

**Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 7, 2009
Cumberland Town Hall
290 Tuttle Road, Cumberland, Maine
7:00 p.m.**

A. *Call to Order*

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. *Roll Call*

Present: Bill Ward, Board Chair, Bill Richards, Vice-Chair, Bob Couillard, John Ferland, Chris Neagle, Bob Vail

Absent: Pam Russell

Staff Present: Carla Nixon, Town Planner, Pam Bosarge, Administrative Assistant

C. *Hearings and Presentations:*

Mr. Ward stated the agenda item for this evening is to review and recommend to the Town Council a recommendation on the 2009 Draft Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Vail, Chair of the Comprehensive Plan Committee stated the committee had been working on the plan for over three years. He thanked the Committee members, staff, and consultants for their service and great work; noting Mark Robinson had served as chair of the committee prior to relocating. The Comprehensive Plan was influenced by fuel costs, sustainability, and the goal of providing services for all life stages. He listed the names of the members of the committee:

Comprehensive Plan Committee Members: Bob Vail, Chair, Peter Bingham, Vice-Chair, Brita Bonechi, Randy Copp, John Ferland, Bill Follett, Ruth Frydman, Peter Hayes, Emily Hill, Sam York, Eileen Wyatt, Meghan Stroud, Jo-Ann Smith, Patrick Skahan, Daniel Nuzzi, Mark Lapping, Council Liaisons, Jeff Porter, Shirley Storey-King, George Turner.

Mr. Ward stated Ms. Nixon has prepared a power point presentation with a brief overview of the draft Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Nixon stated she had enjoyed working with the committee and asked the Board to hold questions until the end. The power point presentation will focus primarily on four chapters, Demographics, Land Use, Economy, and Public Facilities.

See Power Point Presentation Outline attached at the end of the minutes.

Mr. Ward thanked Ms. Nixon for her presentation and asked her to review the steps moving forward.

Ms. Nixon stated this is the first step of the public process; the presentation will be re-broadcast on Channel 2, the draft plan is on the website and committee meetings were advertised and open to the public. Ms. Nixon suggested continuing the review at the October 20th meeting for possible recommendation to the Town Council for action.

Mr. Ward asked the Board members for questions or comments.

Mr. Ferland stated he had no questions; he was a committee member and noted during the three years there was a lot of work, and a diverse representation of the community served on the committee. He is proud to see the document in this form and welcomes the time to solicit input from the community and is looking forward to input from the community.

Mr. Neagle thanked the committee as well.

Mr. Richards also thanked the committee for their hard work and encouraged the community to review the plan.

Mr. Vail stated it was a pleasure to work with such a great committee for three years. The Comprehensive Plan is community's vision for the next ten to twelve years; he supports restoration of farm land, the ability to have shops to purchase local produce and the ability for people to remain in the community for an entire life cycle.

Mr. Couillard agreed the committee did a great job; the alternative transportation focus directs the community in the right direction. He would also like to see bike lanes and sidewalks through out the town.

Mr. Ward agreed the committee did an upstanding job and thanked them for their hard work and service.

Mr. Ward opened the public portion of the meeting. There were no public comments. The public portion of the meeting was closed.

Mr. Ward asked if there were any Comprehensive Plan Committee members who would like to make any comments.

Mr. Bingham, Vice-Chair of the Committee stated this was his third exercise with the Comprehensive Plan; reflecting back to the 1980's which set the tone for today, and included visioning for Twin Brook and lot sizes. The Committee looked at what works and doesn't; they struggled with Main Street and land use regarding individual development rights vs. sprawl. Sevee & Maher's hydrogeological study of the 80's has been revised to allow large landowners the ability to maximize use with conservation.

The Town listens and adapts to change, this has been the best group he has ever served with; and agreed it was a diverse group.

Ms. Jo-Ann Smith stated she is the opposite of Peter Bingham she is new to serving on committees and her purpose was to learn about the process; she gives credit to people with institutional memory, and the Committee is still looking for public input.

Mr. Sam York stated serving on the committee was challenging and rewarding; he chairs the Lands and Conservation Committee which submitted several comments to the Committee which are covered in broad brush form in the plan. He feels energy is important and the plan should increase emphasis from the municipal point of view.

