**Town of Stanford**

**Meeting Minutes from Comprehensive Plan Review Committee**

**January 13, 2021**

**Committee Members Present via Video/Conference Call**

Gary Lovett, Committee Chair

Rosemarie Miner, Secretary

Tom Angell

Conrad Levenson

Karen Mosher

Jeff Spiers

Richard Bell

**Others Present**

Wendy Burton, Town of Stanford Supervisor, Committee Liaison

Nina Peek, VP AKRF, Inc. Committee Consultant

Madeleine Helmer, Deputy Project Manager, Planning AKRF, Inc

**Public Comment**

Three members of the public were present.

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm via Zoom Webinar.

Gary reviewed the proposed agenda:

1. Review and approve the minutes from December 8, 2020.
2. Review drafts of chapters 1 and 2 of the updated Comprehensive Plan and associated maps.

Gary added one item to agenda

* Brief CPRC on conversation with the CAC

*Approval of Minutes*

Tom proposed the following change:

* On page 2, under *Questions that came up* section: Tom Angell feels that “the public has changed enough” should be replaced with “the public opinion may have changed enough”

Nina calls attention to the fact that we haven’t come to a conclusion on the way forward with the process of handing the Comprehensive Plan over to the town.

Minutes approved unanimously with the proposed changes.

*Gary’s discussion with the Conservation Advisory Commission*

* Gary presented the recommendations of the Natural Resources chapter to the CAC on December 16, followed by a discussion in which the CAC expressed its support for the recommendations. One idea that was raised was to have a small focus group of Town residents to review the natural resources recommendations to hear objections and explain CPRC rationale. The CPRC discussed this idea and decided that having a small group could be seen as exclusionary, and any comments were better addressed in a larger public meeting for anyone that wants to attend.

*Review of Draft Chapters*

***CHAPTER 1***

Include the full history of the project in the Introduction.

Add a section that summarizes the major changes made due to public comment or otherwise. Gary will draft the language and then the CPRC can decide if the tone is appropriate (not too negative) and placed appropriately within the report (a table versus an addendum).

**Documentary Research**

Correspondence on the 2012 Master Plan could be referenced and included in the appendix. We would need to digitize the handwritten letters, notes and cards. Members feel that digitizing this feedback is a waste of time given the minutes and videos from 2012 are on the website. Members do not want to include detailed breakdown of community comments but are in favor of referencing the fact that public comments were considered by the current committee and the previous Draft Master Plan Review Committee.

**Vision**

The survey used was conducted in 2000 not 2012. The results of that survey are in the draft Master Plan.

**Goals and Objectives**

Goal 3 Objective 3.4 is being eliminated.

***CHAPTER 2***

**Existing Conditions**

Some concern expressed in the lack of a narrative that draws a reader through the data. Without a sound narrative, the data might be better relegated to an appendix. Gary points out that the CP addresses some of these trends with our recommendations. He sees the information as a snapshot of where the Town is now.

We may need a paragraph at the end of the data section that succinctly summarizes the most relevant trends to set the stage for the report’s recommendations. We should also be clear that the report wasn’t an attempt to address these trends specifically.

It was suggested that the data presentation be left as it is with the data and demographics referenced throughout the chapters to support some of the recommendations. This can be done in addition to adding a summary of the trends.

MOE (margin of error) is in reference to the 2018 data. The margin of error column will be removed but an asterisk will be added to explain that there is some variability in the data. Nina will draft a few options for the presentation of this concept in the CP.

A glossary may make the entire document more accessible to town residents.

**Table 2-4**

Include definition for people who are not in the workforce. What does this include (students, retirees, etc.)? Are those who are self-employed or employed in the gig economy captured here, or at all?

**Pg 9: Increase in Median Household Income**

There was a discussion about the interpretation of the cause of the increase in median household income from 2010 to 2018. There may also be a flow of wealthier people into Stanford and an exodus of those with the lowest household incomes (perhaps due to a lack of rental housing). There are many possible interpretations of these data, but with so many variables and unknowns the conclusions aren’t definitive. Median may also not be the best mode of measurement for this metric.

There is an increase in Median household income and a simultaneous increase in unemployment. Is this merely a reflection of the macrotrends in America?

**Table 2-6**

2018 data are not in percentage and therefore are not consistent with the rest of the table.

**Pg 12**

What is the other 10 percent of units? Currently the number represents 19% rental and 71% owner occupied.

Proposed summary regarding the decrease in long-term rental units attributes it to an increase in short-term rentals and AirBnB scenarios. The committee agrees with this interpretation.

**Figure 2-6**

Conrad asked, “how does this relate to our goals?” Nina mentions the relationship to the Town’s commitment to being “a right to farm” community and the graphic being a depiction of the Town’s current state.

**Agriculture**

Can we use Cornell’s data on reported income to define size of farm vs capital investment (as it reads currently)? Madeleine will look deeper into what is available via Cornell.

**Historic Resources**

To be eligible a property must be nominated with the owner’s consent and then the documentation must be submitted to the state. It is said to be a lengthy and cumbersome process.

**Open Space**

Conservation Easements included in the maps and recreation areas should be eliminated because they are not actually publicly accessible.

Cold Spring Elementary is now the Cold Spring Early Learning Center and not really a public space. However, this lack of an elementary school might be important to mention in the data and demographics session.

**Wetlands, Waterbodies and Watercourses**

Federal wetlands have no effective protection. This should be stated directly. The state regulations only protect those that are larger than 12.4 acres.

The Town does not have a local wetlands ordinance. The 2012 draft had a recommendation for one and the chapter in this current document contains the same recommendation for the Town to adopt a local wetlands ordinance. The reason for a wetlands ordinance is to protect wetlands smaller than 12.4 acres, which are important in flood prevention, maintaining groundwater quality, and protecting biodiversity. The Planning Board needs to have direction in how to respond when a proposal comes before them that involves properties containing wetlands. A wetlands ordinance would provide clear instructions and criteria and minimize subjective interpretations.

**Maps**

Road names are not legible and the CPRC would like to see larger text marking the roads.

Karen foresees some pushback on the CEA map because of the large area covered, especially in the Upper Wappinger CEA. Gary noted that the map in Chapter 2 represents the CEAs that have already been designated by the Town and have been in place since the 1990s.

The parcel boundaries could be lightened more to increase readability.

Shouldn’t the ag districts and the ag exemptions be on the same map? AKRF is following the 2012 template but they can change the graphic to match the text, with exemptions and districts in the same map.

*Final Remarks:*

Any specific editorial comments or changes can be emailed to AKRF after the meeting.

Chapter 1 will change quite a bit, as it relates to text and substance, before the next meeting. Chapter 2 will be edited and formatted in preparation for the final plan.

Will maps remain online after the plan goes live? The plan would be on the website and it will contain the maps.

The next meeting will start with a presentation from Cornell Cooperative Extension on Climate Smart Communities. We will review additional chapters after the presentation and Gary will send an agenda in advance.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 pm.

**Next Committee meeting will be held on:**

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

**The public is invited to listen to these meetings by signing on through the following**

**Zoom link:** <https://zoom.us/j/99284835503>

Meeting minutes submitted by:

Rosemarie Miner

CPRC Secretary