin Beal stated that the State's criteria appeared to be passive, in that they focus on strategies to respond to current trends, and observed that the Commission has the authority to consider additional, more proactive strategies intended to change future trends if they are not satisfied with the current trends. Members discussed this option, and Eric Gallant offered to provide sample housing strategies from other communities.

Eric Galant explained that because of total population of Rockland, the State requires Life Safety Codes be followed, however there are other strategies that can be utilized to increase housing units and thereby affordable housing, such as smaller lot sizes and minimum housing footprint requirements.

Eric Galant explained that his contract has ended with the City, but he will discuss its renewal for his continued work on revising chapters with the Interim City Manager Audra Caler-Bell.

Historic Preservation Ordinance

Kevin Beal explained that he red-lined changes to the Historic Preservation Ordinance Amendment that are needed to codify it. The amendments were reviewed by Ann Morris who made one suggestion which is now included in the presented draft ordinance. Callie Black has drafted a memo to Council ready for the Chair, Eileen Wilkinson's signature recommending the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Michelle Gifford recommended public notice of and a public forum for discussion of the ordinance before final reading by Council.

Eileen Wilkinson signed the memo to Council.

Community Heart & Soul

Callie Black explained that she spent a lot of time discussing Community Heart & Soul with Robin Mayer who utilized the program in Damariscotta. Damariscotta had pot lucks with the community and met with individuals one on one at their homes if necessary. Damariscotta created a map of walking routes within the town by utilizing the program. Robin Mayer speaks very highly of the program and would be happy to meet with the Commission to discuss her experience with them.

Eileen Wilkinson inquired how long the program lasted, to which Callie Black explained that it took a couple of years for Damariscotta to complete.

Callie Black explained that the Orton Family Foundation provides a huge amount of materials, webinars, and help desk all for free. Finding volunteers will be the challenge. However in Damariscotta they started out with a small group of volunteers that grew over time once interest grew. There will be expenses of printed materials such as signs, and an office is recommended which will also incur expenses. Callie has meetings scheduled with other towns that have utilized the program as well.

Kevin Beal explained that the Commission would put together a package to submit to City Council if the Commission decides to move forward with Community Heart & Soul. The package could be submitted as a public engagement process for the development of the new comprehensive plan.

Next meeting: August 11, 2016

Kevin Beal explained that at the next meeting there will likely be City Council business for the Commission to address.

Callie Black asked the Commission to review the new Zone Change Decision Making document and make suggestions.

Eileen Wilkinson suggested hiring a consultant with experience to assist Rockland in navigating from zoning amendments to form-based code.

Michelle Gifford volunteered to present a finalized draft of the Housing Chapter at the following meeting on August 25, 2016.

Eileen Wilkinson stated that at the next meeting, in addition to any required Council business, the Commission will finalize the Population and Demographics chapter and Amy Files will present a finalized draft of the Agriculture & Forestry Resources Chapter.

ACTION: Adam Ackor made a motion to adjourn. Vote 4-0. Callie Black had already left the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Roxy LaFrance
Code Secretary