

Becky & Rocky Furman
260 Island Beach Road
Wells, ME 09040

July 27, 2018

Reference: 2016 Comprehensive Plan

To My Fellow Citizens of Wells,

I am not in favor of accepting the proposed Comprehensive Plan that is being presented and I hope that you will not want to accept it either.

I was a member of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Committee and I would like to share with you some thoughts as to why this current Plan should not be accepted:

- Our Comprehensive Plan Committee spent in excess of a year going over and over The Plan.
- This proposed Plan is not what we voted on as a Committee.
- At the end of the year, our 2016 Comp Committee was pressured to take a vote on rather or not our Plan was ready to be sent to the State. The vote ended in a three to three tie which means that it FAILED in Committee.
- One of the three members who voted to push the Comp Plan forward to the State, should have, in good conscious (abided by our Town's Charter Chapter 230, Code of Ethics ordinance) abstained themselves from voting due to a conflict of interest.
- During our year of proceedings some of us began to develop doubts about the legality of what was taking place. We put them in writing and sent them to our Town Manager and our Selectmen.
- They in turn sent our concerns to our Town's Attorney.
- Our Town Attorney wrote rebuttals with a whole lot of fluff, which offered enough encouragement for our Town Manager and Selectmen to push forward in their pursuit to get this Comp Plan through.
- We tax payers of Wells (us included) paid for this misinformation.

- Because three of us on the Committee truly care for our Town and fellow citizens, we (citizens/fellow tax payers) spent over \$2,000.00 of our own money in attorney and printing fees trying to get the facts resolved.
- We were asked by the Selectmen to attend a workshop to express our concerns.
- Our hiring of an attorney upset our Board of Selectmen so much so that we were humiliated and bullied during our workshop presentation. The belligerence got so intense by certain Selectmen that one Selectman felt obliged to speak up and asked the Board to stop and treat us with respect.
- Our concerns were rejected. Our selectman, three to one, with one abstention, to send the Comp Plan off to the State for review. The State returned as incomplete because of inadequacies .
- Instead of reconvening the original Comp Plan Committee (which our Selectmen had disbanded) to work on it, our Selectmen turned it over to our Planning Department to tweak.
- And tweak they did.
- The Comp Plan was sent to the State again.
- The Comp Plan was approved as being consistent with our State's requirements.
- The problem is that:
 - The State was under the assumption that our original 2016 Comp Plan Committee had reconvened, made the necessary changes and then resubmitted the Plan.
 - Besides the above, a certain Selectman and a member of our 2015 Comprehensive Plan Committee fraudulently signed off on the document as the Chairman of our committee: whereas, we never had a committee chairperson.

Bottom Line: This proposed Comprehensive Plan is a sham and a waste of our Town of Wells tax dollars.

Please vote no as it should not be accepted.

Thank you,


John R, Furman, Jr.

Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting
with Selectmen
December 6, 2016
Rocky Furman

The following is a letter that I presented to our Selectmen on December 6, 2016:

My name is Rocky Furman and I am a resident of Wells.

I feel that our Town's 2016 Comprehensive Plan should not be approved, voted on and sent to the State at this time.

I feel this way because: As our 2016 Comprehensive Plan is written right now, it is flawed.

I look at our Comprehensive Plan as if I am a carpenter building a home:

- As a carpenter, one begins with a good and solid foundation.

In retrospect, I do not feel that we were given a good and solid foundation to work with when we began.

For example:

- We were handed a packet of pages and asked to comment on them.
- We never had a chairperson – I, for one, never knew who was responsible for running the meeting: Jon, Jodine or Mike.
- I was led to believe that what we were doing, although it was important, was just a formality that our Town needed to submit to and get approved by the State to be able to apply for grants.

- The above being noted, I felt that we all worked well together and that we got things done – in other words, good discussions occurred, updates were made and we proceeded.
- As we worked, the 2005 Comprehensive Plan was being referred to constantly. I, however, never got a copy of our Town's 2005 Comprehensive Plan, did not know what was written in it and therefore could not reference it.
- As the months went by and we read and made alterations to the 2016 Plan, I became uncomfortable with both our process and the content of the plan.
 - Here I am, reading this document which Lee Jay of SMPDC was paid to produce for our Town, based, as we were told, on reams and reams of supportive data which was on file.
- As the final weeks of our meetings were drawing to a close and questions about zoning arose, I became more anxious as to what we had done, what we were doing and what was going to happen.
- I also became more concerned as to “the elephant in the room” that no one was looking at – the traffic situation in our Town:
 - We acknowledged our Town's traffic problem in our survey.
 - We assured the participants that we on the committee and our Town Officials were also very aware of the problem.
 - We asked that the participants not include their traffic frustrations as a concern on the survey.
 - However, we never really addressed the traffic problem in our 2016 Plan until our last or next to the last meeting when we, in my opinion, put a band-aid on a wound that needed stitches.

