

*Approved by Comprehensive Planning Commission September 11, 2014*

**CITY OF ROCKLAND  
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMISSION AND  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING  
MINUTES FOR AUGUST 28, 2014**

**COMPS COMMISSION BOARD PRESENT:** Chair Valli Geiger, Thomas Keedy, Ann Morris, Adam Ackor, Terrance Pinto, Alternate Amy Files, Mayor Larry Pritchett, ex-officio member attended.

**EDAC BOARD PRESENT:** Chair Joanne Billington, Valli Geiger, Steven Roberts, Tina Plummer, George Terrien.

**COMPS & EDAC BOARD ABSENT:** Audra Caler-Bell, Eileen Wilkinson, William Bodine

**GUEST:** Jane Lafleur, Friends of Mid-Coast Maine

**STAFF PRESENT:** Assistant Code Enforcement Officer David Kalloch, Community Development Director John Holden, Recording Secretary Kara Cushman

**The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.**

Chair Geiger opened the meeting with a summary of the memorandum re. Camden Street Re-visioning drafted by the Comprehensive Planning Commission (COMPS) to be presented to Mayor Pritchett and the City Council. COMPS requests funds for an expert to study and help implement form-based codes for the Camden Street Corridor. Additionally COMPS suggests that the City Council take more immediate action in the short-term to create a Transitional Overlay Zone for the two segments of Camden Street running from Maverick Street to Waldo Avenue and Waldo to the Rockport town line. The proposed overlay zone recommendations include: Maximum building setback of 10' on street frontages; reduced minimum setbacks from property lines, minimum of height to be 2 stories, front parking prohibition, identify and preserve view corridors, and reduce or eliminate lot coverage and floor-to-area ratio. Chair Geiger said this was not unanimously agreed upon by the COMPS Commission; however, it did pass and acting now would prevent any new development from making changes that are not consistent with the Camden Street vision.

COMPS Member Pinto said he had concerns about the 2 stories requirement. He said it was an unfair requirement for someone who doesn't need 2 stories. If we go with 2 stories, we have to look at other things in the ordinance. He asked how we would address smaller lots in this area.

EDAC Member Roberts asked about reducing parking requirements.

EDAC Member Terrien suggested dividing the recommendation process. Firstly, to head-off re-development. Secondly, make Rockland a vibrant community to increase the tax base similar to downtown. We should stop the big-box model with the interim remedy. Second stories create

opportunities for daytime use. For example, the community around the Camden Street strip could create life around Pen Bay Acres.

COMPS Member Pinto asked how we could force developers to invest in an apartment above their business and would building requirements stay the same for the business plan.

Guest Jane LaFleur said that form-based codes could require a second floor. We can't force someone to rent the space and implementation would be difficult. She used the Camden Rite Aid vs. Rockland Rite Aid as an example. Camden Rite Aid was built the way it is because of the Historical Preservations wanting a different feel to it. They required a second story, parking in the rear, benches, and a park area. We should allow those kinds of places to be built. By having second floors, we would have more space available for elderly apartments, for example.

COMPS Alt. Member Files said we should require the second floor. Developers could invest in space and maybe they would use it. We should just triage for now.

EDAC Member Terrien said if we don't require second floors now, any new single story buildings will be there for decades to come.

Mayor Pritchett asked if it is possible to do new construction to an existing building by adding an additional floor afterwards. Asst. CEO Kalloch said it can be done if they meet certain requirements.

Community Development Director Holden said that we should encourage incentives to build multi-story buildings vs. disincentives. COMPS Chair Geiger said that second stories would provide an incentive to developers.

Guest LaFleur said form-based code has higher density and that this type of code also has public space code. She said a study should be done of the area to unlock the potential it has. Let property owners do better things with their properties.

COMPS Member Pinto said different types of construction should be allowed. Build for a great return. He said it's not just about adding a second floor, but it's also about density. We should look closer at the 10' setback. He likes properties close to the street, but it also depends on the size of the street.

General discussion continued regarding the right-of-way and setback lengths on Camden Street. Mayor Pritchett said that Department of Transportation was clear that the right-of-way is not 66' and it varies. It was stated that the intent is not to obtain additional land to widen Camden Street. COMPS Member Pinto said the public right-of-way is the street in some areas. We have to redefine how wide we want the street and planting. EDAC Chair Billington said that is what EDAC is currently working on. Guest LaFleur said we have to agree on the profile of the road. We need to know where the property line is, travel way, sidewalks, and planting.

COMPS Chair Geiger said that sidewalks are to be on both sides of the street. Properties will go to the sidewalk instead of right up to the road. EDAC Member Roberts said the language doesn't

cut it. Either it's a 10' setback or provide for the sidewalk and a minimum of 10'. EDAC Member Terrien said the setback shall be no further than the greater of the property line of Route 1 or 33 feet from the center of the road and 10'. Mayor Pritchett said around 16' would get you something, for example, 8' for parking, 3' for greenery, and 5' for sidewalks, as maximum setback could be 10' or up to 16'. COMPS Member Morris said we ask the City Council to survey the right-of-way on Camden Street.

Community Development Director Holden said we should allow less setback if we provide adequate pedestrian sidewalks. By having fewer setbacks, we would add more value to the property.

COMPS Member Pinto said to accommodate the streetscape, 18' is required. EDAC Member Roberts said the street may not go down the center of the right-of-way. The road could also be moved with construction over time. We should use the center line as the right-of-way and use it as a point they measure back from. Guest LaFleur said that the property owner must demonstrate the property line, then negotiate 18' or the amount we need. Mayor Pritchett said space along the side is what municipalities use for pedestrian public space. COMPS Alt. Member Files said the roads should be narrowed to slow traffic.

Guest LaFleur asked about liner buildings and if they would be allowed in this plan. It's the kind of development big box stores use. Should they be prohibited? Also, that number of parking spots should be left up to the owner to decide based on their need. COMPS Member Pinto said we should have new comprehensive parking regulations. The parking requirements would start at zero and developers would need to demonstrate how much additional parking is needed.

COMPS Alt. Member Files asked if language should be added to include sidewalks, green space, and bike lanes. EDAC Member Roberts said amenities on the side of the road will change. We won't use 18' when the road moves. It depends on the amenities. Setbacks are based on the center of the right-of-way and some may have bike paths.

**ACTION: A motion was made to change the Overlay Zone Recommendation to read: "In order to accommodate the street design aspects of the Camden Street project, amend the zoning regulations to provide space for the streetscape amenities (sidewalks, on-street parking, green space, etc.) and a ten feet maximum building setback from the public streetscapes amenities." And "Minimum of height to be 2 stories and revise parking standards to no more than is required for the uses on the first level." VOTE: 10-1-1 (Roberts abstained, Pinto opposed.)**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Kara Cushman  
Recording Secretary