

MINUTES

Cumberland Town Council Meeting

Town Council Chambers

Monday, August 28, 2023

6:00 P.M. Call to Order

Present: Councilors Copp, Douglass, Edes, Filson, Segrist, Storey-King and Vail

- I. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., § 405(6)(A)(1) re: a personnel matter
Motion by Councilor Edes, seconded by Councilor Vail, to recess to Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., § 405(6)(A)(1) re: a personnel matter.
VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS
TIME: 6:02 P.M.

II. **7:00 P.M. REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING BEGINS**

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Councilor Edes, seconded by Councilor Vail, to accept the August 14, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

IV. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

Town Manager Shane said that he will hold his report until New Business.

V. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Teri Maloney-Kelly said that on June 19th, she came before the Town Council to ask questions about David Chase's proposed 72-unit housing project to be located at the Chase Pit on Blackstrap Road. At that time, she did not remember that the gravel pit had been rezoned in 2016 to the West Cumberland Housing Overlay Zone. This essentially made all of West Cumberland, west of the Turnpike, a housing development zone, including Mr. Chase's gravel pit. As she learned from being on the Planning Board, just because something is zoned to fit, does not guarantee the project will be approved. We have turned down businesses and projects that we felt were not a good fit, or the right time for our town. Regardless, she asked relevant questions about the proposal, its impact on our town and school system, the impact and concern about the ongoing process of giving up commercial property for residential, and placing additional burden on individual taxpayers. At the June 19th meeting, Councilor Storey-King had a conversation with our Town Manager, and he advised her that he had the Town Council 4 to 3 vote to get the Chase project passed. Mind you, that was before newly elected Town Councilors were sworn in. As of today, no inclusive discussion by the Town Council has taken place on this project. Giving a verbal agreement to support a project by any Councilor who has not had an inclusive peer conversation, public input, or conversations with the neighbors, is extremely concerning to her. This is not how our town leaders have approached their responsibilities in the past. At the July meeting, Councilor Storey-King followed up and asked when the discussion would take place to address her questions. She received no response. This looks like stonewalling. The lack of transparency, inclusiveness, and openness is more alarming to her as a citizen than worrying about how to pay for these projects. The past few months, she has watched and experienced many concerning things when it comes to the leadership team for our town. Your approach has been nothing but proposing additional financial burdens on your taxpayers. Your top three priorities for the Town Council this year were pushing the school through, creating more housing by promoting a 72-unit housing development that will have significant impact on our schools and infrastructure, and the potential 110 rental unit housing on

Drowne Road that will not only burden our school, but create a new tax and expense directly on the taxpayers. This is scary and impactful stuff even if you have the financial depth to take on the additional tax burden. Stonewalling occurred for the second time at the Town Council level at the last meeting when Councilor Storey-King made her second request to her Town Council peers to have a collective discussion about the proposed 110-unit rental housing project. No response was given, and no Town Council leadership meeting has occurred to discuss this project. However, tonight “leadership is considering an RFP”. How a new Council can make these serious financial tax implication decisions without comprehensive input and discussions at a leadership level is hard and sad to see happening in her town. She has to ask, as a Council, who are you representing? Is it the Town Manager? Your own personal agendas? Or is it the collective desires of the citizens who elected you to pay the bills of the town and that you represent? The Cumberland we know today was not built from lack of inclusiveness or lack of transparency, and certainly not built from lack of open and tough conversations. It is quite the opposite, as she has been part of the process and the solutions. She is hopeful that this new Council will come together and work together as a team and not let the past 60 days define who you’re going to be. To that end, when might she expect to get a response to the relevant things that she brought up during public comment at the June 19th Town Council meeting?

Chairman Segrist responded that if she sends him an email with her questions, he will happily respond to them.

Bruce Sherwin of Blanchard Road asked what the process is for getting the 72-unit housing proposal in West Cumberland passed. He wants to know how it works so he and other residents can be present.

Councilor Vail responded that there has not been an application submitted to the Planning Board yet. If and when an application is submitted, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing and go through their process.

Bob Couillard of Lower Methodist Road said that he cannot believe that this multi-unit project in a sand pit is even being contemplated. Several years ago, we had a problem with pollution coming down Lower Methodist Road. If all these new homes are built, they will all have septic systems. Where is all that going to go? He is concerned about problems on Lower Methodist Road happening again. He is against this project.