- It was after I downloaded the 2005 Comprehensive Plan that I realized why I had been feeling so anxious about our 2016 Plan. As I told you at our last meeting, I found the 2005 Plan to be:
 - Extremely well written and documented.
 - Precise.
 - Easy to understand.
 - And to the point.
- By contrast when I then looked at our 2016 version of our Comp Plan, I felt overwhelmed and confused with bright colors and cartoon characters.
- Suddenly, I was asking myself: “Why didn’t we begin with the 2005 Plan and work from there and where did various parts of the 2005 plan vanish to?”

I have also developed a real respect and appreciation for two of my fellow volunteers who have worked long and difficult hours over this last year raising concerns, asking the tough questions, compiling documents, reading codes, doing research, etc., etc. for the citizens of our Town - Carol Simpson and Ed Pare. In my opinion, the citizens of our Town would applaud their fortitude if they were made aware of the contribution to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan by these two worthy individuals.

In summary, as a carpenter in the construction of our Town’s 2016 Comprehensive Plan, it is my feeling that, although the building looks colorful and creative, until the foundation of our plan is corrected, it should not be given an occupancy permit.

It is my suggestion that the following action steps be taken:

- That our Town implement Attorney David A. Lourie’s recommendation to establish a 24-month transition period per

M.R.S.A 4314.3E. This 24-month period will provide time to update our Town's Comprehensive Plan. Enclosure #1.

- That the original 2016 Comprehension Plan Committee Members reconvene with a minimum of four new volunteers appointed to the Committee and begin the process of creating our Town's 2016 Comprehensive Plan using the 2005 Plan as a foundation.
- That the committee is run in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order, with a chairman and vice chairman, elected by the members.
- That the write in portion of the 2016 Wells Strategic/Comprehensive Plan Survey, compiled by the Planning Board and analyzed and presented by Ed Pare to the committee on 09/09/16 in a 58-page document, be a studied and acted upon. Enclosure #2.

Sincerely,
Rocky Furman

Becky & Rocky Furman
260 Island Beach Road
Wells, ME 09040

March 19, 2017

Reference: Town of Wells 2017 Comprehensive Plan

Dear Phil,

I was a member of our Town of Wells Comprehensive Plan Commission and I understand that you will be reviewing this plan soon.

I feel that our Town's Comp Plan, as it is now, should be sent back to our Town as unacceptable.

Having never been on a town commission before, I went through a huge learning experience.

The bottom line is that the closer we came to what some felt was a time to "wrap it up and vote", the more I felt that our Comp Plan was incomplete and lacking critical information:

- We were never given a copy of our Town's 2005 Comp Plan to study.
- We were given a Plan that was patched together by Lee Jay and his team and told to review it.
- Once I down loaded and studied our Town's 2005 Plan, I realized:
 - What a well written, well-documented, easy to comprehend manuscript our 2005 Plan was.
 - That some important parts of our Town's 2005 Comp Plan had been ripped out and excluded in our 2016 Plan.
 - And ultimately our 2016 Plan was a "colorful, confusing, booklet with a bunch of cartoon characters".

Our 2016 Town Survey was filled out by almost 900 of our Town's residents. At the end of the survey, there was a place for one to write in comments. As you can see by the attached report, we received 1,943 handwritten suggestions/concerns most of which we never discussed.

For example, summer traffic on our roads, especially Route 1, is/was a major concern to many. However, the topic was never deliberated until our last meeting and then, in my opinion, we made a makeshift response to a very serious problem.

Our final vote was 3 for and 3 against. In my opinion, we should have continued forward and reached a compromise while we were still engaged rather than simply sending it off to you for review.

Please feel free to contact me 351-5744. Thank you.

Best Wishes,



John R. Furman, Jr.