

**City of Rockland
Comprehensive Planning Commission
Minutes for July 16, 2015**

Board Present: Chair Valli Geiger, Tom Keedy, Ann Morris, Eileen Wilkinson, Alt. Michelle Gifford

Board Absent: Adam Ackor and Amy Files

Staff Present: Code Enforcement Officer John Root, City Attorney Kevin Beal, and Recording Secretary Kara Cushman

Guests: Eric Galant-Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission and Lisa Westkaemper

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Eric Galant of Mid-Coast Regional Planning discusses his updated and revised Transportation Ch. 8 of the Comprehensive Plan

The Transportation Chapter is formatted to fit the review criteria rule. Text in italics is state rule. The COMPS Commission can change answers or add to them. Some data overlaps from the 2002 COMPS Plan and the new draft; however, some data can be discarded.

Eric Galant reviewed the chapter and maps to highlight key points. The analysis comes from the maps. He discussed the High Crash Locations map. High crash areas are defined as having 8 or more crashes within 3 years. There have been minor changes to the map and we can add any other areas that are dangerous.

In looking at the Traffic Volumes map, volumes have been stable since 2000. Certain roads have increases and decreases in numbers. Counts are not done during festivals and events. On Page 4 of the draft Transportation Chapter, Member Morris asked to have Route 17 added to the list of significant through traffic roads.

Maine Department of Transportation is federally required to have a plan, and a 3-year projects plan is provided on pages 5-6. These are specific projects to the City of Rockland. City Attorney Beal said that the grant for sidewalks from the Rec Center on Limerock Street to White Street is still in the works.

Chair Geiger asked if it is possible to change Old County Rd to Route 1A instead of Broadway? Or change Route 90 to 1A instead of Broadway? Eric said that it is possible to change road designations, but it's good to have the surrounding towns involved for such roads as Route 90. Chair Geiger asked about the speed limit on Broadway. The state sets the speed limits on roads and would have to get permission from the MDOT to change it.

The Commission discussed parking standards from page 7. Eric said we don't want to discourage development, but there is a need for parking. Member Keedy said there are no standards for on-street parking. There needs to be an overall plan for parking for the whole city. What is provided in this draft is specific to off-street parking. City Attorney Beal said they had looked at parking in the Downtown Revitalization, but not in a specific parking plan.

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Access management refers to the paving of driveways onto roads. It's based on traffic volume. If driveways are poorly sited, it can cause accidents. We could have stricter standards. (i.e. requiring trimming of trees or co-locating multi-use entrances) Some towns have more road design standards than Rockland.

The COMPS Commission discussed sub-divisions. Eric said connections to sub-divisions are encouraged when there are 40+ units. More than one entrance is required. Cul-de-sacs are not worth the costs for sub-divisions that have 15 or less homes.

On page 11 is an inventory of City roads and the state would want to see this in the COMPS Plan. Roads are defined by state and state aid roads. We can just name the roads that are in really bad condition. Some towns add road mileage. The inventory list doesn't have to be included in the plan, but it should be mentioned that there is an inventory list for reference.

Eric discussed the crash data inventory. The data is broken down by major streets and is city-wide. Units can be a single person and injuries are by severity. Common crash causes are recorded by the police. Member Wilkinson asked if there was a report that showed crashes caused by drunk driving. There is not at this time.

The COMPS Commission discussed cross walks in the City. Chair Geiger said the electronic cross walks are dangerous as they turn green the same time the traffic light turns green. Eric said that the City can request a delayed light. Member Wilkinson asked if there are new sidewalk designs that are easier to maintain. Eric said that certain widths are required for handicap people including dots for the visually impaired. CEO Root said we can't just stripe off the area. Eric said some roads make sense to invest in shoulders. We could add in the chapter deficiencies in sidewalks.

On page 21, we can add to traffic generators. Many towns are faced with the burden of maintaining private roads. This data is taken from the current COMPS Plan. We can update if we want. CEO Root said he has a map of municipal parking that we can use as a reference. On page 23, the report identifies bus and van services. CEO Root asked about taxis. There are handicap accessible taxis in the Rockland area like Schooner Bay. This should be added to the report.

On page 25, all strategies in italics are required by the state. Exacting detail is not required but it's good to have a balance between general and broad strategies. Ask why certain strategies have not been implemented and do they still apply. There is some overlap between the City's strategies and the state strategies. List projects that the City wants to do in the next 10 years and reserve funds for capital investments.

CEO Root asked about the terminology of short, immediate, and long to describe the timeframes for goals. Eric said the budget is over a long period of time and this way we are not tied down to a specific number of years to finish projects. This is the format the state has for criteria rule. City Attorney Beal asked how much we can change in the MDOT requirements. Eric said that we can change and add topics and create a narrative that is more interesting, making state data more of an amendment. The state has a check list to make sure the requirements are in the plan. Chair Geiger asked about an executive summary for each chapter. Eric suggested a ½ page summary.

Eric said there might be another chapter he can do for Rockland. It depends on the budget and he will know in August. He can assist us with other chapters as needed. He suggested the COMPS Commission

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split up the chapters among members or do a chapter a month. Member Keedy suggested looking at the strategies and numbering them. Which ones are most important? Set strategies up in a way we can reference them quickly. Eric said other City departments can give advice for chapters as well. Have public meetings and surveys. Have a paragraph within each chapter for public comments.

Chair Geiger asked about a master sidewalk plan. CEO Root said he has a map identifying that. Eric said we could do a 2-page public survey with general questions. (i.e. Are you satisfied with services? Etc.) Talk about overall growth, population, and housing projections for the next 10 years and how it all affects traffic. Member Keedy said there is also a need for tourist data to anticipate future needs.

Chair Geiger asked for the next meeting to read the old chapter and the new chapter and mark up with changes with additions and deletions. She will be resubmitting a demolition ordinance to City Council. Member Morris asked for historical preservation to be added as a goal. City Attorney Beal and Chair Geiger are working on an infill ordinance to discuss for next time. They want to send the ordinance to City Council by September.

Next meeting is August 13, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kara Cushman
Recording Secretary