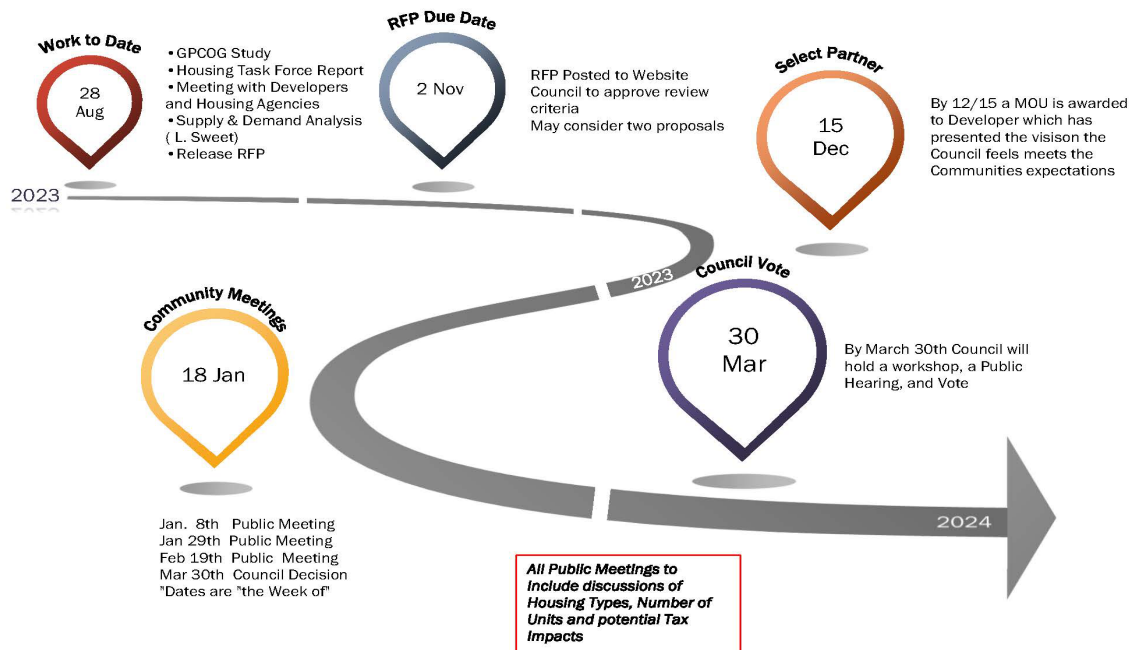
Joyce Baughn of West Cumberland asked if Tax Increment Financing (TIF) monies are spent to extend the waterline in West Cumberland for the Chase project, is that a decision of the Town Council or Administration.

Councilor Edes said that the decision to extend the waterline would be a Town Council decision. So far, the Town Council has not been involved in this project. He is of the opinion that if Town officials allow this project to go through by calling it a condo project, we are doing nothing but cheating. He is taken aback that we are participating in changing the rules and calling this a condo project.

VI. LEGISLATION AND POLICY

23 – 091 To hold a Public Hearing to consider and act on authorizing the Town Manager to prepare a Request for Proposals for an affordable housing project to be constructed on the Town owned property on Drowne Road.

Chairman Segrist gave the following overview of the process on this item:



Chairman Segrist opened the Public Hearing.

Carol Riley of Carol Lane said that she would like to commend the Town Council for their openness and hard work in their attempt to bring us affordable housing. She bought a modest ranch house here 7 years ago, before housing prices started to skyrocket. If she were looking for a house now, she would not be living in this town. This is not only a problem for seniors. Her grown child, a single parent who works in the area, is living in an apartment where the rent is increased every year. There is no affordable place in this town to rent or buy for teachers, firefighters, police officers, etc., who want to live where they work. She believes that bringing affordable housing to Cumberland will benefit us all. Do not let fear of the unknown keep us from exploring our options, because this is what the agenda item is. Exploring our possibilities by authorizing our Town Manager to prepare and send out an RFP to companies who develop affordable housing projects. Let's be brave and open-minded. Let's see what's feasible.

Jesse Lamar Vincent of Range Road said that he supports the Town Council moving forward on this RFP. You have done your due diligence over the past 2 years. He thinks he is a better person for having lived in a community that accepted people from all socioeconomic backgrounds. His own public education made him better for it and he wants his children to grow up in a community that has people with all those opportunities and perspectives. He does not want to see our community become a gated community where only the wealthiest people can get in.

Greg Sweetser of Blanchard Road said that he read through the proposal and liked the part that talked about 30% of the apartments would be for 55 and older. This creates a diverse community and making it affordable is very important.

Pete Wilson of Oak Ridge Road said that he questions the premise that there is a need for affordable housing in Cumberland. If we were talking about creating housing that needy people in Cumberland would move into, he can see the advantage in that. But if we were talking about creating housing so people can move here, that's not a benefit to the community. 110 units plus the 72 units in West Cumberland is just nuts. It will put a strain on the school population as well as tax increases to educate all the additional students.