Mr. Ward closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Neagle motioned to table the review of the draft 2009 Comprehensive Plan and suspend the meeting to re-convene at the Planning Board's regularly scheduled meeting on October 20, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Richards seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting ended at 8:05 p.m.

A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

William P. Ward, Board Chair

Pam Bosarge, Board Clerk

DRAFT
TOWN OF CUMBERLAND
2009
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

Chairman: Robert Vail
Vice Chairman: Peter Bingham

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brita Bonechi Sam York
Randy Copp Eileen Wyatt
John Ferland Meghan Stroud
Bill Follett Jo-Ann Smith
Ruth Frydman Patrick Skahan
Peter Hayes Daniel Nuzzi
Emily Hill Mark Lapping

TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS

Jeffrey Porter
Shirley Storey-King
George Turner

TOWN STAFF

Carla Nixon, Planner
Pam Bosarge, Secretary
William Shane, Town Mgr.

CONSULTANTS

Hugh Cox, New England Planning Concepts (Research)
Judy Colby-George, Spatial Alternatives (Mapping)
Brian Robertson, Ph.D, Market Decisions (Community Survey)
Sevee and Maher Engineers (Groundwater Study)

THE COMMITTEE

- 15 members appointed by Town Council.
- First meeting: August 17, 2006
- 3 Town Council liaisons
- 3 staff members

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND WHY IS IT NEEDED?

- **State Mandate**
- **Important Planning Tool**
- **State Requires 13 Sections**

THREE PARTS...

- **Conduct Inventory & Analysis:**
2 parts: Survey & Data Gathering
- **Policy Development:** the specific goals & actions.
- 3. **Implementation Strategy:** How the policies will be implemented. E.g., ordinances, revised CIP.

SOME GENERAL SURVEY FINDINGS:

WHEN ASKED WHAT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE SHOULD CONSIDER AS IT PREPARES THE NEW PLAN, RESIDENTS MENTIONED:

- Taxes being too high;
- Keeping Cumberland the way it is;
- Improving the tax base through businesses;
- Increasing the affordability of housing.

VISION STATEMENT

“The Town of Cumberland’s vision for the next 10 years is to strive to improve its environmental & economic sustainability, to encourage quality affordable housing for individuals of all income levels and ages, to continue to expand its non-residential tax base, to honor its rich history, and to provide for a future in which moderate growth is accomplished through careful and thoughtful planning.”

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Aging population

- The median age is 39.4 years.
- The State’s median age is 33.8.
- Those ages 45 to 64 make up the largest age group.
- The only age group to decline was young adults (18-29)

POPULATION

- 1950: 2,030
- **1960: 2,765**
- **1970: 4,096**
- 1980: 5,284
- 1990: 5,860
- 2000: 7,159
- 2007: 7,704

HOUSEHOLD & HOUSING DATA

- 26% increase in # of households between 1990-2000.
- Average household size: 2.38 persons...down from 3.44 in 1970.
- 96% of town's housing is comprised of high-priced, owner-occupied, single-family homes.
- 91% of the housing units in Cumberland are owner occupied. State: 72%. County: 67%.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- In 2005 the median home price was \$340,000.
- In order to afford that amount, a household would need an income of \$116,000.
- Median household income in 2000:
\$67,500.
- This is 80% higher than the state median income & highest in Cumberland County

QUESTIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

- Concern regarding trend of fewer young adults Reason for this? What can be done?
- School age population has peaked. Expect slow or no growth over next 10 years. Excess capacity? Effect on taxes?
- Effect on other community facilities and services?

More questions...

- Does the decrease in household size indicate a need for different housing types and more or different services?
- Do the income levels of the town indicate that the town is unaffordable to moderate and low income people? What impact does this exclusivity have on the character and the functioning of the community?

Survey Results Re: Housing

- 58% support policies to encourage affordable housing for young families
- 73% support for affordable elderly housing.
- 67% support for assisted living for senior and handicapped residents.
- 49% support to offer tax relief to elderly residents in need by shifting some of the property tax to other residents.

HOUSING GOALS & ACTIONS

Continue to encourage the development of housing which provides for a mix of people from all income strata, ages, trades and professions.

