

City of Hallowell
Comprehensive Plan
Comprehensive Planning
Committee Meeting
October 23, 2007
Town Hall
6-8PM

CPC Meeting

Focus: “Planning the Plan”

CPC Members	
DG	Dawn Gallagher
AH	Al Hague
JP	Jeff Pidot
DB	Darryl Brown Jr
EC	Ed Cerrone
JL	Jeanne Langsdorf
RB	Richard Bostwick
EP	Eric Perry
SB	Sybil Baker

All members of the CPC committee attended the Tuesday October 23 meeting as well as John Bastey (ORC chair), David Giroux (City Manager), and Frank O’Hara and Antje Kablitz from Planning Decisions. The agenda included (1) a discussion on the findings from the two public kick-off meetings, (2) clarification of the schedule and scope of the plan, and (3) suggestions for development of the inventory sections. A copy of the agenda is available on the Hallowell Comprehensive Plan Webpage.

Part One: Minutes from the Public Sessions - What did we learn?

Comments to the September 27 2007 Public Meeting focused on Downtown and the Waterfront:

- Dawn Gallagher saw the first meeting as a generally positive event where those in attendance were on the same page in terms of what was good and what needed to be addressed within the area.
- Al Hague felt that there was consensus on Main St development with a focus on keeping the historic character going forward. He saw a move toward a “more of the same” zoning principle.
- Richard Bostwick saw the focus for developing a family and pedestrian friendly environment with a safe transportation network.

Comments to the September 27 2007 Public Meeting focused on West Hallowell (Ward 5):

- Dawn Gallagher views on the second session included a perception that there were significant issues regarding the purpose and process of the comprehensive plan and that increased discussion is needed to ensure that

all concerns are met. She wants the plan process to ensure transparency, build trust, and provide as much awareness and education as is needed.

- Daryl Brown spoke to the intensity of the second meeting with regard to the issue of limitation/regulation on land and the desire of Ward 5 residents to maintain personal property rights.
- Richard Bostwick - though not in attendance at the meeting - saw the need to conserve open space but not trample on property rights and to explore the options for and against cluster housing
 - John Bastey indicated that cluster development is an allowable but NOT required option for development in the City's current ordinance.
- Daryl Brown reminded the group that rules and regulations changes always affect "somebody"
- Sybil Baker felt that the focus should be on providing land owners with incentives rather than edicts with regards to property development regulations
- There was conversation about the misperceptions regarding Manchester open space ordinance. There some discussion within Ward 5 about the town's regulation, which is seen by some as relatively strict in regards to development. There was some concern by residents that this type of open space regulation would be used in Hallowell. So far, no such standard has been recommended or implemented within Hallowell.

Other Comments:

- Sybil Baker spoke of the large number of city committees and the fact that these committees are not speaking to one another. She suggested that the chairs of various committees should meet once in a while.
- Eric Perry voiced concern about the Augusta Crossing and the fear of encroachment and increased traffic.
- Jeanne Langsdorf felt that there was a perception of a divide within Hallowell both physical (urban/rural) and in social views (progressive/conservative).
 - Eric Perry noted that there is tension between the West (rural Ward 5) which feels the East (downtown) has the muscle to do whatever it wants
 - Daryl Brown spoke to the needs to remember "everyone" within the process.
 - Daryl Brown also spoke to the idea that though open space is a concern for urban residents, rural residents have many of their open space needs met in their own back yards.

Frank O'Hara ended this portion of the meeting with a question as to how information should be disseminated in the future to ensure that all residents are well informed about the process.

DB: There should be more public meetings with both "sides" of Hallowell coming together

RB: Develop inserts for the Hallowell Record and some form of newsletter

SB: Send periodic updates to other committees

EC: The website is the best way to disseminate information

There was a question about how postcards were sent to residents, as many did not receive the flyers regarding the public kick-off sessions. The flyers were based on voter records but could also come from home owner records, DMV, and land owners. All of these are currently incomplete records and for the most part do not take renters into account.

Part Two: Clarification on Schedule and Scope

There was some lengthy discussion at the CPC meeting regarding the work schedule and the parallel track of the ORC and CPC work.

Inventory Schedule Comments

Ed Cerrone felt there was a need for additional public meetings throughout the information-gathering period, perhaps in January.

Richard Bostwick was curious about the when the direction of the plan is determined

- FO explained that a direction is typically formed after the inventory has been reviewed and the major themes of the public vision session identified.

Dawn Gallagher would like to see a review of surrounding communities' comprehensive plans - in particular their land use sections.

Sybil Baker wondered how city council and other committees fit into the plan process.

- Committee and council work will proceed as normal and short term committee recommendations will be implemented as the Council deems fit.
- For example: the housing committee's analysis and recommendations will come before the City Council shortly. The decisions of this committee are both long and short term. Short term concepts can be implemented immediately and long terms ones can be further strengthened through incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Open space is moving to have its plan before the council in December
- DG suggested having the open space and housing committee come to the November meeting of the CPC

Sybil Baker was asked to define what affordable housing means.

- The basic definition of affordable housing is that no more than 30% of a person's income should go toward housing/utility costs.

Changes to the inventory plan schedule:

- Move open space and housing to November's meeting
- Move land use to the December meeting
- Add an additional public session in January

Roles of the ORC and the CPC

A major topic of discussion, and concern, is the dual work done by the CPC and the Ordinance Review Committee (ORC) and how/if they collide. They are basically on parallel tracks with the ORC working on recommendation from the existing comprehensive plan and the CPC working on developing policy recommendations to update the existing plan.