Sally Bancroft of October Farm Lane said that she supports the forward thinking of the Town Council for taking on this controversial issue. Until we have a way of assessing what the possibilities are, we can't answer the questions about tax increases and the strain on the school system.

Alan Newton of Ole Musket Road said that this is for affordable housing, not low-income housing. Affordable housing is for our teachers and our public safety personnel, all of whom will be paying appropriate taxes. He cannot think of a better project than this. He doesn't know if there is a legal way to ensure that those that work for our town get priority in housing, but that would be even better. He fully supports this project.

Betsy Harding of Cumberland Crossing said that the Town Council is very good at grappling with issues that are very significant to taxpayers. She knows of people whose children and grandchildren cannot move back here. They grew up here but can't afford to live here now. What about seniors who can't keep up with their homes? We need places for people of all income levels to live.

Joyce Baughn of West Cumberland requested that the Town Council do nothing with regard to the RFP at this time. Not because she has any problem with affordable housing, but because we are facing two major increases in our taxes. One from the school system and one from our revaluation. We do not know what the impact is going to be on our tax bills. You are trying to move an RFP forward that will be decided before we get the final version of the tax revaluation. You are going to make a decision on March 30th and the tax revaluation doesn't come out until April 1st. That feels deliberate. She would like to request that we wait until we know what our tax impact is going to be on our two highest priorities before we start having developers spending their time and money on what can fit on that property.

Bruce Sherwin of Blanchard Road said he feels that the Town Council has not done everything that they could or should do on the affordable housing issue. You need to think about time and place, then cost and due diligence, and then TIF. He has seen a lot of growth in his 42 years in Cumberland but has never seen the kind of growth the town is asking for now. We already have a growth problem in this town, we don't need more of a growth problem. We have people who are worried about losing their homes. Cumberland does not have the services of larger towns. Services are going to cost us money.

Jana Spaulding of Skillin Road said that if we were talking about Asylum seekers, subsidized housing, homeless Veterans, pick any group, she would be in favor. This is not affordable housing. There is a misconception that poor families are moving to Cumberland to go to our school. Her biggest objection to this process is the process. At no point have the Councilors sat down together to discuss the housing consultant's report. The consultant looked at it from a regional state perspective, which it is. She did not look at it from a Cumberland perspective. She didn't know about the extensive waiting list for senior housing. It is the Town Council's job to look at it from a local perspective, which you have not done yet. A developer will give you the project that is best for them. It should be your job to look out for Cumberland.

Chris Byrne of West Cumberland said that he is in favor of the whole process of looking for solutions to the affordability problem that we have. He is more alarmed with squeezing in 72 new units in West Cumberland and poisoning the aquifer. His concerns with putting out an RFP is the number of units the developer will recommend and that we get what we actually want. There needs to be public feedback and he would love to see the process come to fruition that satisfies the needs of the people.

Reverend Allison Smith of the Congregational Church in Cumberland applauds the Council for their diligence and foresight over the past two years to address what is so vitally needed, which is more housing options for more people of different backgrounds. Single family homes are not a one-size solution for many people in different chapters in their lives. For many people, living in a multi-family dwelling makes sense. There is a verse that she really loves, and she wants everyone to hear: *you have been blessed to be a blessing*. This is a way that we can be a blessing in someone else's path. This is about us being a community of welcome, and caring, and love.

George Turner of Carriage Road said that he thinks that the Town Council has done a great job so far and the RFP will likely ferret out any problems. He was on the Council for 16 years, he is currently on the Planning Board and was on the Board of Appeals for 22 years, and has lived in his house since 1977. Back in the 80's we were worried about growth. At that time, Cumberland was a lazy little farming community that we could all enjoy. We can't go back in time. Times change and we have to change with it. If most of us had to buy our property back now, we wouldn't be able to afford it.

