



TOWN OF KITTERY

200 Rogers Road, Kittery, ME 03904

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Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

February 13, 2024

5:00 PM

Rice Public Library Community Room

1. Acceptance of January Minutes
2. Connector
3. Land Acknowledgement
4. DEI in the Community and Region
 - a. Discuss lawn signs in partnership with CRT
 - b. Share ideas, stories, events, and learning opportunities
5. Education Subcommittee report
6. DEI Consultant RFP update
7. Comprehensive Plan Summary – Review Draft + Discuss
 - a. What stands out relative to the charge of the committee?
 - b. Prioritize themes/suggestions for final summary
8. Election Table
 - a. March 5, 2024
9. Next Steps & Next Meeting
 - a. March 12, 2024 @ 5 PM
10. Adjournment

Meeting Materials:

- January Minutes
- Comprehensive Plan Summary



TOWN OF KITTERY
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee
January 9, 2024
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present: Meaghan Dunn, Bruce Mallory, Kavika Vargas, Nicholas Frank, Russell White, Erin Kempster, Emily Flinkstrom, Cheryl Daly, Judy Spiller, CiCi Nielsen, Jason Garnham, Kendra Amaral, Haley Mock, Barbara Scott, Mary Stevens

1. November + December Minutes approved unanimously.
2. DEI in the Community and Region
 - a. Discussed educational community events: a small group/subcommittee will meet to discuss and plan community events and bring recommendations to full committee.
 - i. Subcommittee will be Meaghan, Kavika, CiCi. Haley will be the town contact.
 - ii. DEI Com. will seek to partner with other town depts/committees (KCC, RPL, etc)
 - b. Discussed lawn signs in partnership with CRT: Kavika and Cheryl shared feedback from CRT advisor. DEI Committee will send an official letter to CRT stating what we want and how we will contribute. Meaghan and Bruce will draft the letter.
 - i. Discussion: CRT will design, DEI will do production and distribution. Can CRT help with distribution? Do we have a budget? What expenses will we cover? We can sell the signs
 - ii. Discussion about biodegradable signs.
3. Comprehensive Plan Review: Marine Resources – Topic 6
 - a. Consider equity and fairness in access to licenses
 - b. Consider long-term sustainability
 - c. Access to moorings – make mooring process more equitable
 - d. Accessibility – equitable public access to waterfront
 - e. Why no bike racks at the beaches?
 - f. Resident vs. Non-resident access (perception of scarcity of resources)
 - i. There are costs associated with maintenance of waterfront parks and beaches. Access should be equitable and reasonable. Cost of living along the coast is so high – let's not create unreasonable costs and restrictions
4. Consultant to DEI committee: Subcommittee will review proposals (Russell, Erin, Mary, Bruce)

Next steps/unfinished business:

- Draft a summary of our comprehensive plan feedback
- Letter to CRT with specific request re: community signs
- Subcommittee to make recommendations re: community education and outreach
- Subcommittee to review proposals for Consultant
- Need a DEI rep on the Youth Ad Hoc Committee

Next Meeting: February 13, 2024 @ 5 PM

DEI Committee Comments on Kittery Comprehensive Plan 2015-2025
(from meeting minutes)

Topic 1, Historical, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

Concern expressed over the use of the word “character” given the racially charged nature in the current climate - what is that word meant to convey in this context?

In the current plan there is no mention of the Black Heritage Trail or Rock Rest. There is an absence of Kittery’s rich African American history

Discussion focused on updating the language on historical plaques around town. It was mentioned that there is an ongoing project called “Museum in the Streets” that may be a valuable resource

Topic 2, Natural Resources and Recreation (including reference to Marine Resources, Topic 8)

Focus on fairness and equity regarding access to natural resources and recreation sites

Especially mobility access

Equitable and reasonable access fees for everyone to marine recreational resources like Ft. Foster, Sea Point

Need to publicize location of public access sites for parking

Topic 4, Housing Resources

Discussion on population density in the context of affordable housing and preservation of natural resources. Affordable housing needs to be developed around infrastructure.

