



TOWN OF BREMEN
P.O. Box 171~ Bremen, ME 04551

*Wayne Barber, Board Member
Steve Barnes, Board Member
Mary Berger, Board Member
Susan Carr, Board Member
Bennett Collins, Board Member
Isobel Curtis, Board Member
Hal D'Alby, Board Member
Debora Elliott, Board Member
Cheryl Ferrara, Board Member
Martha Frink, Board Member
Charles Miller, Board Member*

**First Meeting of the Bremen Comprehensive Plan Committee
Thursday, March 26, 2026, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present: Wayne Barber, Steve Barnes, Mary Berger, Susan Carr, Bennett Collins, Isobel Curtis, Hal D'Alby, Debora Elliott, Cheryl Ferrara, and Martha Frink

Others Present: Selectman Boe Marsh, Selectman Tom Papell, Town Clerk Melanie Pendleton, and Planning Board Chair Nick DelPrete

Speakers: Emily Rabbi, Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission, and Max Johnstone, Midcoast Council of Governments

SUMMARY

As the committee begins its process, the Town of Bremen and the Comprehensive Plan Committee would like to thank Emily Rabbi of the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission (LCRPC) and Max Johnstone of the Midcoast Council of Governments (MCOG) for their valuable insight and guidance at this meeting.

Max Johnstone gave the committee an inside look at the processes developed by other towns as they advanced through their planning. He was the consultant who worked on the Bristol Comprehensive Plan during its final days and helped move it over the goalpost. Now, that plan has been voted on and approved by the residents of Bristol. He also discussed the Nobleboro process where five volunteers completed the plan even while working through the pandemic shutdown. Their plan was approved by the State. He urged the committee to look at the State's Self-Assessment Checklist and follow it.

MCOG can offer the Bremen committee 16 hours of free consultation services and can provide a contract for further work. His group can help with surveys, mapping, moderating meetings, brainstorming ideas, writing, reviewing, and other needs that might arise.

Emily Rabbi said the LCRPC can help the committee with ideas starting from the time the process begins until the final document needs to be reviewed. Unlike MGOC, the LCRPC does not charge for its services but can be a strong resource and advocate for the committee. She explained the methods some town use to complete the process including all-volunteer groups, volunteer plus consultant groups, and consultants only. She emphasized reaching out to every member of the community and engaging them as much as possible in the process.

Emily talked about how State laws regarding growth management have changed since 2004. In 2008, the State significantly updated and amended the original law; and in 2025, L.D. 1751 was passed to streamline the comprehensive planning process, particularly for smaller towns such as Bremen. L.D. 1751 is not yet in place, and Emily believes our plan would most likely fall under the current rules while the State works to implement the new law. There is also a grace period before the new regulations are required.

She emphasized reaching out as much as possible to community members and involving them in the process. She suggested public workshops, surveys, and outreach at public places and events. She gave examples of how other towns are contacting residents and making it fun. The goal is to find out what people want their community to look like now and in the next 10 years.

The committee held a roundtable discussion on next steps. Ideas were put forward from pizza parties to keeping meetings under two hours. As first steps, the committee decided to review the existing 2004 Bremen Comprehensive Plan, to discuss areas of interest expressed by committee members, to develop a timetable for meetings and future activities, and to look at benchmarks for progress goals.

Actions Between Now and the Next Meeting:

- Members will familiarize themselves with the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.
- A list of checklist interests from the original sign-up will be provided to committee members.

Scheduled Meetings:

- 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, in the Town Center
- 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 23, in the Town Center