Eric Perry explained that the ORC is dealing with updating those portions of the ordinance which do not comply with the **current** comprehensive plan policies. The City Council has charged the ORC with looking for inconsistencies while keeping in mind the policy changes that the CPC may be making. Their goal is to professionalize the existing ordinance, not to move it into a new direction. The ORC is currently focusing on administrative issues that need attention and fixing holes concerning development regulations whereas the CPC will be concerned with long-term policy development, looking at the big issues, and framing the future of the City.

The concern is that all changes to the ordinance can have policy recommendations. To combat this Mark Eyerman (Frank's partner at Planning Decisions) who is working with the ORC to keep the committee out of policy issues and focused on administrative changes. In addition AH and RB are both on the ORC and CPC committees in order to act as liaisons between the two.

There was some discussion as to whether or not the ORC should present proposed ordinance changes to the CPC (or at least the CPC chair) before they are implemented to ensure that major land use policy decisions are not made prior to the development of the new comprehensive plan.

Part Three: Inventory Topics and Suggestions

The CPC was asked to review the proposed inventory topics. The plan is for the Planning Decisions team to present information on a variety of topics concerning the city's current patterns of growth and development over the next few months, which will culminate with a spring 2008 public visioning session to present information and ideas. The committee was asked to comment and suggest changes. Comments were taken by topic and recorded on flip charts by Frank.

1. Population and Demographics
 - Geographic patterns of population
 - Income information
 - Immigration patterns
2. Economy
 - Mix and types of businesses in Hallowell
 - Changes in the tax base
 - Changes and trends in businesses over time
 - Economic activity between local and outside business (who I hiring locals?)
 - Break down of population by profession
 - Demand for commercial land use - how does Hallowell fit into regional pattern and the demand for box stores
 - % of people who shop locally
 - Market data on what large store (such as Hannaford) look at when choosing locations
3. Housing
 - Housing stock: owner versus rental
 - Changes in rental market
 - Build out analysis: what pressures are there? regional demands?
 - Density of housing compared to open space
 - Size of units
 - Floodplain concerns. How to get around FEMA's current standards looking at communities like Bath and Brunswick
4. Transportation
 - Possibly bring in a DOT speaker to go over major issues and trends
 - Look at DOT overpass issues on Water St and 2nd St Bridges. What are the plans?
 - Review existing DOT plans
 - Commuter trends (Litchfield's growth and its impacts on Hallowell traffic)
 - Augusta Crossing Study
 - Sidewalk and pedestrian access analysis
 - Turnpike development
 - Weight restrictions on roads: are the current restrictions enforced?
 - Review Augusta transportation plans

- Bus system
 - Speeding issues and traffic calming
 - Vaughan's bridge
5. Public Facilities
- Regional consolidation, intergovernmental control (what is going on in communities around us?)
 - Augusta Sewer & Water plans for replacement/expansion
 - Involve waste committee, recycling center, fire department, etc in discussions
 - SPECIAL TOPIC: Stevens School
 - SPECIAL TOPIC: Downtown
 - Waterfront park
 - Adequate parking
 - Mobil property
 - Public restrooms
 - Sand/salt pile
 - Lighting issues
6. Recreation
- Walking/biking trails
 - Types of recreation available
 - Vaughan Fields
 - Involve recreation committee in discussion
 - Ice skating
 - Snowmobile/ATV trails
 - Boat slips
 - Hunting access
 - Cross-country skiing
7. Water/Marine Resources
- Kennebec River Initiative
 - Public access points
 - Shoreland zoning
 - Phosphorus run off issues
 - Water quality
 - Fresh water swimming
 - Critical habitat: work with Beginning with Habitat
 - Quarries
 - Changes to wildlife patterns
8. Agriculture/Forestry
- What forestland does Hallowell have under tree growth protection?
 - Where are agriculture lands? What has been the trend over the last 10 years?
 - Who takes part in Land for Maine's Future Farm Program?
 - Community gardens

- Management plan for City forest
- Composite site/leaf dump
- Involve tree board in discussion
- Agricultural run off (Phosphorus)

9. Historic and Archeological

- Cannon
- Summary of historic district: where it is, what it means
- Federal registry definitions and how to make changes
- Quarry
- How much protection is there for historic buildings
- History of the riverfront

10. Land Use

- Who owns the land riverside, east of the rail trail?
- Visual zoning vs. historic vs. comprehensive plan policies
- Developable land
- Useable land in floodplain
- Bounding communities land uses
- Homes and businesses built in the last 10 years
- Lot creation over the last ten years
- Out of state land ownership

11. Fiscal Capacity

- Bonding capacity
- Debt capacity
- Land vs. home tax and value appreciation
- Affect of mall in Augusta
- Share of revenue
- Tax exempt properties

The CPC meeting ended with the decisions to revise the schedule (see below) and to have a joint meeting with the Housing and Open Space committees in November.

Part Four: Revised Schedule

Note: Topic that are *bold and italicized* have been changed

Hallowell Comprehensive Inventory Plan Production and CPC Meeting Schedule						
CPC Meeting Date	Meeting Topics and Other Items to attend to					
Oct 2007	Coordinate with CPC and PDI team			Schedule		Gather all relevant SPO and City Data
Nov 27, 2007 (Joint meeting with open space and housing committees)	Land Use		Housing		Critical Natural & Water Resource & Recreation	
Dec 18 2007		Population				
Jan 22 2008	Transportation	Economic Agriculture/ Forestry	Historic	Public Session (Date to be determined)		
Feb 26 2008	Public Services	Fiscal				
Mar 25 2008	Summary of Issues			Plan Vision Session		
April 2008	Inventory Completed			Public Vision Session		Finalized Maps for Inventory