

**City of Hallowell  
Comprehensive Plan  
Public Kick-off Meeting #2  
October 3, 2007  
Hale-Dale Elementary School  
6-8:00PM**

# Hallowell Comprehensive Plan Public Kick-Off Meeting

The second public kick-off event for the Hallowell Comprehensive Plan update was held on Wednesday October 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Hale-Dale Elementary School Cafeteria. The meeting began with an introduction from Dawn Gallagher, the Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC). She gave a brief synopsis of the CPC's work to date, including how it was formed and the committee's broad goals.

After her introduction Frank O'Hara gave a brief summary of Planning Decisions and the firm's role in Hallowell's Comprehensive Plan. He then turned the attention to Antje Kablitz, also of Planning Decisions, who gave a brief run down of the comprehensive planning process (the PowerPoint shown during her discussion can be found on the Hallowell Comprehensive Plan Webpage at [www.planningdecisions.com/projects.htm](http://www.planningdecisions.com/projects.htm)).

Antje began with a brief synopsis of what a Comprehensive Plan is and why a community needs one. She indicated that communities are required by state law to have a Comprehensive Plan to guide long range growth and development. Typically these plans are updated every 10-15 years with periodic reviews to ensure that the policies and objectives of the plan are being implemented. Hallowell's last plan was done in 1997 and reviewed in 2003 as such this is the "perfect" time for an update.

A Comprehensive Plan begins with a thorough inventory and analysis of the current conditions, to understand where a community stands today. This inventory is accomplished in two ways. The first is through analysis of local, state, and national (census) data. The second is through discussions with the people who live in the community. The public's input is critical to understanding what residents see as the community's assets and the issues that need to be address.

After all the data and community input has been collected, the Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) is charged with creating polices and objects which highlight the assets and address the issues. A plan is drafted from their recommendations and reviewed by the public, the City Council and the State before adoption.

Hallowell's Comprehensive Planning Process is estimated to take 12-15 months beginning in September of 2007 and ending with a Draft plan in the Fall of 2008. The Fall of 2007 will

include the public kick-off meetings and the gathering of the data inventory. In the Winter of 2007 there will be a series of hands on public participation workshops to gather visions and ideas on where Hallowell stands today and what it could be in the future. In the Spring of 2008, the Comprehensive Plan Committee will form policies and objectives based on the inventory and public recommendations. The writing of the draft plan will be completed over the Summer of 2008 and a draft plan will be presented to the public, City Council and the State in the Fall of 2008. (A copy of this time line and contact information can be found in the meetings PowerPoint at [www.planningdecisions.com/projects.htm](http://www.planningdecisions.com/projects.htm))

After the Antje's synopsis, Frank O'Hara briefly answered questions about the comprehensive planning process. He then asked the public to introduce themselves. The list of attendees below was compiled from the sign-in sheet distributed during the meeting.

<b>Comprehensive Plan Committee</b>
Dawn Gallagher
Al Hague
Jeff Pidot ( <i>not in attendance</i> )
Darryl Brown Jr
Ed Cerrone ( <i>not in attendance</i> )
Jeanne Langsdorf
Richard Bostwick ( <i>not in attendance</i> )
Eric Perry
Sybil Baker

<b>The Public</b>			
Janis Cross	John McNaught	David Young	Joel Canty
Gail Wippelhauser	Robert Bowden	David Young	Steve Velloni
Chris Gibson	Gretchen Patrick	Darryl Brown Sr	Kathleen Leyden
Mary Hiers	Dot Mithee	Norma Lord Brown	Ed McNaught
Patrice Gabrion	Robb Lockhart	Nicole Brown	Scott Cowger
Ted Vaughn	Stephen Shepherd	Pamela Perry	
Carrie Murray	Cary Colwell	Mike McPherson	
John McPherson	Tom Warner	Ben Nason	
Connie Couverette	Wes Avis	Gerry Mahoney	
Bruce Couverette	Elizabeth Cronwell	Rob Briggs	

At this point, Frank opened the floor to public discussion. He asked that people begin by focusing on issues and ideas for the west side of Hallowell while leaving the end of the discussion open to general comments and concerns regarding Hallowell as a whole.

## **YOUR ISSUES & IDEAS for HALLOWELL**

### Property Rights

- School in Portland (Muskie) Get master's students involved
- Concerned about property rights which need to be maintained ...entertain idea of TDR
- Concern as realtor: regulations can make peoples land "unusable"
- State Eminent Domain issues over tower placement on private property
  - Granite Quarry on land worth more than tower placement
  - Tower will increase cancer risks
  - City needs to regulate/restrict towers
- Families who own the land for generations should have more say about their land is development
- Worry about the limitations set by the CP that could impact new development – need to preserve existing investment
- Worried about the fact that limitations will impact the landowner investment....limiting options steals from the land owners
- Feels like outsiders are saying what landowners can and cannot do
- Family passes down real estate from generation to generation and want to keep the value of the land in tact
- We should use incentives to meet the future dreams of the long time land owners
  - Land for Maine's Future working to rehabilitate old farms
- Issue that restrictions will hurt landowner dreams
- "We have not managed it right" ...that is what landowner is hearing is this true?
  - Issues is not with the fact that landowners have misused land but rather the broader fear of how Hallowell has changed overall
- No one should tell landowners what to do with the land

### Business Development

- Keep Hallowell out of the franchise business (don't let what has happened in Augusta happen in Hallowell)
- Fear of big chains...development from Augusta coming this way
- No large parcels for sale at the moment in the west side for large scale commercial development
- We need some commercial development to have revenue coming in to help land owners
- Changes should not limit new revenue streams from coming into Hallowell
- Hallowell has an image of being anti-business which is counterproductive to tax payers....need to be somewhat pro-business