Angela Stone of Cumberland said that she is in support of the exploration and possible creation of affordable housing in Cumberland. She feels that maintaining a true middle class and a socioeconomic range in a town matters. For years, she worked as an interior designer in the suburbs north of Chicago. The towns that she worked in had median home prices of a million dollars or more, and that was 5 years ago. The prices rose significantly in 5 years and are now 1.7 to 2 million dollars. These suburbs are incredibly beautiful and idyllic in many ways, but they feel odd and fake. They feel that way because it's an intentional financial bubble, not because of what their Town Council passed, but because countless people will continue to sell their homes to the highest bidder. She does not believe that these affluent communities cared enough to make sure the middle class could live there. Everyone seemed to drive the same 4 cars and have the same 4 jobs. Home prices continue to increase because like Cumberland, it's close to the city and close to the water. Smaller houses were bought and torn down and replaced with mansions. She recalled discovering that the public-school teachers made \$100,000 per year and still could not afford to live in the town. Many of our teachers, police officers, and firefighters live in our town, but most of them bought before the free-market housing prices soared. Our current median home price is \$750,000. A million-dollar median price doesn't seem that far off these days, and she doesn't think that is okay. Would you be able to buy your house now? Would your child's teacher be able to afford to purchase a home or afford rent now or 5-years from now? Would your grown child be able to afford to move back here? Her son's kindergarten teacher lives in North Yarmouth and has a son the same age. Seeing her at soccer and basketball practice is a big highlight for him and her as well. She thinks these connections are important in keeping the small town feel that we all love. The well-argued point that it's a tough time to invest in affordable housing is completely valid, but we still need to. The housing and rental market in Maine is just not affordable for most families or seniors. She currently has friends looking for a rental in the Greater Portland area and the rents are beyond affordable. Since the pandemic, more people than ever are homeless. This is true in all 16 Maine counties. While she realizes that the type of housing being discussed will not help those that are unhoused directly, it will contribute to a solution that she believes deep in her heart that we all need to be part of. Homes are increasing in value every week that we continue to debate the justification of others being able to afford to rent in our town. Everyone's cost of living has increased, as has groceries, heat, childcare, etc., but not everyone has a home, much less a home that is increasing in value each month.

Christina Mitchell of Shady Run Lane and a member of the School Board, said that when people speak to her about the school budget or the potential new school, they express concerns about the cost and their fear of being priced out. She understands this. At the same time, we hear from teachers and ed techs who we want to retain as employees. This is very difficult when they can't afford to live here. In order to help residents, seniors, and people who may have grown up here be able to continue to live here, it's not about offering senior housing and senior tax assistance, which are both great things, it's about affordable housing. Our seniors want to see their adult children and grandchildren live here.

Sarah Allenby of Main Street thanked the Town Council for all of their work so far on affordable housing. There is critical need throughout this area for more housing, and she is excited and proud to see our town take a proactive approach to help lower income individuals, fixed income seniors, and other potential residents be able to enjoy the benefits of living in this town. When she bought her house 11 years ago, she had no desire to live in an exclusive community, and still has no such desire today. Most people want Cumberland to be an inclusive community, so thank you for leading us through this exploratory process and representing how welcoming we want our town to be.

Teri Maloney-Kelly of Maloney's Ridge Way said that she does not think there is anyone who would not agree that they would welcome and want to help all those folks that we read about in the newspaper be able to live in Cumberland. However, she is now in that place where she has to choose between herself or somebody else. This RFP is going to happen. Her concern is the confusion around affordable housing that is being talked about. We are not talking about single family houses; we're talking about rental units. She is one of those citizens who has been around for a long time and understands why people want their family and friends to be here. However, that will come at a cost to the existing citizens who live here. She is one of them. She is that marginalized person who looks into the eyes of the patrons of our food pantry every two weeks. Do you think this project will benefit them? Absolutely not. Those rental levels are unaffordable and when she goes home after seeing them every other Friday night, she does not feel good about knowing what is potentially happening in her town. If people think we are going to help our asylum-seeking friends come into our community, that is not a realistic thought. She wants people to realize that what they might think affordable housing is, is not what we will end up with.

Mike Williams of Fairwind Lane said that he grew up in a working-class neighborhood just outside of New York City. Over time, it became a bedroom community, wealthier people moved in, property taxes shot up and the working-class people moved to other neighborhoods. He realizes that there are multiple major issues in this town and the affordable housing issue is one of them, as is the space issue in our school and property taxes. These three things are related, but we're not going to solve any one of them by ignoring the others. He appreciates this process and fully supports it. We can solve all the problems. Just don't give up on any one of them.

Lu Gallaudet of Range Road said that she fully supports getting an RFP to see how we go forward and trusts that the Town Council will look at all the options. She requested that the Town does not give up any land that could potentially be used for a new school.

Jamie Broder of 14 Ole Musket Road and Chairman of the Housing Task Force said that there were 10 members on the Housing Task Force who represented new Cumberland residents, people who had many generations of Cumberland, and everything in between. They worked together and found a way to come up with a unanimous recommendation for a broad range of things in different parts of town, that could all meet the needs.

Kevin Balvin of Longwoods Road said that he was against this, but has changed his mind and is now fully supportive of this project. But let's go a step further and add to the RFP, 10% for Asylum seekers to live rent free. Let's actually create a difference in some people's lives instead of charging a family \$3,000 a month for an apartment in Cumberland. Our mascot is a Ranger so let's lead the way in this fight and make a difference. The Town Council can do this.

