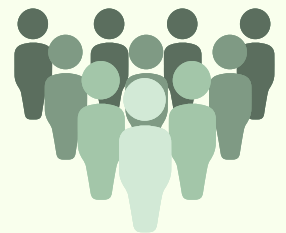


"The Comprehensive Plan is an opportunity to create your community's vision and to get a sense of community and place across all generations."

LCRPC staff spoke with Marianne Pinkham about the Nobleboro Comprehensive Plan Update Committee and their process, especially about the need to be consistent with the Growth Management Act by the State of Maine. See below for her insight.



What tools or outreach strategies did the Nobleboro Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (NCPUDC) use to receive public participation?

NCPUDC applied for, and received a Maine Community Foundation "Lifelong Communities" mini grant for work related to Age Friendly Livable Communities. This grant was used for the community engagement section of the Comprehensive Plan: funding for community conversations, a subscription to Zoom for virtual meetings, and access to digital surveys. The survey questions were developed from past questionnaires of Nobleboro and surrounding communities and were used during the in-person and Zoom based conversations.

How did the NCPUDC approach workload distribution?

NCPUDC used its past Comprehensive Plan as a base to develop the updates to the 2021–2022 Plan. Marianne took on the role of Coordinator for NCPUDC, coordinating meetings, agendas, volunteers, and the workflow. For each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan there was a lead volunteer, and this person was responsible for reaching out to stakeholders, doing research, and collecting data.

NCPUDC used their community and connections to improve each chapter of the plan. The Committee made sure to use the best resources available to them, which included (to name a few): Maine DOT, Coastal River Conservation Trust, Midcoast Conservancy, the Road Commission and the Fire Chief. The NCPUDC ensured that community members with expertise were represented in each section of the comprehensive plan.

What was the biggest challenge the Committee faced in the Comprehensive Plan update process?

Creating a significant and in-depth plan during a pandemic was a challenge that the Committee worked hard to overcome. Marianne advises that the best committee is one comprised of dedicated and committed people.

The mapping section also came as a challenge for the Committee. The work often needs to be outsourced for some of the more detailed maps like the Land Use map. Many mapping resources are available online, so make sure you use them. Also ensure that all mapping data is being saved and shared on a hard drive or flash drive for future Comprehensive Plans.

Do you have any tips for other towns that are in the process of creating their Comprehensive Plan, or will be in the future?

Engage your community! Have a small, dedicated group working on the plan, then have everyone else as stakeholders for support. Keep it simple and use the resources that are all around in the community and online. Additionally don't be afraid to ask for help. Know the players in your town, don't create a new committee for every chapter if you currently have resources in place. Make sure that your committee is knowledgeable about the chapters and process. Having the support of the Town's Select Board as well as having a member of the Select Board serving as an active member of the NCPUDC is also vital. Ensure that all sections of the Comprehensive Plan checklist provided by the State are acknowledged to ensure that a Town's updated plan can be found complete and consistent with Maine's Growth Management Act. You know the town best. Be cognizant of new laws that have been passed and apply them to the plan. Be aware of the laws that affect policies, land use, ordinances, or your Town's visions.

Be sure to check in with LCRPC for any regional coordination efforts with your Town's Comprehensive Plan! This includes, for example: shared resources and facilities, transportation, and broadband and more.