ACTIONS:

- Incentives to developers who create a portion of the lots for buyers who meet affordable income guidelines.
- Incentives for the construction of smaller, single family homes.
- Exempt homes under 1500 sq. ft. from the Growth Management and Impact Fee Ordinances.
- Develop a RFP for Town-owned land in center.

The Economy

LOCAL BUSINESSES

There are over 130 businesses located in Cumberland.

Most are one or two person operations, but several are larger.

WHAT WE WANT...

Coffee shop, a small grocery store, office buildings, banks/credit union, nursing/assisted living facility.

AND WHAT WE DON'T...

....big box stores, fast food restaurants, gravel pits or national chain restaurants.

Occupation Types

Pie Chart

JOBS

Where? Where?

- Cumberland has had so little commercial development over the years, that even areas that are zoned for commercial or rural industrial uses now have existing homes either within or adjacent to them.
- While some areas appear to be obvious locations for new commercial development, e.g., Route 100 and Route 1, debate has still occurred on what type of commercial activity is appropriate in those areas.
- As part of this comprehensive planning process, all areas of town were looked at to consider what type of development, whether residential, commercial or mixed, would be appropriate.

ECONOMY GOALS & ACTIONS

Goal: **Expand the commercial tax base.**

Actions:

- To simplify the application and review requirements.
- Assess the feasibility of a new turnpike entrance/exit in West Cumberland .
- Explore the creation of an enterprise zone to encourage the new start-up ventures.
- Consider the creation of an economic development corporation.

Goal: Encourage agriculture-related businesses.

Actions:

- Reduce restrictions on farm buildings and operations.
- Expand the use of locally grown products.
Encourage additional days and locations for farmers' markets; incorporating the locally grown food into the school nutrition program.

Goal: Promote sustainability and encourage businesses that would allow residents to more easily obtain basic goods and services.

Actions:

- Recommend to the Town Council that a committee be formed to develop a town center plan.
DONE.
- Consider creating a small town center where mixed uses such as retail, commercial and residential can co-exist. Possible locations include the development of the Doane property and/or by expanding permitted uses on Main St. to allow for limited, non-residential uses.

Goal: Encourage the development of the Route 100 Corridor

Action: Continue to invest TIF funds in the installation and/or expansion of public infrastructure such as public water lines, bike lanes, sidewalks, landscaping and lighting to enhance the appearance of the area and attract new businesses.

Goal: Facilitate the ability of residents to work from home

Actions:

- Work with cellular companies to locate areas with weak or no service.
- Assist in facilitating the co-locating or building of new towers
- Strive to minimize any visual impact.

FISCAL CAPACITY

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the town's ability to finance necessary capital and operating expenses to meet anticipated growth over the next 10 year planning period.

BUDGETING 101

- Assess value of properties in town.
- Determine need/cost of town services.
- Set tax rate.

When values for (existing and new) properties increases, it is easier to create a budget with less impact on the tax rate. Not so lately. So, need to cut costs.....

Cuts have been made each of the last three years by:

- Sharing services with the County (dispatch service) or neighboring municipalities (Code Enforcement, Assessing, Animal Control)
- Reducing the number of employees and the amount of employee benefits;
- Cutting back on capital improvements such as road maintenance and building projects, and;
- Delaying other capital expenditures such as vehicle replacements.

SCHOOLS

- Education makes up the largest category of town expenditures.
- In 2006 education and library expenditures comprised 52% of the total budget.
- Overall spending on education almost doubled (97% increase) between 1997 and 2006.

General Governmental Expenditures

General Government Revenue by Source (2006)

FISCAL CAPACITY GOALS & ACTIONS

Goal: Encourage the town to explore revenue sources other than property taxes.

ACTIONS:

- Continue to ensure that permits and fees cover the costs of administering them.
- Continue to ensure that the cost for providing emergency medical service is at the reasonable and customary level for insurance reimbursement.
- Explore other possibilities for reimbursement for services provided by the town.
- Explore opportunities for leasing town buildings and facilities.
- Continue to encourage department heads to apply for grants from state and federal agencies as well as from private organizations to assist in funding capital improvements and equipment.
- Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Growth Ordinance and Impact Fee Ordinance.

Goal: Continue to provide increased opportunities for non-residential development in order to shift some of the tax burden from residents to commercial taxpayers.