The following comments were emailed to the Town Council and entered as part of the record for this item:

From Phil Gleason:

My wife Mary Schendel and I are long time Cumberland residents and currently live at 24 Hillside Ave. Although we are unable to attend tomorrow evening's meeting in person, we want to be on record as expressing our support for your efforts to address the lack of affordable housing in Cumberland. Soliciting RFPs from local developers is a sensible place to start, but there is obviously much work to be done to ensure that Cumberland will remain a welcoming community where people from all walks of life can afford to live. Educating existing residents about the extent of the problem and the challenges ahead is an essential first step. Thanks for making this issue a priority.

From Katelyn Elie, 60 Old Colony Lane:

I am unable to attend the town council meeting this week, however as a 7-year resident who grew up in Yarmouth (my husband in Lewiston) I am increasingly concerned with the amount of development that continues in our town WITHOUT support from the infrastructure- meaning the school.

It is unacceptable to continue to build these large divisions or in this case apartments that could bring more students into the system- further taxing the resources that are strained already.

I am all for diversification of our population but when the time is right our community to support it. This is unfair to the residents who are already established here to continue to see this type of rash decision without looking at a proper population analysis and what this would do for all the community resources.

From Tim Michalak, 31 Shady Run Lane:

Because of a conflict, I cannot attend tonight's meeting.

I do want to request that the council obtain an estimate of costs to the taxpayer before moving forward in any fashion. Our town manager indicates that it will cost very little, but that is incorrect.

First, a new ballfield, parking, and press box must be built with power which will certainly cost between \$300 and \$500,000. It is a specious argument to say the fields need to be upgraded. Financially, it makes no sense to destroy a perfectly good field close to the center where many children can walk to, something the comprehensive plan encourages. Instead, the West Cumberland field could be upgraded to complement the existing field.

Secondly, the school will be impacted with even more crowding, plus the cost of hiring specialized ESL teachers and additional remediation professionals.

Thirdly, town social services may be stressed as I suspect many tenants will receive rent subsidy.

Fourth, greenhouse gases will be exacerbated as dense construction is being done in a community without bus service so tenants will need cars.

Fifth, additional cars may require additional traffic signals and controls and add to congestion.

To vote without a quantification of costs, direct and indirect, is reckless and a dereliction of duty.

From Jen and Bob Montgomery-Rice, 13 Ole Musket Road:

Today I'm writing in support of Affordable Housing for the Town of Cumberland.

Diversity is important to our family. I spent 25 years as a public and private school teacher, and I wholeheartedly believe having a broad cross section of the world in every classroom is beneficial to all. Diversity brings to mind racial differences but financial diversity is also crucial for us all to understand others and gain perspective, empathy and open-mindedness.

We have lived in Cumberland for about five years, having moved here from the Bangor area. We were drawn to the beautiful surroundings, the short commuting distance to Portland, and the accessibility of outdoor activities. The high quality schools were important as well, though our two children are now grown in their 30's and living elsewhere. Both of our kids would enjoy an opportunity to live in Cumberland. One of them has a healthy salary and could buy in Cumberland; however, the Cumberland homes are prohibitively expensive and she feels she wouldn't have any discretionary income left over if she purchased here. Our other child and his spouse have good jobs, make decent salaries (one works for a communication provider and one works at a hospital) but have two children, and they cannot begin to think about a home in

this town; they could not make ends meet here. It is sad to see that young people, unless they make extraordinary salaries, cannot choose our great town.

Cumberland's pool of qualified workers is small. People may think that since we have limited retail businesses, workers are unnecessary. Not true! Our lawn service is always looking for people and can no longer offer shoveling (just plowing) in the winter because of fewer workers. (We live in Maine so the distance people want to travel in the winter is reduced during the snow season). We employ a number of other services not to mention restaurants, etc. who also complain regularly that "they just can't find people in this area." We need those workers to live nearby! The other day Walgreen's was closing several hours early (in Falmouth) because of a lack of employees. Walgreen's is the closest pharmacy to folks in Cumberland, and I would argue that a pharmacy is a crucial service!

Increasing mortgage rates are another factor in a deficit of affordable housing: people who have good rates on their current home do not want to sell and move unless they can buy the next house in cash. That issue effectively puts a gridlock on available housing. Even folks of advanced ages who might have wanted to downsize or sell to reduce maintenance and costs feel that they cannot or should not move with the mortgage situation. Beyond supply and demand challenges, people who might have been able to afford a home in Cumberland when interest rates were low cannot now with interest rates so high. Many people moved to Maine when COVID (and subsequently more work-from-home options) hit our world. People wanted to get out of cities and move to areas with more space—areas like Cumberland. That exodus to the 'burbs made housing prices shoot up even higher. Yes, great for suburban and rural folks who wanted to sell and move elsewhere (many of them made a LOT of money) but not terrific for the middle wage earners who were from Maine; they were effectively boxed out from many suburban areas because of cost. They continue to be boxed out today. Far too many people spend 30-50% of their income on housing as it is. Here is where affordable housing can help.

