



To: Hallowell Comprehensive Planning Committee  
From: Frank O'Hara  
Re: **HALLOWELL VISIONING SESSION -- DECISIONS**

Plan development consists of three steps:

1. Developing a common agreement about the current facts of Hallowell. This is what the inventory process is about. The first draft of the inventory is now complete.
2. Developing a common agreement about where we'd like Hallowell to go in the future. This involves creating a "vision."
3. Deciding the best way to achieve the vision. This is the strategy, the goals, the policies, the objectives.

Often, in day to day arguments, we mix these pieces up, and jump around from disagreements about policies to disagreements about facts to disagreements about the desired state of affairs. By separating these pieces, and moving slowly through them, the Comprehensive Plan Committee can create a plan that will reflect the values and goals of most residents.

Now with the first draft of the inventory complete, it is time to move to the vision. Time is a factor, because summer is coming on, and soon it will be difficult to get people to come to public meetings.

This memo lays out a series of decisions that the committee must make in order to plan the public visioning session for the community.

**Decision 1 – What issues should the visioning session seek to clarify, and how many hours will be needed?**

The Committee is in the fortunate position in that the public meetings last fall showed that there is some consensus about how people would like the City to look. That consensus is reflected in the statement of principles that the Committee adopted in January (see end of memo). This means that the visioning session can skip past the big picture questions, and focus on more specific and difficult choices. You brainstormed possible topics last meeting. The table below shows your issues, as well as other possible issues, and how they might be addressed in a visioning session. There is also room for you to add new issues.

In all, 6 ½ hours of exercises are laid out. This is enough for an all-day session. At the other extreme, if the session is only held in an evening, probably only about 2 hours of exercises can



be completed. To help in thinking about when we want to hold the sessions, check in the columns to the left the importance of each exercise suggested. Is it in the top 2 hours of exercises proposed, so that if we only do one night, we would be sure to do it? Is it in the top 4 hours of suggested exercises, so that if we do 2 nights or a half day, we would get to it? Or is it in the top 6 hours, suitable if we do an all-day session?

We will discuss your answers at the committee meeting, and this will help in moving to the next decisions.

2 hr	4 hr	6 hr	Possible Issue	Table Exercise	Time
			Stevens school – what happens where? What should City role be?	Site plan with topo map exercise -- Plus general discussion	1 hour
			Gateway appearance – Whitten, 201south, 201 north	Photo and map exercise	1 hour
			Historic preservation choices	Photo shop choices for rehabilitation, and for new development within historic district	30 min
			City-wide parks and trails	Work on city-wide map showing existing parks and trails, and open space plan recommendations	1 hour
			Affordable housing – what kind to encourage?	Photo	30 min
			Business development – what people want, don't want	Structured discussion	30 min
			Confirm overall goals	Review, edit, statement of principles	30 min
			West of turnpike – overall goals	Map, structured discussion	1 hour
			How can the “creative economy” be strengthened and expanded?	Structured discussion	30 min
			Other (list _____)		min
			Other (list _____)		min



**Decision 2: How many hours of visioning should be scheduled?**

**Decision 3: What date or dates, and times, should they be scheduled?**

**Decision 4: Where?**

**Decision 5: How can we get the right people there again?**



### Draft Statement of Principles (January, 2008)

1. Part of the **special character of Hallowell** is defined by its Main Street, its in-town residential neighborhoods, and its rural areas. This character should be reinforced and enhanced.
2. An equally important part of Hallowell's special character is the diversity of its residents – from artists to farmers, from young to old. To enable this diversity of people to continue, Hallowell should encourage a **diversity of housing types and costs** – owner and rental, condominium and single family home and apartment, at all cost levels.
3. **Downtown and the waterfront should be lively and a focus of many activities, including:**
  - housing in the upstairs
  - shops along the street
  - boating and outdoor events at the new bulkhead
  - infill buildings in the vacant spaces on Water Street
  - performance, culture, and arts spaces
  - places for teens to gather (without alcohol)
  - safe and convenient pedestrian access from downtown to the Rail Trail, Vaughn Park, elementary school.
  - adequate parking
  - public toilet facilities
4. The **existing commercial development pattern** of Water Street, in which small, locally-owned businesses predominate, should be **extended** to appropriate areas on both the north and south; and **the existing pattern of residential development** in the village area should be **extended** to appropriate areas nearby.
5. Hallowell should be **sensitive to the need for landowners** to be able to make reasonable economic use of their properties, and should consider incentive-based as well as regulatory approaches to achieving its land use goals.
6. Hallowell should be **environmentally responsible** in protecting its water quality, encouraging energy-efficient development, promoting walking and riding, encouraging recycling, and discouraging light pollution.
7. Hallowell should **encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections** along public ways between its neighborhoods and schools, its trails and parks, its urban and rural areas.
8. Hallowell should work with its neighbors and the state Department of Transportation to **divert** commuting **traffic** from residential streets, to **slow traffic** to safe speeds, and to ensure that the community is safe and easy to walk and bicycle around.