

Growth Planning Committee  
Minutes  
December 15, 2020

Attendees: Dan Saunders, Paul Hogan, Wermer Gilliam, Director of Planning and Development,  
Mike Corsie, Jim McMann, Janet Powell  
Absent: Jim Fitzgerald  
Guests: Tom Morgan

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM by Dan Saunders, Chair.

With no mail to read, Dan introduced Tom Morgan who presented findings on the town's **Economy**.

**The Conditions and Trends** include:

1. **Workforce characteristics**/one third of residents are self-employed, a majority of residents work for private companies, tourism that supports hotels, resorts, lodging, restaurants and retail accounts for the lionshare of the economy in KPT.
2. **Employment Data**/ trends in unemployment are closely aligned with that of the State since 1/2019. It was also noted that wages, especially those earned in the retail sector, have not risen in keeping with the increases in housing costs.
3. **Lobster and Bluefin Tuna Industry**/ (see data from Chapter 9 Marine Resources)
4. **Tourism**/ the negative impact on the local Hospitality Industry during Covid highlights its continued vulnerability and suggests a need for diversifying the town's current economy.

**Strategies to Consider**

1. **Electric Charging Stations**/with grant money available from the State, exploring the installation of fast charging stations for EVs in the North St. Parking Lot would certainly support tourism to Dock Square.
2. **Housing for Seasonal Workforce**/while individual companies are still challenged by their seasonal employees living outside of town, many larger hotels and resorts have acquired or built housing for their employees. DS mentioned that the Rental Ordinance has allowed additional units and rooms to now become available to seasonal workers. WG, while in agreement added that many of the retail stores employ locals who are already residents. MC mentioned that of all of his 18 employees, he is the only one residing in town. PH referenced the slow but steady disappearance of once-available small apartments and rooms, citing the sale and conversion to luxury condos of the former rental building on Langsford Rd. It was agreed that maintaining a diverse workforce housing inventory, both seasonal and year round, needs to be explicitly stated in the CP.

3. **Shuttle Van Service**/previously proposed and voted down by residents. Uber has moved in to fill the need for local transport to airports, trains and into town at a fairly reasonable cost. Also, convenient, same day delivery services for groceries and household products have also become available. WG asked about **parking and traffic in Dock Square and the concept of remote parking**. WG mentioned that tour busses are now being parked at the Trolley Museum. Tom asked if there had ever been discussion of a different vision for DS and if the traffic patterns causing congestion might be diverted to create a more pedestrian-centered atmosphere, if only seasonally. It was proposed that the two towns consider a study to understand if the patterns are due to purposeful business in town or to through traffic.
4. **Diversification of the Economy**/the recent surge in families relocating to Maine in unprecedented numbers during Covid has prompted a need to focus on **broadband**, the **remote workforce** and consequently, the **stability of our power grid**. Due to frequent power losses during storms, KPT has increasingly become more dependent on portable and stand-by generators. Prioritizing the need for more local, renewable energy sources, keeping pressure on CMP to improve and maintain the quality of the grid and on legislators to prioritize improving access to broadband and reliable energy are essential. As a self-maintenance precaution, residents might be reminded of their right to maintain their trees that pose a potential threat to wires. PH raised the significance of **private rentals** to the town's economy. It was unanimously agreed that it should be listed as an important dimension of the economy, given the considerable number of individuals who are employed to set up and maintain them. While the BOS are currently discussing the number of licenses to be issued by the town, **Short Term Rentals** is central to the vision of the town and the CP, making it an essential component of the CP's public outreach in 2021.
5. **Keeping the Economy Local**/ The "15 minute neighborhood" is a strategy that supports the well-being of a community by ensuring its basic services are within a 15 minute walk or bike ride. Residents have access by car to most essential services but the town lacks places where families can gather and socialize. ( i.e.coffee shops) Anecdotal evidence shows that small businesses that have served that purpose in the past struggled to sustain a thriving business year round. At the next meeting, we will continue the discussion of ways to meet that need and diversify the local economy. (food trucks, farmer's market, taking advantage of the mixed use ordinance)

The next meeting: **Tuesday, January 5, 2021**. Further discussion on the **Economy** and (see Agenda)

The minutes of December 15, 2020 were unanimously approved.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.