Cumberland needs affordable housing for many reasons that I've listed here and more. Diversity of people and incomes will benefit everyone. Workers are needed to make the quality of life we enjoy here in Cumberland. Though none of us has control of mortgage interest rates, we do have control of the rules we put into place in our own towns that can make affordable housing available to more people that would make Cumberland even better. Please vote to allow more affordable housing available in Cumberland.

From Anneke Hohl, 20 Coveside Road:

I write to you today as a private citizen and Cumberland resident. I'm sorry I am unable to join this evening's meeting in person. I appreciate the Town Council's efforts to-date to consider more affordable housing in our community. I am concerned by housing costs (to buy and rent) and the barriers those high prices create for people who serve our community (like police officers and teachers) to live in the community, as well as for seniors to have more options to stay in the community, and for our young people to return to and settle in the community. I hope the Council will vote to support issuing an RFP so we can learn more, as a community, about our options for more affordable housing. Thank you for your time, consideration and service.

From Dennis Caron, 28 Rangers Way:

I have a few comments/questions regarding Cumberland's plan to pursue affordable housing (see below). Until such time that these issues are addressed I would be opposed to this project going further. Any input you or the council can provide would be appreciated.

RE: Affordable Housing Project

What is the "Total" Cost to Cumberland residents ?

Opportunity cost of the town's Land that will be donated ?

Cost for student additions to school population ?

Additional municipal services needed by the project and it's residents ?

CEA cost and risk ?

Project subsidies ?

TIF/tax losses ?

All in cost for ball field relocation (labor, land, materials etc.,)?

Why do residents have no opportunity to vote ?

Votes were held for lesser issues (recent MSAD51 land purchase)

Why is only 30% of project reserved for Seniors ?

Tax increases are forcing seniors out.

The current need for senior housing has yet to be satisfied.

Why no priority for “local” Seniors ?

Why no requirement for disclosure of possible conflicts of interest between officials and the project parties ?

Current/prior relationships, exchanges of anything of value, transactions, etc. ?

Can the project or the rights to it be sold or transferred ?

If not what prevents that from happening ?

If yes under what conditions and how is the town protected from subsequent unplanned cost or project degradation.

After MOU what protection is provided for the town if material changes happen ?

Developer goes bankrupt or defaults, lawsuits are filed, substantial problems arise, etc.,?

Chairman Segrist closed the Public Hearing.

Councilor Storey-King reviewed her concerns in the housing study that the Town Council has still not met to discuss:

- Page 9 says that the income restricted rents are very close to the AMI rents already and the apartments on Drowne Road struggle to maintain 100% occupancy.
- Page 10 indicates that the square footage of affordable housing versus market rate housing is considerable.
- Page 12 says that there are not enough households in Cumberland to fill the affordable units and creating a similar project to Village Green would meet the same fate.
- Page 13 says that demand based on current households in Cumberland at this point in time, there does not appear to be enough low-income households in Cumberland to fill either a family rental or age-restricted rental housing unit. For the people who said that we have not been doing anything to help the affordable housing issue, we have built hundreds of affordable houses. We have been leading the way.
- Page 19 says that 25% of the students are in kindergarten through 2nd grade. This is evidence to her that we do have young families moving into Cumberland.
- Page 22 says that Cumberland has far surpassed the Statewide growth. Our growth is 20% and the Statewide growth is 3.5%.
- Page 23 says that nearly all growth, age-wise, in our community was 15- to 34-year-olds and 55 and older from 2010 to 2022. 2022 to 2027 projections show a decline of 10% in our school age population, an 18% increase in our 65 and older population, and a decline of 10% in our 45- to 64-year-old population.
- Page 26 says that 13% of households in Cumberland earn less than \$50,000 per year. That's 335 households. 38% of households earn less than \$100,000 per year. That's 1 in 3 households (1122 households). According to GPCOG, 3% of Cumberland households live in poverty (88 households).

She is not for closing our borders and shutting people out. Many current households are paying 8 to 10% of their household income per year in property taxes. She cannot support this and that is where she stands.

Councilor Edes said that he echoes everything that Councilor Storey-King just said. There has been a lot of talk about our teachers and firefighters not being able to live here. He checked. We have 9 full-time members and 20 volunteers in our fire department. All 20 volunteers live in Cumberland and 3 of the 9 full-timers live in Cumberland, 2 live in Windham, 1 lives in Gray, 1 lives Buxton, and 1 lives in Portland. Our teachers and firefighters are housed. He wants the Council to sit down together to discuss what we want and give the Town Manager some direction. The Town Manager wrote the RFP, not the Town Council. This process is literally throwing everything against the wall and seeing what sticks. He asked all the Council members to please allow everyone on this Council to have some input on the RFP.