### Hallowell's Character

- Maintain the character
- Two Hallowell's downtown (newer families) vs Rural (old families)
- How do we preserve generational land ownership while also "moving forward"
- Tension over a vision for the community vs property rights
- We are a diverse community with different view points that all can be heard
- Be aware of problems and development from the outside – these should be filtered through local community
- The highway splits our community
- Protect feel of the west side

### Zoning & Development

- Keep existing zoning in tact...rural residential zones
- Standards for development that keep character
- Subdivisions need to have a neighborhood feel....follow village grid pattern
- Shouldn't zone private property as open space rather encourage development that protects open space
- Tighter development through TDR
- All types of Housing should be allowed in the west side– whatever people can afford
- Cluster housing – preserve open space

- Currently RF zoning = one house per acre. If all the land were developed at this level it would ruin the scenic vistas
- Cluster housing scares some people in rural areas who do not want to “live on top of each other”
- Right now you can't do cluster housing if you wanted to....want to change to bring the option to allow this type of development
  - Current Ordinance just put in wording to encourage cluster housing
- Cluster Housing: reduces infrastructure costs
- Ordinance Terms need to be defined.... workshop to help people understand concepts
- Fear of being forced into cluster housing.... Need to have public sewer for these developments
- Rewrite of ordinance and zoning is a reason to be fearful
- Fear of restrictions that make only 40% of land available for development
  - This is true of the Manchester Open Space Ordinance ( not being proposed in Hallowell)

### Open Space

- How is open space plan interfacing?
  - OSC will integrate their plan work into the CP same with Housing
- OS plan: 12 months of public work sessions, brought OS ideas for the “east side” last week and those for the “west side” today
  - Improve Bond Brook watershed
  - Information about the plan and comments to the comprehensive plan committee can be found at [www.hallowellconservation.org](http://www.hallowellconservation.org)
  - Poor development will impact environment
    - Flexible zoning (TDR)
    - Analysis of land that is suitable for development
  - Fund for land protection/purchase (impact fees, donations, grants)
  - Priority conservation areas include
    - Area between bog, pond, and Res
    - Renewed attention to the Res

- Work with neighboring communities to optimize what we have
- committee only wants Vaughn Field as zoned open space
- Swap some of the Res for the quarry so it can be a swimming hole
- Protect wetlands
- Little league field should be protected through an association (City owns it for the new cemetery....but the field is under NR protection and not conducive for burial)

#### Old Primary School

- Old primary school: to become a park, what are they going to do about evening activities (in particular teens)
  - Need to put lights up
  - Curfew
  - Resurface for sports activities
  - Police should enforce curfew
- Eyes on the land: ice rink, evening games...people will protect/police land through use (vacant land is more “dangerous”)
- Places for teens to hang out that is safe

#### Winthrop Street

- Want to have some control over the types of commercial development comes to the area
- Want to keep rural/residential beyond Witten Rd
- Fear that Winthrop St=Western Ave in terms of traffic
  - Not much to stop the pressures of growth
  - Very busy
  - There are some who think it should be two lanes in both directions
- Winthrop Street: City should insist on not expanding the road. It is the neck on the bottle

### Central Street

- Beautiful
- Central Street Traffic speed has increased & the barrel down the hill which is dangerous for pedestrians
- Central Street as alternative to Winthrop due to school
- Central St Residential areas seem less safe due to speed and amount of drivers

### Dangerous Intersections

- Town farm road & central street (built for school busses not for typical driver)
- Shady Lane & Vaughn Road (extreme slopes, limited visibility)
- Maple & Water St (limited visibility)
- Middle Street & Litchfield road – parking for Vaughn Woods – issues with speeding (Litchfield commuters), visibility issues
- Winter Street – speeding issues (60 MPH)
- Answer is new designs and paving standards
  - Traffic calming should be considered (bike lanes, speed humps, etc)
  - Bike trail system: alternative commute options

### General Traffic

- Possibility of a new road from Augusta Crossing to Winthrop through Hallowell (Central St -Whitten Road) – this could be a commercial development area
- Hallowell needs another exit away from the turnpike as a new commercial develop the area.
- There has been an increase of traffic from Manchester
- Stop other roads coming in from Augusta through recommendation in the CP
- Get involved in what is happening in Augusta... DOT hearings to ensure that Hallowell is represented

New Mall Area in Augusta

- Concern about traffic from new mall (divert traffic to Winthrop Street issues)
- New Mall could lead to a new road to Winthrop Street which would be harmful to Hallowell character

Public Participation & the Comprehensive Plan Process

- These public forum discussions are back and forth, an exchange of ideas
- CP is a big picture idea...broad concepts not specific uses
- Workshops need to be focused on the whole community working together
- These public meetings are a great forum for having input and hearing ideas
- West of Turnpike outnumbered by the town....fear of getting ganged up on in the democratic process... fear of losing in a voting process
- There is a lot of speculation and misinformation that is spread by word of mouth....need meetings like this to “straighten things out”
- Set an example for other communities: commitment to notifying neighboring communities when our projects impact them
  - For example: Hallowell was not part of new mall process in Augusta (We were not invited to the table but if we start inviting people to our table maybe they will reciprocate)

Steven's School

- SS returned to Hallowell... City departments should move to the area
- Myth that SS is going back into City hands
- SS process has started now with a committee and public meetings... state willing to listen.... Hallowell being proactive about what the City would like to see
- State wants to get rid of SS by 2011