

**TOWN OF OLD ORCHARD BEACH
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE
September 25, 2019 – 6:00 PM
Police Department Community Room**

1. Open Meeting 6:00 PM

Present:

Chair: Lou Valentine

Planner Jeffrey Hinderliter

Asst. Planner Michael Foster

Planning Intern Ian Miller

Tom Mourmouras

Katherine Trapani

Jean Leclerc

Helen Whittaker

David Walker

Pat Brown

Mark Guimond

Win Winch

2. Future Land Use Plan: Discussion

Jeffrey Hinderliter passed around something that Helene did.

Our purpose of tonight's meeting is to look beyond zoning districts.

Look at the town in terms of land use and neighborhoods.

At the next meeting, the board will decide on the vision and goal for each neighborhood and what we would like to see for each neighborhood.

We are looking at a vision and goal for each of these areas that are identified on the map in addition, a couple of items that the Board would like to see.

After this, we will be putting the final pieces of the land use plan together.

We will see the 6 overall goals for the town, and then we will see the town broken up into these neighborhoods, then with each neighborhood we are going to have a vision and a purpose and what we would like to see. Then match up the future land use districts underneath the neighborhoods so we can then see how the future land use districts relate back to the neighborhood exercise because we are looking at it without the artificial boundaries of zoning. Then look back on it with our overall goals to see if our future land use districts match up with our vision.

RURAL

Win Winch:

Rural should remain rural and any small businesses there would be buffered (25' buffer?) so we don't destroy the real nature of the neighborhood.

Mark Guimond:

The boundaries are not right in Ocean Park because Ocean Park has defined itself because it predates the town. West Grand Avenue goes in front and it is also part of Ocean Park. We are not a Rural Community. We are housing and mixed use with light industry.

David Walker:

Preserve the Rural character and do not allow any new businesses in that area.

Helene Whittaker:

Keeping the area the way it is and do not overdevelop the area.

Pat Brown:

Agreed with Helene.

Jean LeClerc:

Develop it in a controlled manner.

Tom Mourmouras:

Limit Commercial

Chair Lou Valentine:

To improve support and protection of open space in that area. No businesses except in home businesses.

CASCADE ROAD

Win Winch:

His vision for the Cascade Road is residential and his vision is to get sewers in there and gas service along with sidewalks.

Mark Guimond:

Cascade Road is predominantly residential with a few other uses. There is talk about putting in large lots. Your utility costs go up dramatically and he does not think that works. We have to look at other land use and keeping open space. He wants a sense of community.

Pat Brown:

Transportation.

David Walker:

Some more robust businesses on that corridor from Route 1 in

Helene Whittaker:

Clean up the area. Middle income housing with green areas and develop complete streets.

Jean Leclerc:

Pretty much the same.

Katherine Trapani

When you do a vision statement, work safe should be in it. Somewhere there should be a safe corridor. Also likes the suggestion for a traffic light on Cascade Road.

Tom Mourmouras:
Continue with median income housing.

Lou Valentine:
Beyond Ross Road, preserve the open space and allow lower density but remain buildable land nothing commercial beyond Ross Road.

SMITHWHEEL ROAD

Win Winch:
Corridor it is high density residential there now. Maintain the high density. Also sidewalks.

Mark Guimond:
Smithwheel is densely developed. Traffic is also increasing. We need to look at a theme of what we want on Smithwheel Road.

Pat Brown:
Transportation.

Helene Whittaker:
Clean up the area and enforce property maintenance ordinance. In addition, the dump land used for solar panels.

Jean LeClerc:
Agrees with Helene and we need to have some sort of a vision for the Industrial Park.

Katherine Trapani:
Solar and wind development for utility scale.

Tom Mourmouras:
Not familiar with this area.

Lou Valentine:
Enforce codes to clean the total area. Upgrade road and sidewalks.

ROSS ROAD

Win Winch:
Continue residential low density.

Mark Guimond:
We need more land use. We need a vision. Dense development with open space.

Michael Foster stated that it is hard for people to see dense development and preserving green space as one and the same, but he believes that they can work together by keeping things together in that area.

Pat Brown:
Sidewalks.

David Walker:
Agrees with others.

Helene Whittaker:
Traffic light at Ross and Cascade Road. Clean up the area using the maintenance ordinance and middle income housing development.

Jean Leclerc:
Controlled development and preserve the blueberry plains.

MUNICIPAL

Pat Brown:
Tear down the Loranger School and put up middle income housing there. Have the 3 schools consolidated behind the high school and have an access road on Saco Avenue from behind the fire station going to the school so you do not impact the traffic on EE Cummings Road.

