



## TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH PLANNING BOARD

2200 East Main Road  
Portsmouth, RI 02871  
401-683-3717

### PORTSMOUTH PLANNING BOARD Special Meeting September 26, 2018

**Members Present:** Guy Bissonnette, Luke Harding, Kathleen Wilson, Ryan Tibbetts, David Garceau and Michael James

**Members Absent:** Edward Lopes

**Others Present:** Gary Crosby, Town Planner, Michael Asciola, Assistant Town Planner, and Leon Lesinski, Administrative Officer, Portsmouth Planning Board  
The Meeting was called to order by Mr. Bissonnette at 7:00 p.m.

**1. Agenda Continuances/Modifications:** none

**2. Approval of minutes for Special Meeting of August 29, 2018**

**MOTION:** Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tibbetts, to approve the minutes for the special meeting of August 29, 2018. All in favor. So voted.

The Planning Board discussed the October workshop date with Mr. Crosby and Frederick Marano, 200 Lepes Road, Portsmouth, Member, Citizens Interested in the Comprehensive Community Planning Process Committee (CICCPPC). The Board decided to move the date to October 24. Mr. Marano indicated that the CICCPPC would have opportunity, prior to the workshop, to review the Natural Hazards & Climate Change Element.

**MOTION:** Mr. Tibbetts made a motion, seconded by Michael James, to move the workshop for the Comprehensive Community Plan from October 31 to October 24, 2018. All in favor. So voted.

**3. Review the Natural Hazards & Climate Change Element of the Comprehensive Community Plan**

Gary Crosby, Town Planner gave a lengthy review of the Natural Hazards & Climate Change Element. He explained the difference between hazard resilience and hazard mitigation. He noted that both concepts require planning within the element. He spoke on targets for and response to sea level rise. The element has one goal and four policy statements with associated action items. Mr. Crosby addressed comments and answered questions from Planning Board members as follows:

- Action MH/CC – 1.3a: The town’s hazard mitigation plan is expired but in the pipeline with FEMA for approval.
- Action MH/CC – 1.3b: The listed plans should be continually reviewed for consistency with each other
- Action MH/CC – 1.4a: The purpose for this action in terms of determining and securing benefits to town citizens should be explained in the wording of the action item. Michael Asciola, Assistant Town Manager is training to become a flood plain manager.
- Actions MH/CC – 1.1d and 1.1e: Actions with regard to town drainage systems and onsite wastewater treatment systems should be worded to include the caveat that measures are conducted in collaboration with State and Federal authorities.
- Actions MH/CC – 1.3b and 1.4b: These actions should further define limits, targets and time frames for reviews and measures.
- Element 13 – Implementation will outline and delineate responsible parties to conduct all actions listed each element of the Comprehensive Community Plan.

Mr. Bissonnette called for public comment.

Peter Roberts, 80 Ormerod Avenue, Portsmouth questioned sea level rise claims in Island Park. Referring to past storm events, he expressed that residents already know about the risks with storms. He suggested that the element refer to measures citizens should take in a hazardous event.

Acknowledging the controversial nature of the topic of sea level rise, Mr. Tibbetts stated that federal agencies, including the US Navy, are taking the issue seriously and that data collected over time will reveal an accurate picture. He suggested that comprehensive plan should indicate consideration for sea level rise with language that is not controversial or political. Mr. Crosby inquired as to whether the element should include concern limits for sea level rise. Mr. Bissonnette suggested that the language should instead include “check-points” for gathering and responding to new information on subjects like sea level rise. Mr. Crosby agreed, noting that the Comprehensive Plan undergoes a review every five years.

#### **4. Review the update of the Consultants progress with the Comprehensive Community Plan**

The consultants report was included in the Planning Board monthly package. There was no discussion on the report.

#### **5. Review the Comprehensive Plan Workshop Schedule**

The Planning Board will revisit the Natural Hazards & Climate Change Element, and review the Energy Element and the Land Use Element at the October 24 workshop. Mr. Crosby will present the Land Use Element to the CICCPC by

Thursday, October 11, 2018.

At 7:53 p.m., a motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. So voted.

Respectfully submitted:  
Dede Walsh  
Recording Secretary for:

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Leon Lesinski  
Administrative Officer