



office. (802)-748-5181 ex. 1011
cell. (503)-333-7987
jnoone@nvda.net

To: Canaan Planning Commission
From: Jesse Noone, NVDA
Date: 6/13/2024
Re: June Meeting Review

Overview

NVDA Rep gave updates on a writing timeline, town visit, and outreach progress. The group discussed potential goals of the plan as well as the transition to having an in-person availability to the Commission's regular meetings.

Context

Vermont's Open Meeting Laws: <https://www.vlct.org/topics/vermonts-open-meeting-law>

Amendment: <https://www.vlct.org/news/act-133-s55-amendments-open-meeting-law-take-effect-july-1-2024>

Body

The meeting was a brief update on outreach, timeline, and town observations. There are many interesting facets to Canaan – the international and state borders, the beautiful green, the two village centers. Most people I spoke with echoed what the Planning Commission has voiced – that the town and area has experienced a steep decline in job and housing security since the departure of the Ethan Allan business.

This presents an opportunity to attract new industries, and the Planning Commission should think critically and constructively about which types of industries they would like to in hopes of revitalizing Canaan as a regional hub.

While Canaan has offered services and jobs in the past, it also sees Colebrook as close enough for other social amenities and does not see big changes for Canaan overall. The Commission's main goal is to re-establish working economies on a scale that fits people living in Canaan and would allow them to keep living there.

There are social stressors involving increased costs, housing shortages and people from out of state purchasing homes for part-time residency. This has also played a role in community connectivity as these residents have so far been less inclined to tap into the neighborly community feel that the town has provided in the past. Many people I spoke with appreciated this aspect of their community the most.

Part of the Commission's goals will involve getting people to gather more as well as connecting the town's non-profit endeavors, trades programs, and other community services to the town more.

We spoke about the climate and how warming weather is affecting the area. Particularly noteworthy was the connection of the decline in moose populations to the rise in ticks, and how that is affecting both the scenic environment and economy. With the winters not icing as much in the past, this is having an impact on the town's recreational industry and that focus to bolster recreational tourism during other seasons should be a focus. It was also suggested that walking paths that lead to the rec field would be an excellent way to get more people active and connected.

Numerous studies have been conducted in Wallace Pond and more information should be gathered on those studies and findings.

Lastly, we spoke again about the importance of improving cell and broadband services, recognizing the difficulties in services in a remote area with so many hills and valleys. Reaching out to NEK Broadband will be a priority.

Conclusions

I'll produce an outreach log soon to keep you all updated on who I've reached out to when and what they've responded/ if they plan to attend future meetings.

I will also be writing Flood/Climate Resilience section soon using the [Vermont Municipal Vulnerability Indicator \(MVI\)](#) tool.

Continue to think of goals and priority actions that the town should pursue. If you have questions about what I mean by these, please reach.