ACTIONS:

1. Consider adopting more flexible zoning that would allow for mixed use developments that are compatible with the existing uses.
2. Consider establishing a TIF District for Town-owned land in the center to encourage development in a growth area.
3. Consider extending water and sewer to the Highway Commercial district on Longwoods Road to facilitate commercial development.
4. Consider the pre-permitting of commercial lots or business parks in order to expedite commercial projects while still following all public notice and ordinance procedures.

Goal: Continue to explore cost saving measures.

ACTIONS:

- Pursue further regionalization of services with neighboring towns.
- Consider further use of the County for shared services.
- Recommend to the Town Council that new subdivision roads be accepted as public easements rather than as public roads.

LAND USE CHAPTER
Land Use Chapter
(14,672 acres of land in town)

<u>Acres By Use</u>	<u>%</u>
• Residential:	56.0%
• Commercial:	1.8%
• Muni/ Civic:	1.3%
• Open Space:	8.2%
• Vacant:	20.9%
• Unknown:	1.4%
• Roads & utilities:	10.4%

LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

Do our ordinances prescribe a pattern of development that promotes sprawl?

Do we adequately identify and designate areas where growth should be encouraged and areas where it should be discouraged?

**LAND USE
GOALS & ACTIONS**

GOAL: Work towards creating a more “livable” community.

ACTIONS:

- Strive to create a mix of homes, jobs, services and amenities in areas with proximity to town services.
- Encourage diversity within the community by adopting affordable housing zoning provisions.
- Encourage/allow for a variety of housing types to meet the needs of single residents, young families and seniors so that the ability to stay in the community for a lifetime is possible for all income levels.
- Establish design guidelines and performance standards for the Main Street area that will ensure compatibility of new and existing uses.
- Have pedestrian/bike friendly connections within densely developed residential areas and within commercial areas. Connect the two whenever possible.
- Facilitate the development of mixed use projects.
- Maintain existing trail systems with the town and where possible, connect trails.

Goal: Encourage the preservation of land that is suitable for agricultural use.

Action: Create a Farmland Overlay for land areas greater than 20 acres or on which the current use is agricultural. The overlay will require that any subdivision developments within the area conform to the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.

Goal: Connect the major roads in town to conserve fuel and allow for more efficient and convenient vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Action: Inventory potential road connections.

Goal: Reduce dependence on cars and encourage safe, non-vehicular transportation for all age groups.

Actions:

- Interconnect new subdivisions with existing ones or leave connections to undeveloped sites.
- Work to link existing trails by strengthening ordinance language. Delete reference to Greenbelt Map, instead state “any observable trail shall be preserved in its existing location or relocated on the site in such a way as to preserve the existing trail connection.”
- Re-establish the Greenbelt Committee and have the committee develop a plan that lays out potential connections between open space areas and other public properties.
- Develop bike/pedestrian ways along all major roads.

Goal: Encourage non-residential development in commercial and industrial zones to diversify the tax base.

Actions:

- Establish a mixed-use zone on the town-owned land at the end of Drowne Road.
- Create a simplified process for small projects that require site plan review.
- Consider having a staff-review process for small projects or changes to existing plans.
- Invest in infrastructure to support desired business development in areas targeted fro business growth.

Goal: Simplify the site plan review process so that small projects may be processed with a minimum amount of time and cost to the applicant.

Actions:

- Develop procedure for staff review of small projects.
- Develop a reduced list of submission requirements.

Goal: Develop a plan for Main Street that reflects the vision of all town residents for this area’s future potential as a center of the community.

Action: Implement the recommendations of the Town Center Committee and add those recommendations to this comprehensive plan.

Goal: Require that future subdivisions be designed so as to preserve or protect agricultural use, environmentally sensitive land, and scenic areas while clustering homes in areas of least visibility from the roadways.

Actions:

- Adopt a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.
- Eliminate Traditional Subdivision option from current ordinance.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES
CHAPTER**

WHAT THEY ARE

Buildings: schools, public safety buildings, library, town hall, recreation facilities;

Public Utilities: water and sewer.

WHAT THEY DO

- They provide municipal services to residents.
- Along with zoning, the location of public facilities can influence the pattern of growth.