Concerns over creating zoning that encourages economic segregation. There will be tension between preservation and housing.

There is no mention of accessibility in regards to open spaces.

The committee would like to balance residents and visitors' needs in preserving and accessing natural spaces.

Transportation network would be a step in making the town more accessible

Topic 5, Economic Development

Discussed absence of housing, particularly rentals

Discussed how to leverage the Route 1 corridor to create a community-centered space

Discussed population density and land usage

Discussed Foreside development and how to expand that geographically

Discussed how the working waterfront ties in to Kittery's economic development

Discussed what the town can do to support and attract more BIPOC owned businesses, and businesses that serve a diverse population. How do we make Kittery more welcoming to a diverse population?

Topic 6, Transportation

Accessible and safe sidewalks, including auditory crossing signals

Increase the emphasis on goals for public transportation, including access to Woodland Commons (e.g., through subsidized shared ride services and access to bus lines)

Need ways to deliver to people who are not food secure

Need a regional solution to public transportation needs

Reduce shipyard traffic; add regional park and ride locations

Further development needed toward Rte 1; connecting both sides of town

Increasing population density encourages public transportation

Discussed subsidizing ride services to help people access established bus stops

Link affordable housing with public transportation and access to EV charging stations

Increase emphasis on accessibility

Lighting to reduce pedestrian injuries

Make transportation “safe for everyone” (both physically and emotionally)

Topic 7 Municipal Facilities and Services and Fiscal Capacity

No mention of accessibility in this section of the plan

Improving conditions for pedestrians was a major theme of the feedback from the public

Community Center comprehensive plan does try to address physical accessibility

Discussion surrounding trash pick up. Residents without transportation may not have the ability to dispose of trash at the town dump.

The entire comprehensive plan is missing language regarding DEI initiatives. It is important to find places to include that language and explain how it is beneficial to the community.

Public transportation is also an accessibility issue.

There needs to be a goal of improving communication, particularly regarding voting.

Ambulatory services are not mentioned in the plan. Many insurances do not cover the company that provides these services in Kittery

The facilities at Emery Field are attracting a number of families and community members that speak different languages - it's a good reminder that language accessibility is an important goal

how is KCC addressing the needs of the older population and if the town, as a whole, is meeting those needs.

Is there was any kind of centralized municipal department oversight? Kendra explained that she does engage in regular meetings with department heads to ensure that all municipal offices and services are on the same page.

How are citizen complaints handled? The process is customer-centric and “service with a smile”.

At Freebie Barn, the town staff are observed as professional, positive, and polite.

Chief Richter to share his department's efforts to hire more female officers, ongoing training in de-escalation, and a desire to diversify the department. He is finding challenges in getting diverse candidates to apply - this is a problem across the state. This could be a topic in future Comprehensive Plans

What about mental health advocacy in town policing? The department has contracted with an LCSW to help connect people with the services they need. A second position is being proposed to address the needs of the community. Officers have embraced the program, and Chief Richter has seen the benefits.

Topic 8 Land Use

More clearly and explicitly lay out the need for a broad range of housing.

Need more education around this prior to creating the new plan so we can garner that from the public input sessions.

Use land to bring people together, create inclusive & welcoming spaces.

The three key principals at the end of the chapter should include language around inclusion and fostering connections between people.

Accessibility included as land use concept.

Transportation opportunities should be included as a priority.

“Character” and “Small town atmosphere”– avoid those words, or better define what we mean by those words/terms.

Think about what our land use code restricts vs. allows – everyone lives differently and we should think about what other cultures may desire so we can attract and welcome those folks– example: multi-generational housing options. We need to reduce the single-family-only zoning in Kittery.

Linking fear of change to DEI community conversations/listening sessions. How to share the benefits of more folks coming into our community.

Create a land use code that reflects what we WANT and not what we DON'T want. We have made progress on/achieved some of the to-dos outlined in the comprehensive plan.