Families, Neighborhood & Economy

Draft Proposed Policies and Actions
Orono Comprehensive Plan Update
Nov. 12, 2013
The First Wave of Policies & Actions

• Address Population, Housing & Neighborhoods, Economy, In-Town Land Use
• Will focus on 5 key areas tonight
  – Building a “Start-up” Business Economy
  – Attracting Family-Aged Households
  – Student Housing and Neighborhood Preservation
  – Downtown Improvement
  – Expanding Resource-Based Economy, incl Food
More...and More Coming

• Other proposed policies and actions addressing Population, Housing, Economy and In-Town Land Use on line at www.orono.org/planning

• Comp Plan Committee will be addressing other areas – Transportation, Capital Improvements, Recreation, Natural Resources, Municipal Finance - in coming months
I. Building a Start-Up Economy

**Issue/Opportunity** – Commercializing innovative products and services coming out of UMaine and elsewhere

**Policy** - The Town will create an environment that supports commercialization of innovative ideas, products and processes.

Reference: Economy Issue/Opportunity #1
Building a Start-Up Economy: Actions

• Be part of a Greater Bangor innovation hub
• Implement High Speed Fiber and Gig. U
• Streamline Home Occupation Regulation
• Invest in Incubator, Co-Work, and Maker (Lt Mfg) Space
• Direct Assistance to Micro-Businesses
Be Part of a Regional Innovation Hub

• OEDC cooperating with UMaine, Old Town, Bangor Target Area Development Corp., Angel Network, Blackstone

• Grow the “BigGig” entrepreneur networking and pitch events

BigGig’s first 3 pitchers – Oct. 22, 2013 at Verve
Implement “Last Mile” Gig Speed Fiber

- 21st Century municipal infrastructure
- Within 7 years extend fiber optics at least throughout the designated growth area of Orono (Stillwater Ave east, Kelley Rd north)
- Under “Gig.U,” work with ISPs and Micro & Start-up Businesses to hook up higher speed subscribers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100 Mbps Subscribers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009: 7,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010: 69,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011: 170,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012: 516,500</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>50 Mbps Subscribers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009: 39,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010: 162,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011: 347,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012: 803,461</td>
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</table>

National growth in higher speed subscribers
Streamline Home Occupation Regs

• Allow office-based and similar home occupations that do not generate significant customer traffic as a matter of right throughout the Town, without Planning Board review

• Other home occupations still allowed with Planning Board review
Invest in Incubators, Co-Work, Maker Spaces

• Help sustain Target Technology Center
• OEDC business plan for late stage incubator, co-work, and light industry/artisan “maker” spaces.
• Allow light industry in C-1 District east of I-95 (along Stillwater Ave, in Tech Park).
Assist Micro-Businesses

• Establish development fund to assist at least 10 start-ups in next three years with mini-grants of $5K - $10K for needed equipment and connection to high speed Internet service

• Assist graduating students wanting to start a business get a foothold in Orono
YOUR TURN:
DISCUSSION – START-UP ECONOMY

And don’t forget the index card:

The Comp Plan Committee is on the right track
___ yes
___ almost there with some change (see below)
___ needs lots of work (see below)

Your comments on index card.
II. Family-Aged Households

Issue/Opportunity – The steep decline in family households with school-aged children (-17%, 2000-10)

Policy - The Town will create opportunities for the development of affordable home ownership close to services, jobs and Downtown Orono.

Reference: Population-Housing Issue/Opportunity #1; Land Use Issue/Opportunity #4
Family-Aged Households: Actions

• Financial assistance for affordable subdivisions tied to home ownership

• Zoning:
  – Revise MDR standards to match median lot size and reduce frontage requirement
  – Incentive-based Village Residential District, including Traditional Neighborhood Design standards
Affordable In-Town Subdivisions

- Affordable Housing Tax Increment Financing
  - Promotes housing, including owner housing, affordable to households with working incomes
  - Assistant professors, technicians, teachers, small business owners, etc., typically would qualify (max of 120% of region’s median household income)

- “Patient” loans for infrastructure
Zoning: Reduce MDR Minimums

• Use MDR District median lot size as benchmark:
  – 20,000 SF minimum lot size to 15,000 SF – still fairly large lot (1/3 of a football field)
  – 100 feet minimum frontage to 80 feet
• Similar to Noyes Dr – Sunrise Terrace – Edgewood neighborhood (median 15,300 SF)
• Compare to Sailor Development (median 9,600 SF)
Compared to a Football Field...

1 Acre
15,000 SF

160 ft.
360 ft.
What 12,000 – 15,000 SF lots with 80 ft frontage look like: Noyes Dr – Sunrise Terr

A football field
**Zoning: Village Residential Overlay**

- Within walking distance -- ~1750 ft (0.33-mi) – of Downtown or RSU school campus
Village Residential Overlay

- Incentive-based
- Must adhere to Traditional Neighborhood design guidelines
- Must include deed covenants or other legally enforceable mechanism to require homes to be owner-occupied (if 2-family, one of units is owner-occupied)
  - Except UMaine – managed family housing
- Maximum of 2 unrelated persons
Village Residential Overlay

- In return, single-family and two-family dwellings allowed on smaller lots (e.g., 7,500 SF)
- Subdivisions designed as clustered development; single-family, two-family, and townhouses allowed with minimum open space requirement and flexible lot dimensions
WHAT WE MEAN BY “TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN”
Easy to walk from end to end
Walkable Neighborhood Size

Q: How far can you walk in 5 min. at 3 mph?
A: 1,320 ft (or ¼-mile)

1/4 to 1/3 mile typically thought of as easily walkable
Two Types of Open Space

Formal: squares, greens, pocket parks
Identity, relaxation, play, helps to organize the streetscape (“outdoor rooms”)

Informal: natural areas, recreational areas, buffers
Resource protection, edge, active and passive recreation
Formal Open Space and Streetscape work together to create a memorable place

Noyes St., Portland, ME
Informal Open Space...