David Walker:
Send all of the students to Thornton Academy and use all of that land for Commercial Development except for the ballpark because we do need some entertainment.

Helene Whittaker:
She sees the ballpark area with a brewery, restaurant and community building with housing for summer PD recruits and J1 students, ballpark baseball players and this building also to be used as an emergency shelter, a skating pond, event location regarding car shows, etc. expanding the skateboard park, investing in the ballpark, consolidate schools, solar panels being used on our town buildings and schools and develop the dump area with solar panels. Also, move the rec department to the community center.

Jean Leclerc:
Community building which will house a hospitality school and also have function rooms and have year round conventions and other things. Solar panels on the community buildings. Maybe put a hotel up by the ballpark. Also, see if we can find green spaces of town land.

Katherine Trapani:
On board with the previous comments.

Tom Mourmouras:
He would like to see less traffic and cars in the downtown area. More parking and easier public transportation to bring the public down to the beach. You could utilize way more of the commercial space in the downtown area and least make it more green and reduce the amount of traffic.

HALFWAY INTERSECTION:

Win Winch:
Improve the intersection. Tighten up Commercial and make it more traffic friendly.

Mark Guimond:
It is a dysfunctional intersection. Need a roundabout. We need to go back to the State and say that the

halfway does not function.

Pat Brown:

It is \$4 million for the roundabout and not going to happen. Suggested traffic light on Saco Ave by the Chinese restaurant “China Eatery” and a traffic light across from Dunkin Donuts.
Clean up our town entrance.

Katherine Trapani: She thinks that it is appropriate to put in a vision statement that we do want to work towards having a roundabout.

David Walker:

A solution for that intersection.

Helene Whittaker:

A roundabout is the first visual impression of Old Orchard Beach. It should have a welcoming entrance to our town. Properties in the area should be well maintained and businesses more appealing. Instill pride. Create an overall positive image. If we had these things, it could attract more businesses year round.

Jean Leclerc:

Something needs to happen with the whole intersection.

Thomas Mourmouras:

Agrees with the roundabout and clean up the image of the commercial properties. Looking towards lower intensity businesses that are not contributing to that traffic flow.

Lou Valentine:

The entrance to Old Orchard Beach should be cleaned up. Cleanup from the China Eatery to the used car place on the right side going in to Old Orchard Beach.

SACO AVENUE

Win Winch:

Saco Avenue is the main corridor of the Town and it is slowly improving. Need sidewalks on both sides of the road and shade trees. We need to encourage that look.

Mark Guimond:

This is a major entryway to our Town. Widen the road. Need to run a Trolley. If we encourage development, we need to think of consolidating driveways.

Pat Brown:

Tear down the school, build a middle-income housing and in front of that, have that be the transportation hub.

David Walker:

Widen the road.

Helene Whittaker:

Beautification, sidewalks, complete streets, property maintenance, paint the water town to look like a

lighthouse, no more 55+ housing, add middle income, motel and cabin rentals need some fixing up, the old post office to finally get sold or use the building for a community center or other use.

Jean Leclerc:

Build up the businesses, sidewalks.

Katherine Trapani:

Infrastructure to have more development.

Tom Mourmouras:

More housing from Halfway to the light. See bike lanes from the light on Saco Ave. towards the downtown. Try to go with more boutique businesses/community center business.

Michael Foster:

For commercial parking in the rear. He believes so much focus is on cars that end up parking in the front and you have a building way back and it is not easy for pedestrians to access.

Chair Lou Valentine:

Constant improvements to the existing homes and businesses. New development are an asset but not contagious.

WASHINGTON AVENUE

Win Winch:

Continued renewal. Emphasis on sidewalks.

Mark Guimond:

We should preserve what we have there and we should be keeping that. Sidewalks. We need to encourage people to get out a walk.

Pat Brown:

Delineate the sidewalks without curbs and with buffers to discourage cars from parking on one side. Sidewalks on one side of the street and parking on the other side.

Helen Whittaker:

Energizing the area and encourage upgrading the properties to encourage the uplifting of the area. Codes needs to keep an eye on that area.

Jean Leclerc:

Narrow streets, densely packed, sidewalk on one side and parking on the other side. Start setting up one way streets. Would like to see more of a cottage neighborhood.

Katherine Trapani:

Self-guided walking tour neighborhood.

Thomas Mourmouras:

Keep the momentum with the recent development and a year round community centered businesses that could survive.

Chair Lou Valentine:

Maybe something that the Town could do for beautification such as planters, etc.