Councilor Vail said that the RFP will not change all the statistics we heard this evening. People come to this community to educate their children and then move on. There is going to be turnover on a regular basis regardless of what we do. This is not a destination for retirees, it is a destination for people who want to educate their children. Part of the RFP process is to sit down together and look at the proposals. This is a long march to provide services for our citizens. We've been at this for a long time, and this is the next step. He wants to see where the next step takes us.

Councilor Filson said that there are many people in our community who are struggling. We have 539 renters in our community and 124 of them are rent burdened. 108 are severely rent burdened. Having options so they don't get forced out of the community because of lack of housing stock isn't just a Cumberland issue. It is incumbent on us to look for those solutions. The RFP is the next step in this information gathering process, which we want everyone to be part of. She is in favor of moving forward with the RFP because it is the next step in a process that will give us the time and space to sit down and consider whether or not it is viable and if it makes sense for us.

Councilor Douglass said that she took the opportunity to run for Town Council because she cares about our community. She shares the same concerns as it pertains to our tax base. It's scary and we're all sharing the same concerns. She will not make a decision that is not fiscally responsible, and from her perspective, moving this forward is taking a step in that direction to better understand and be able to ask questions.

Councilor Copp said that he runs a business in this community and lives in this community. He is 5th generation, his son is 6th generation, and his grandchildren will be 7th generation in this community. He will not sell his home. He will leave his house and his legacy to his grandchildren. He is proud to be in this community and is on the Town Council because he has a genuine interest in what happens in this community. Not everyone has the opportunity that he has had. His family left him enough land so he could build a house. He lives in an affordable house. If he sold his house, it would not be categorized as an affordable house. His son and his parents live in an affordable house. He is lucky enough to have his grandchildren live next door to him. There are people who are not as fortunate as he is that would love to live in this community. This has been a very hot topic and he has given it a lot of thought. He is not in favor of David Chase's condominium project on Blackstrap Road, but he is in favor of putting out this request for proposals. That is all we are doing. Asking for proposals. We need to listen to the experts.

Motion by Councilor Vail, seconded by Councilor Filson, to authorize the Town Manager to prepare a Request for Proposals for an affordable housing project to be constructed on the Town owned property on Drowne Road.

VOTE: 5-2 (Edes and Storey-King opposed) MOTION PASSES

23 – 092 To hold a Public Hearing to consider and act on the recommendation of Gorrill Palmer Engineers to make the intersection of Tuttle and Middle Road a 4-way stop.

Motion by Councilor Storey-King, seconded by Councilor Copp, to table to September 26th.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

23 – 093 To set a Public Hearing date of September 26th to consider and act on the recommendation of Gorrill Palmer Engineers to make the intersection of Route 100 and Range Road at J Brothers a 4-way stop.

Councilor Filson explained that a well-attended neighborhood meeting was held last week where Traffic Engineer, Randy Dunton, presented data on the intersection and recommended a 4-way stop.

Chairman Segrist asked for any public comment on this item.

Bob Couillard asked why the speed limit isn't lowered to 35 from the Falmouth town line to the top of the hill near Copp Motors or to the Gray town line.

Councilor Copp said that is a good point. There are 3 different speed limit signs within 300 yards. He believes that will be addressed, but the sightlines also need to be addressed.

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Vail, to set a Public Hearing date of September 26th to consider and act on the recommendation of Gorrill Palmer Engineers to make the intersection of Route 100 and Range Road at J Brothers a 4-way stop.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

**23 – 094 To hold a Public Hearing to consider and act on a Medical Marijuana Registered Caregiver License renewal for SSJA, LLC (owner Jacob Acheson) located at 217 Gray Road.
(Tabled at last meeting)**

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Vail, to remove this item from the table.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

Town Manager Shane explained that the applicant is not ready to open yet as he still has some internal work to complete on the building. At that time, he get the occupancy permit from the Code Enforcement Officer. He will not be able to open until he received that final approval.

Chairman Segrist opened the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Chairman Segrist closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Filson, to approve the Medical Marijuana Registered Caregiver License renewal for SSJA, LLC (owner Jacob Acheson) located at 217 Gray Road, conditional upon final approval by the Code Enforcement Officer.

VOTE: 6-1 (Storey-King opposed) MOTION PASSES

23 – 095 To hold a Public Hearing to consider and act on setting sewer user fees for FY2024.

Chairman Segrist explained that sewer user fees have been static for the last 3 years. There is a large capital improvement project going on at the treatment plant in Falmouth, of which we are 1/3 owner. This will cause a significant increase in sewer user fees.