Public Facilities Goals

- Continue to provide high quality municipal services to town residents in the most cost-efficient way.
- To provide community facilities sufficient to meet the needs of the town government and its citizens. Examples include town buildings, Val Halla Golf and Recreation Center, Twin Brook Recreation Center, the Rines Forest, and the schools.
- Encourage higher density development to areas which are served by public water and sewer.
- Consider expansion of the public water and sewer system so that environmentally sensitive areas are protected; to stimulate or provide for economic development; and to provide safe drinking water to areas that have had water quality problems in the past.
- Manage growth so that public services can be effectively and efficiently provided.

Transportation Chapter

Key Points

THE CONNECTION.....

..... between land use and transportation....

- Encourage new growth near town centers to reduce travel time to schools, jobs and services.
- Consider options for alternative transportation options.
- Since Cumberland does not have bus or rail service at this time, the focus of this chapter is to maintain and expand sidewalks and bike lanes, maintain roads, and create road connections when possible.

TRANSPORTION SURVEY RESULTS:

77% support the town planning the layout of future streets to coordinate development and ensure the creation of an efficient network or roadways.

66% support connecting existing main roads where possible.

A majority supported an entrance/exit to I-295 near Tuttle Rd. (MDOT Decision-Yarmouth)

TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Manage and control through traffic so as to minimize adverse impacts and assure safety for residential neighborhoods.
- Develop road standards for subdivisions which match the level of use they will service.
- Provide safe roads in good condition.
- Strive for safe roads for bicycles and pedestrians.
- Take steps to encourage residents to use alternate forms of transportation.

HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES GOALS:

- Encourage protection of the historic character of certain residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage protection of historic and pre-historic archaeological sites as identified by the Cumberland Historic Society and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

MARINE RESOURCES GOALS:

- Enhance the sustainability of the town's marine resources by working to improve water quality in shellfish harvesting areas.
- Promote access to the shore.

WATER RESOURCES GOALS:

- Implement the recommendations of the Groundwater Study Dated June 5, 2008 by Sevee and Maher Hydrogeologists.
- Protect the aquifer areas.
- Protect water quality by ensuring that new construction does not create erosion of soil that can run into surface water bodies.

CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS:

- To protect critical natural resources, including, but not limited to: wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, shoreland areas, aquifer recharge areas, and unique natural areas.
- Require that future subdivisions be designed so as to preserve and protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive land and scenic areas, while clustering homes in areas that most protect valuable natural resources.

AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES GOALS

Since the conversion of farmland to residential subdivisions is a primary reason for the loss of agricultural land, the Committee has listed recommended actions to mitigate this trend. These actions include:

- Defining the rural areas of the town;
- Creating a farmland overlay map;
- Adopting conservation subdivision regulations;
- Limiting the expansion of water and sewer into rural areas;
- Lessening restrictions on farm buildings and operations

RECREATION CHAPTER GOALS:

- Continue to provide a wide variety of recreational and educational programs for the community.
- Provide for safe vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility to recreation areas.
- Maximize the use of town-owned facilities.
- Continue to pursue access to the shore.
- Continue to maintain open space areas and trails, and look for opportunities to expand both with minimal use of tax dollars.
- Consider ways to power recreation facilities with alternative energy such as solar and wind
- Develop alternative revenue sources.

- Develop a community center for use by residents of all ages.
- Encourage a trail system throughout the town.

LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...

THE SUSTAINABILITY CHAPTER

A DEFINITION:

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

(Brundtland Report, 1987).

Sustainability Goals

- **Adopt energy conservation methods that reduce dependence on fossil-fuel based systems, reduce harmful pollutants including emissions, waste, and other environmental impacts.**
- **Create, protect, and enhance “Social Places” where residents can gather together.**
- **Protect and enhance public and ecological health through pollution prevention, reducing or eliminating the volume and/or toxicity of toxic and hazardous materials, air emissions, water discharges, solid and hazardous waste, pesticides.**
- **Conserve water resources/ protect aquifer.**
- **Facilitate the development of a diverse economic base that includes the provision of routine goods and services at the local level.**
- **Develop recreational opportunities in town to reduce need to drive for movies, restaurants, stores.**
- **Consider ways to power recreation facilities with alternative energy such as solar and wind.**
- **Educate and inform residents about the importance of sustainability.**

Questions?

FMI: www.cumberlandmaine.com