Defines edges, protects resources, provides recreation

Cross Hill, Cape Elizabeth
Connection to Street System
The Street as an Outdoor Room

Distance b/t bldgs either side of street vs. ht of buildings: 3.5:1
Two Examples
The Public-Private Continuum
Now let’s break down the Outdoor Room into its parts:

~3.5:1 Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>Eat/Cook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>Sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backyard</td>
<td>Socialize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porch</td>
<td>Relax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoop</td>
<td>Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Yard Path</td>
<td>Talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fence</td>
<td>Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalk Esplanade Curb / Tree</td>
<td>Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Socialize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Lights</td>
<td>Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs / Utilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidewalk Esplanade Curb / Tree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front Yard Path Fence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Putter Garden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relax</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ~20 ft | ~13 ft | ~24 ft | ~13 ft | ~20 ft |
Feels Good from the Front Yard...
...to the Private Backyard
YOUR TURN:
DISCUSSION – FAMILY-AGED HOUSEHOLDS

And don’t forget the index card:

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___ yes
___ almost there with some change (see below)
___ needs lots of work (see below)

Your comments on index card.
III. Students and Neighborhood Preservation

Issue/Opportunity – The integration of off-campus student housing into Town

Policy - The Town will continue to seek a balance between small-scale student housing integrated into neighborhoods and larger-scale developments close to campus, with particular attention to limiting impacts on established single-family neighborhoods.

Reference: Population-Housing Issue/Opportunity #3 and #4
Students and Neighborhood Preservation: Actions

• Student engagement
• Limit student rentals in single-family neighborhoods
• Improve communications with landlords, especially those who live outside of town
• Strengthen code enforcement tools
• Rental rehab and rental reconversion funds
Student Engagement

• Work with UMaine’s new Associate Dean for Community Engagement to expand opportunities for students to contribute to and be part of town life

• Create a University presence Downtown (drop-in center, bookstore/clothing store, non-alcohol venue for socializing, etc.)
Limit Student Rentals in Single-Family Neighborhoods

• Adopt “student home” as a regulated land use in the MDR District and limit their number
  – Draw from examples in Newark, DE, St. Paul, MN, and Lower Marion Township, PA
Improve Communications with Landlords

• Re-establish Landlord-Town Committee for communication, education, outreach
  – Peer pressure approach aimed at relatively few landlords vs. expanded regulation that impacts all landlords

• Protocol for communications among Code Enforcement Office, Landlord, and Public
Strengthen Enforcement Capacity

• Improve code enforcement’s ability to enforce the limit of 3 unrelated persons in single-family zoning districts
  – Rental registration list on web site
  – Public tracking of CEO and Police dokumented complaints via web map
  – Release of leases to CEO if required

• Amend Disorderly Property Ordinance for better application to large student housing projects
Rental Rehab and Reconversion

• Through CDBG or similar mechanism, provide rental rehab loan funds to improve health & safety of rental properties
• Establish a mechanism to fund a reconversion incentive program – from multi-family rental back to single-family homes
YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

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Downtown Improvement

Issue/Opportunity – Downtown’s transition from neighborhood commercial to a specialty district of restaurants, specialty goods and financial services

Policy - The Town will continue to invest in the infrastructure, business development, and marketing of Downtown as a center of economic activity and a destination for goods services and entertainment.

Reference: Economy Issue/Opportunity #3
Downtown Improvement: Actions

• Locally financed façade improvement program
• Public infrastructure
• Housing near Downtown
• Off-site business signage
• Credit enhancement agreements
Locally Financed Façade Improvement Program

• Use a portion of future Downtown TIF funds to create a façade improvement program targeted at historic character, aesthetics, & energy efficiency

• Follow design guidelines from 2011 Downtown Plan; work with OVA

• At least dollar-for-dollar private match
Public Infrastructure

• Sidewalks, streets, sewers, drainage per CIP and Downtown TIF Development Program
• Upgrade Pine Street parking lot
• Reclaim Pine Street gully; expand public parking in anticipation of other Downtown expansion
Housing Near Downtown

• Housing within walking distance of Downtown is a driver of successful stores

• See actions under Family-Aged Households (Village Residential Overlay District)
Off-Site Business Signage

- Work with OVA (and Stillwater Ave. businesses) to design an Off-Site Business Signage program
- Amend Land Use Ordinance to allow off-site business signage customized to Orono
Credit Enhancement Agreements

• Consider a standard Credit Enhancement Agreement, as allowed within Downtown TIF District, to return a portion of new property taxes resulting from substantial redevelopment and increases in valuation of Downtown properties.
YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT

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Your comments on index card.
Food System as Part of Economic Base

**Issue/Opportunity** – Expanding Orono’s resource-based economy, including agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation and related value-added production.

**Policy** - Orono will draw on its natural resources and University expertise to expand resource-based economic activity.

Note: Actions address both outdoor recreation and food-related economic activity. Tonight, talking about food-related activity.

Reference: Economy Issue/Opportunity #4
Value-Added Food Incubator

• Engage Cooperative Extension, School of Food and Agriculture, Target Technology Center, and Maine Farmland Trust to determine feasibility of & financing for
  – incubator specializing in value-added food production and/or
  – Shared commercial kitchen/food processing facility
Farmers’ Market

- Develop a roofed facility for Orono Farmers’ Market in or close to Downtown

Covered Farmers’ Market, Portland, OR
Photo by J. Jemison
YOUR TURN: DISCUSSION – FOOD SYSTEM AS ECONOMIC BASE

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