OCEAN PARK

Win Winch:

Maintain the Historical neighborhood. Parking is an issue.

Mark Guimond:

David Walker:

Charge for parking.

Helene Whittaker:

Parking lot by the Wastewater Treatment Plant substation on West Grand and make it environmentally friendly. No parking meters. No parking on Temple Ave. Continue sidewalks along Temple Ave. up to the train tracks, make road bike friendly, maintain the OPM ambiance (50's era) protect the Historical Districts and maintain them, take care of blight property areas in Ocean Park.

Jean Leclerc:

Take a look at the septic systems, infrastructure needs to be taken care of.

Katherine Trapini:

Ocean Park is very pleasing.

Chair Lou Valentine:

It seems to be upgrading itself within the confines. Future development with a large piece of property there would be nice however, it is not for sale.

DOWNTOWN

Win Winch:

Stay on track with the year round apartments. Encourage people to live downtown. Maintain the Victorian look and Transportation.

Mark Guimond:

More public parking.

David Walker:

Year round businesses, entertainment, theaters, restaurants, hotels. Looking for a thriving downtown development.

Helene Whittaker:

Old Orchard Street closed to traffic made into a walkable seating area with planters and bike racks where people can sit, eat and socialize, up and coming businesses, eateries, tasting venues etc. Exercise areas along the beach. Keep the amusement park and palace playland, make the pier entrance more welcoming. The area is much too crowded with the temporary booths that eventually become permanent. Not allow the temporary booths to happen and if they want a business, rent. In the square she would like to see more color used on the cement walls (aqua) use color instead of gray because we are a seaside community. A boardwalk along the beach, sidewalks on first street, not tarred because of

summer heat and the dogs (stonedust).

David Walker:

Broadband expansion along the beach so that our visitors have free access to broadband.

Jean Leclerc:

Develop the downtown. Need to get rid of the t-shirt shops and the honky-tonk shops that are here for 3 months and then gone. Need to create ordinances or some sort of rules in place to get some solid businesses and how they look and how they need to be built. Get rid of the parking and one lane from each side. Have lanes going one way down to the pier and maybe start closing part of the street. Use East and West Grand up to Strike Zone and Lisa's pizza. In addition, if this works out, close the whole street.

There is plenty of parking. Bring in a hotel chain.

Katherine Trapani:

Need to decrease the tacky gift shops but how do you do that legally.

Thomas Mourmouras:

Go after the landlord that are allowing these tacky gift shops. Having some sort of tax if the business is not open the full year and would go into a fund that supports year round businesses coming into that area. Stimulate the growth of the year round business. Make the Palace Playland a higher year round use.

Chair Lou Valentine:

If a building goes down (building wise) replace with an attractive named hotel with a ground level with parking underneath.

Bridge over the tracks and sidewalks to Union Ave.

WEST GRAND AVENUE

Win Winch:

Maintain and protect the Dunes. Have to be prepared for high water levels.

Mark Guimond:

Maintain and protect the Dunes. Need to look at our Storm drainage. More parking along the beach especially in Ocean Park.

Pat Brown:

Protect the Dunes. Storm drainage.

David Walker:

Manage the Marshes.

Helene Whittaker:

Business License renewal only if the property is properly maintained (part of the licensing renewal)
Gondola or walking bridge over the tracks to attract more people to use the parking lot. Complete streets (sidewalks, bike path) narrowing the streets to slow down the vehicles. Consistent signage that are visually appealing.

Jean Leclerc:
The Beach and Rising tide.

Katherine Trapani:
Led signs flashing and are too bright.

Thomas Mourmouras:
Require studies for the water issue.

Chair Lou Valentine:
Road and sidewalk maintenance from Union Ave. to Casco Ave.

EAST GRAND AVENUE

Win Winch:
Sidewalks on both sides of the road.

Jean Leclerc:
The same as the others.

Michael Foster:
For both East and West Grand preserve beach access.

Chair Lou Valentine:
Upgrade some of the buildings at the beginning of East Grand off of Old Orchard St.

Planner Hinderliter would like the Board to continue their homework. Would like each to come up with one vision goal statement and one or two bullets of what you would like to see. Get this back to staff before the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on November 21, 2019.

3. Good & Welfare

4. Adjourn at 7:36 PM

I, Valdine Camire, Administrative Assistant to the Comprehensive Plan Committee of the Town of Old Orchard Beach, do hereby certify that the foregoing document consisting of NINE (9) pages is a true copy of the original minutes of the Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting of September 25, 2019.

Valdine Camire