

**CITY OF BREWER
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
JANUARY 13, 2014**

Vice Chairman McIntosh called the meeting to order at the Brewer City Hall Council Chambers at 8:05 a.m.

The following were in attendance:

Kevin Birch	Present	
Allen Campbell	Absent	
Jim Donnelly	Absent	
Michael Fitzpatrick	Absent	
Nicole Gogan	Present	
David Hanna	Present	
Frank Higgins	Present	arrived at 8:16
Linda Johns	Present	
D'arcy Main-Boyington	Absent	
Richard Manzo	Present	
Janet McIntosh	Present	
Daniel O'Connell	Present	

Consultant Rich Rothe

Also in attendance: City Council Liaison Bev Uhlenhake, Brewer Code Officer Ben Breadmore (arrived at 8:40).

Minutes of the December 16, 2013 Committee meeting were unanimously approved as written. (In response to a question, Rich and Linda stated that the minutes reflect comments made at the meeting; these do not necessarily reflect a committee consensus).

[Frank arrived at 8:16 am]

The Committee continued their discussions of various land use issues with both pros and cons.

Landscaping requirements for parking lots.

- The city currently has requirements for minimum standards to be met, such as every other row of double parking must have a strip of raised, landscaped island in between and raised end islands.
- T-shaped parking spaces are hard to maintain.
- The raised islands keep cars parked in designated spaces and not creep closer into aisles. Aisles must be kept clear for emergency access.
- Parking lot landscaping helps to keep the parking area cooler in summer. Shaded parking lots benefit both the motorists and also the environment. Cooler parking lots help keep stormwater runoff water temps lower which is better.

- Parking lot islands and landscaping help in pedestrian safety.
- Some towns require a minimum percentage of the parking lot be shaded by full-size trees.
- Raised islands can be more difficult to plow around. It's tough to balance plowing needs with safety and aesthetics.
- Post offices (Federal government) don't have to follow local requirements.
- The city has considered large, open parking lots as grandfathered. If and when those properties seek site plan approval for changes to the lots, the city would work with them to be more into compliance.
- Perhaps seek incentives for these grandfathered parking lots to be improved (potentially by Tax Increment Financing (TIFs), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), allowing outparcels, or tax breaks).

[Ben arrived at 8:40 am]

Expansion of downtown.

- The city created a Downtown Development District last year which includes the two-block area of Betton Street and Center Street. The zoning change appears to be working well with several new businesses and building upgrades in process. Existing buildings are hard to redevelop because of parking requirements.
- Should the city create a Downtown II or Waterfront district which would allow specific uses, dimensional requirements, and perhaps allow for a portion of on-street parking to meet parking requirements?
- This new district should allow for residential on the first floor (the DD district does not) so as not to create non-conformance with existing residential.
- There are two components to encouraging redevelopment: 1) regulations to allow it; and 2) incentives to encourage it.
- A downtown in Brewer would be different than downtown Bangor. Brewer should focus on the waterfront and trail.
- Perhaps focus on a wellness theme and healthy community.
- Would like to see specialty businesses within the waterfront area.
- A specific amount of on-street parking should be allowed for commercial uses.
- The gateways into Brewer from the bridges should be cleanup up and welcoming.
- Perhaps modify regulations to allow and encourage landowners to develop or redevelop their properties. Changes may take longer to happen but this would be done at landowner's expense and not the city's.
- Redevelopment may happen over time as uses change to a higher and better use. Single-family homes may eventually be changed to other uses.
- The city does not want to create non-conforming uses.
- The area between the three bridges is currently commercial with some residential.
- Downtown districts can have less shoreland zoning setbacks.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for January 27th at Brewer City Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.