

Approved July 17, 2014

**CITY OF ROCKLAND
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR JUNE 12, 2014**

Board Present: Chair Valli Geiger, Thomas Keedy, Ann Morris, Adam Ackor. Mayor Larry Pritchett, ex-officio member attended.

Board Absent: Eileen Wilkinson

Staff Present: Assistant Code Enforcement Officer David Kalloch, City Attorney Kevin Beal, Recording Secretary Kara Cushman

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M.

Adjustments to Agenda:

Mayor Pritchett discussed the postponement of the ordinance amendment for container restaurants by the City Council. He said that the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and the Comprehensive Planning Commission (COMPS) are to look at the proposed amendments that would clarify development and architectural review standards in the Downtown (DT) and Tillson Avenue Area Overlay Zones (TAAOZ.) He asked if these amendments work, should the present standards be left as they are, or to pull back and lessen the requirements. He also said that a workshop with the Council is to be scheduled in August/September.

Chair Geiger said that the June 26th COMPS meeting will be to discuss the Camden Street Corridor and the first meeting in July, on the 17th, is to discuss the design standards in the DT and TAAOZ. She also stated that container restaurants were presented to City Council and then came to COMPS. COMPS felt uncomfortable passing with possible unexpected consequences and effects and recommended tabling it.

Previous Meeting Minutes:

ACTION: Member Morris made a motion, seconded by Member Ackor to pass May 29, 2014 COMPS Commission meeting minutes as written. VOTE: 4-0-0

New Business:

General discussion continued with the review of Ordinance Amendment #16, CH. 19, Section 19-304, Downtown "DT" Zone Height Regulations.

Member Ackor asked if there are other 5-story buildings in downtown. Mayor Pritchett said the Navigator has 5 and 4-story wings and that Gamage Antiques has 5-stories from the back of the building.

Chair Geiger said that the Colorado Springs form-based code did a good job with transitional height changes. The core downtown allows unlimited heights, with reductions in adjacent areas, and so on. Their code has requirements we could add in ours.

Resident Terry Pinto distributed some copies of the Smart Code to commission members. He said that building proposals shouldn't be turned down just because of aesthetics. This is not a reason to regulate height and development. He said discussion should focus more on width of streets, width of sidewalks in the north, south, east, and west directions, sunlight in streets, and sidewalk placement. Smart Code would address all of these things. He suggested that COMPS enter in a more in-depth thought process and to take into consideration perception and view.

Member Ackor said they should look at visual aspects of the city like church towers or the cupola on the court house. Any buildings taller than those buildings would dwarf the court house. Chair Geiger agreed about the importance of civic buildings which is a tenet in some form based codes. Resident Pinto discussed the impact of lower buildings vs. smaller buildings. He said not to design on a specific business. The function of the building on the inside and the aesthetics of the building on the outside are more important. COMPS had a general discussion on past buildings and heights that used to be in the same area downtown. City Attorney Beal said that this is not a one-size fits all solution. There should be transitions within the zone and transitions up to corridors, as well as, adopting an overlay zone to transition height up to 65 feet.

The Commission voted to have the City Council review and take action on the following proposals:

- 1) **The Comprehensive Planning Commission recommends that City Council not act on Amendment #16.**

ACTION: No motions made by members. VOTE: 4-0-0

- 2) **City Council is to enact a 6-month moratorium for new applications of existing and new buildings that would exceed 50 feet in height in the Downtown Zone area south of the center line of Park St. and Park Drive to Central Park.**

ACTION: Chair Geiger made a motion, seconded by Member Ackor to accept this action. VOTE: 4-0-0

- 3) **The Comprehensive Planning Commission proposes an order from Council to allow the Comprehensive Planning Commission to look at building heights as part of the review of standards in the Downtown zone and Tillson Avenue Area Overlay Zone.**

ACTION: Chair Geiger made a motion, seconded by Member Keedy to accept this action. VOTE: 4-0-0

- 4) **The Comprehensive Planning Commission proposes to send a memo to City Council that includes, recommending developing form-based codes for the Camden Street Corridor. In the meantime, adopt an interim overlay zone to address the most critical concepts of the Camden Street project. Finally, the COMPS Commission encourages City Council and the Harbor Trail Committee to extend the Harbor Trail north along the Camden St. Corridor.**

ACTION: Chair Geiger made a motion, seconded by Member Keedy to accept this action. VOTE: 4-0-0

Old Business:

Chair Geiger discussed some pros of container restaurants: they look fun, provide a lively streetscape, and could be artful in appearance. She was unsure of their temporariness, impact on restaurants in buildings, and the way in which they would be allowed in the city. Resident Pinto said the more restaurants you have the more that will come. It will bring people and give more reason to be a destination. City Attorney Beal said that container restaurants are considered eating establishments in the ordinance. Asst. CEO Kalloch said there are no differences outlined in the zoning ordinance between regular eating restaurants and container restaurants and they currently would have to meet design standards like any other building. He also said they could be located on city property such as Buoy Park if the city agreed to lease the space and no approval is needed from the Code office. Eating places currently go to the Planning Board to be

reviewed. Member Keedy mentioned his concern that there isn't available city land to rent due to local festivals and events.

City Attorney Beal said that staff had reached out to other communities but found no towns regulated them. He recommended that COMPS look outside of Maine to see what other municipalities are doing.

Next meeting tentatively set for June 26, 2014.

Meeting adjourned at 8:54 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kara Cushman
Recording Secretary