Town Manager Shane added that over the next 4 years, there will be approximately \$400,000 of improvements at the treatment plant in Falmouth, as well as almost \$400,000 in capital improvements to the Portland Water District pump station in Cumberland. This is in addition to \$100,000 in annual increases over the next 5 years. This equals an \$80,000 increase. Since residents have not been made aware of this increase, the Town Council may decide to table this item in order for us to send out letters and get more public input.

Motion by Councilor Douglass, seconded by Councilor Vail, to table to September 26th.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

23 – 096 To consider and act on setting the following household waste disposal events:

- **Confidential Shredding, Saturday, October 7th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**
- **Bulky Item Pick-up Week, October 9th through 13th**

Motion by Councilor Edes, seconded by Councilor Copp, to set the following household waste disposal events: Confidential Shredding, Saturday, October 7th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Bulky Item Pick-up Week, October 9th through 13th

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

23 – 097 To hold a Public Hearing to consider and act on an amendment to the Official Town of Cumberland Overlay Zoning Map to remove the Manufactured Housing (MH) Overlay Zone as it is now obsolete, as recommended by the Planning Board.

Town Manager Shane explained that this is a housekeeping issue as the Manufactured Housing Overlay Zone is now obsolete.

Chairman Segrist opened the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Chairman Segrist closed the Public Hearing.

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Vail, to amend the Official Town of Cumberland Overlay Zoning Map to remove the Manufactured Housing (MH) Overlay Zone as it is now obsolete, as recommended by the Planning Board.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

23 – 098 To move the September 25th Town Council meeting to Tuesday, September 26th and the October 9th Town Council meeting to Tuesday, October 10th in observance of Yom Kippur and Indigenous Peoples Day.

Chairman Segrist asked for any public comment.

No public comment.

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Filson, to change the date of the September 25th Town Council meeting to Tuesday, September 26th and the October 9th Town Council meeting to Tuesday, October 10th in observance of Yom Kippur and Indigenous Peoples Day.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Copp – he donated \$20 to the 4-H fund that benefits the Food Pantry. The Cumberland Fair is a few weeks away when the Town Manager will use these funds to purchase meat for the Food Pantry.

He also donated \$50 to the Lion's Club for the construction of their new booth at the fairgrounds. The Lion's Club does a lot for this community.

Councilor Vail – Shad's donated quartz countertops to the new Lion's Club booth and installed them. Hancock Lumber donated materials, someone donated a stainless-steel hood over the cooking area, and Rusty Googins donated electrical services. It will be a great asset to this community. Thank you all.

Councilor Filson – thank you to everyone who showed up to the meeting this evening. She continues to be so impressed by the talent and dedication in our community. That’s what makes some of the more challenging meetings easier to process emotionally. It’s heartening, so thank you.

Councilor Douglass – a reminder to everyone that Rise Pizza and Wander at Longwood are both now open. Everyone should go check them out.

Councilor Edes – hunting season is coming, and he wants to encourage the hunters of Cumberland to please consider donating to the Food Pantry if you harvest a deer or moose.

Councilor Storey-King – her new business topic is not personal, and she has no issues with North Yarmouth or the MSAD Board of Directors. Someone there asked her recently, if we’re going to build a \$100,000,000 school, and Cumberland is responsible for \$70,000,000 of it (70%), what would it cost to dissolve the district. This is simply a fiduciary question, and she is not advocating for dissolving the district. She spoke to Scott Poulin about this, and he spent about 4 weeks looking into it and came back with no answer. He believes that it would cost us more to dissolve it than to pay our share of a new school. He also said that he thought the new school would probably be closer to \$75,000,000 than \$100,000,000. In the interest of full transparency, Scott shared with her that in our 55 years in the district, we have never negotiated our cost sharing method. It has always been based on valuation. Cumberland will be paying 72% of the share for the upcoming school and we have 68% of the population in the schools. There are other options for cost sharing. Some school boards have a review of their cost sharing every 5 years. Some weigh their board votes according to population and assets. Some base it 50% on valuation and 50% on student enrollment. RSU 5 has identified fairness factors, which are relative state valuations, relative populations, and student head counts. She may be naive, but we’re looking at a \$75,000,000 school and Cumberland is expected to pay 72%, that equals \$54,000,000. If we did student enrollment at 68%, that equals \$51,000,000. That’s a difference of \$3,000,000 and that is not nickels and dimes. She would like this to be part of the conversation with the district moving forward.

Chairman Segrist – thank you to everyone who came to the meeting this evening and participated in the conversation.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilor Copp, seconded by Councilor Vail, to adjourn.

VOTE: 7-0 UNANIMOUS

TIME: 10:14 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brenda L. Moore
Council Secretary