

CITY OF NISSWA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #3 SUMMARY



Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Location: Nisswa City Hall

Meeting Chair(s): Ashley Kaisershot and Dawn Espe

Summary by: A. Kaisershot

In Attendance: Dawn Espe, R5DC, Ashley Kaisershot, NJPA, Brent Jones, Nisswa Planning and Zoning Administrator, Steering Committee Members: Molly Raske, Mark Ronnei, Mike Sedivy, Suzie Wignall, Bob Fier, Sheila Johnston, Reed Larson, Larry Petron and Woody Haecker, Nisswa Planning Commission

Copies: To all steering committee members

1. Introduction and Presentation: Meeting facilitators, Ashley Kaisershot of NJPA and Dawn Espe of R5DC, started the meeting at 5:30 p.m. at Nisswa City Hall.

2. An overview of the agenda and progress update was presented. A second session will be needed for goal development. Future dates, deadlines and a general overview of tasks was discussed. **The public hearing date is scheduled for July 11th, 2017.**

3. An online survey was available for a four-week period, closing on February 21st. **178 responses were collected.** A combination of broad, open-ended questions were asked as well as questions pertaining to particular topics: sense of place, park, trail, and open space, transportation and infrastructure, economic development, housing, downtown, and tourism. Written comments were found to be most valuable.

4. An overview of the table of contents and appendix was provided.

5. Dawn Espe led and facilitated a SWOT analysis around two topics 1) Nisswa character and community vision, and 2) economic development. The SC provided comments regarding each topic. Their responses are as follows:

Nisswa Character and Community Vision

STRENGTHS: Seasonal decorations, scents and smells of businesses, unique store fronts, diverse building facades, tasteful architectural details, train depot and museum area, historical continuity of downtown, design attributes, aesthetic components (log, timber, stone), history, visual impact, nostalgia for returning visitors, the totum pole, community events (turtle races), stores (Dairy Queen and the Candy Store), the pine curtain.

OPPORTUNITIES: Design guidelines, preservation of character, preservation of natural resources, resiliency planning, reforestation, park and open space maintenance,

connectivity efforts, history, signage, maintain community character, different perspectives of the resident and the tourist, street widths, trail connections.

THREATS: Perhaps Nisswa lake park, water quality, forest loss, signage, decline of natural resources, different perspectives of the resident and the tourist, maintenance costs for park and open space, development near sensitive environments.

Economic Development

STRENGTHS: Strong chamber presence, undeveloped parcels along highway corridor, downtown, waterfront commercial, tourist season, natural resources, Paul Bunyan Trail.

OPPORTUNITIES: Development along highway corridor, mixed-use opportunities, attract retail, hospitality business, and small scale industrial.

THREATS: Development along highway corridor, lack of housing options, lack of staff and resources, lack of living wage jobs, sewer capacity concerns, no incentive programs, no Economic Development Authority (EDA), city water, zoning limitations on housing, seasonal business constraints, design standards could be a deterrent.

6. An overview of the definitions of goals and policies was provided and an overview of a S.M.A.R.T (Specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic, time-based) goal concept was given. The following goals were reviewed: housing, park, open space and recreation, natural resources.

Park, Open Space, and Recreation Goals |

Goal 1: Provide residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy the natural environment throughout the City of Nisswa.

A recommendation was given to add definitions in a prior section. Define “natural resources.” A recommendation was given to define the area this goal will be applied to i.e., throughout Nisswa vs. City of Nisswa.

Goal 2: Serve the needs of all park and trail users and ensure equitable access to these facilities.

Goal 3: Enhance public multi-seasonal access, connectivity, and inclusiveness of Nisswa’s recreational and natural resources.

Goal 4: Facilitate partnerships to and collaborate with other agencies, community based groups, and the private sector to expand pedestrian trail networks.

It was requested that this goal be simplified and exclude specific stakeholders involved in this effort.

Natural Resource Goals |

Goal 1: Protect and preserve natural resources (air, water, land) for continued responsible use. Achieve no net loss of wetlands and forested lands.

Recommendation to include a definition of “natural resources.” Include water quality in goal language. Discussion occurred around encouragement of preserving the forested character, rather than requiring a zero net loss. Development is encouraged.

Goal 2: Make Nisswa a model community for environmental sustainability and stewardship

Incorporate language on Nisswa will do this through education and programming. Looking into designations that the City can achieve to be credible.

Goal 3: Protect and improve the health of the natural environment

Discussion occurred about adding two goals that pertain specifically towards 1) addressing water quality and/or best management practices and 2) education programs and awareness towards water quality.

Housing Goals |

Goal 1: Develop a diverse and high quality housing stock that meets the needs of Nisswa residents at all stages of life and at various income levels.

Goal 2: Strengthen and support Nisswa’s existing neighborhoods.

Goal 3: Create high quality environments in all residential neighborhoods that preserves and protects existing natural resources.

Define high quality environments and conservation design techniques.

Goal 4: Cultivate vibrant and cohesive residential neighborhoods that support the image of Nisswa as a welcoming and connected community.

Goal 5: Balance local housing markets to address local housing needs.

Discussion occurred about identifying the employers’ standpoint in this goal. Conversation regarding number of housing units, and need of more housing units occurred. Address this discussion in a goal, or policy. Septic systems and/or sewer need to be addressed in the narrative regarding development and need of service.

Nisswa character and community vision goals will be sent out to the SC for review and comment.

7. A second session for SC meeting #3 will be held on **March 21st from 6:00 – 8:00pm at Nisswa City Hall**. Goals for the following areas will be reviewed and discussed: transportation and infrastructure, sustainability, tourism, economic development and land use.

NEXT STEPS

Project managers will summarize the meeting, e-mail it to the SC, and follow up with those who were unable to attend. Meeting content will be compiled after the second session of SC meeting #3 and will be posted to the project website.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES:

Session Two of SC meeting #3 is scheduled for March 21 from 6:00 – 8:00pm at City Hall

Steering Committee meeting #4 will occur in early April – Time, date, and location TBD

Visioning Session will occur on April 18th – Time and location TBD

Our project staff believes that this document accurately reflects the business that occurred during the meeting. If any member believes there are inconsistencies, errors, or omissions in the minutes, they should notify Ashley Kaisershot at Ashley.kaisershot@njpacoop.org. If feedback isn't received within seven (7) days, the meeting minutes will be considered approved.