

# TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

Saturday, February 5, 2011

White House Motel Conference Room  
Littlefield Avenue  
Hampden, ME  
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. LONG TERM ISSUES
  - A. VISION OF COMMUNITY
  - B. QUALITY/TYPE OF SERVICES PROVIDED
  - C. REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
  - D. KEY STEPS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Lunch Break 11:30 – 12:00

3. SHORT TERM ISSUES
  - A. 2011/2012 BUDGET PRIORITIES
  - B. ORDINANCE & POLICY PRIORITIES
  - C. HIGH SCHOOL RE-USE ISSUE
  - D. HAMLIN MARINA PROPERTY SALE
4. NEXT STEPS/WRAP UP

Session Ends at 2 p.m.

TO: Hampden Town Council  
FROM: Sue Lessard, Town Manager  
DATE: February 2, 2011  
RE: Strategic Planning Session

Attached please find the questionnaires distributed to all Councilors prior to the Strategic Planning session to be held on Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at the White House Motel Conference Room at 9 a.m. Information from Councilor Shakespeare is not included because he did not return the questionnaire for inclusion prior to the distribution of the agenda and packet. Councilor Hornbrook has submitted a statement declining to answer the questions and that is included.

As a reminder to Councilors, the purpose of this session is the exchange of ideas. No final decisions will be made and no votes will be taken. The result of the session will be the referral to appropriate Council Committees of ideas/priorities for inclusion on future agendas of those Committees and ultimately regular Council Agendas. These ideas then are translated into proposed budgets, policies, ordinances, etc. that go through a full public vetting process which includes meetings and hearings that all are publicly noticed. As always – all information available to the Council in regard to such issues will also be posted on the Town's website and available to the general public.

This session is an opportunity for you, as elected representatives of this community, to discuss the concepts and ideas that you believe best represent the voices of the electorate. We live in a difficult economic climate, and continue to face many challenges in how best to provide public services. Defining a direction will be critical - for without a plan, the Town can only be reactive – not proactive – in maintaining a fiscally stable community.

Over the course of the coming year the Council will have many difficult choices to make in what we do and how we do it. It will be critical that each of you understand and respect how the others think and how each of you process information. Everyone's ideas are valuable and everyone has the responsibility to not only present their own ideas – but to consider the ideas of others as well. A session in which there is an open and respectful such exchange should help to foster that kind of atmosphere for the Council going forward.

I look forward to seeing you all on Saturday. In order for me to do my job well, it necessary that the policy makers – each of you – determine the priorities that you want administered.

*Matt Arnett*

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES SESSION

The purpose of this form is to gather information to be used in planning for the Council Goals and Objectives session planned for January 22, 2011 at the White House Inn Conference Room from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

In order to make this session as productive as possible, some pre-work on the part of each Councilor is necessary. If you would take the time to consider the following questions and respond to them by January 10<sup>th</sup> that would allow sufficient time to consolidate the responses and prepare the final agenda before the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Response space has been left after each question but feel free to use whatever space/pages necessary to convey your thoughts. The meeting will be facilitated by Walt Cupples and his wife Deborah. Their role will be to keep the discussion on track, insure that all have an opportunity to participate equally, and assist in formulating a 'next steps' strategy that will allow the work from this session to have scheduled, concrete actions to follow.

1. What type of community do you wish to see Hampden become in ten years? What should be its noteworthy features? Its major accomplishments? Its reputation in the state?

A town that is recognized as a leader in sensible green development; greenways—multimodal trails that connect residential and business communities to one another and to neighboring towns are an important feature. A town that has successfully combined energy efficient and aesthetically pleasing development—earning energy star ratings for new subdivisions and commercial developments. The former Hampden Academy and the area known as “the Triangle” have been cited throughout New England as model, twice green developments for their conservation clustering around important natural features of the terrain, their efficient roadway layouts, and their energy efficient and natural blending architectural design standards. Several conservation design residential subdivisions have proved to be economically successful with high public support and strong market appeal.

Hampden continues to be recognized as a well managed town with strong efficient public services and a reasonable tax rate. “Your tax dollar goes a long way in Hampden,” is a common comment in the area. The public schools continue to be strong and highly regarded throughout the area; the cost per pupil has actually dropped somewhat due to innovations in instruction and services.

2. What are the key steps we need to take in the next five years to make your vision of Hampden possible?

Reach agreement concerning the broad characteristics of the town we want Hampden to become.

Agree on the rudiments of a master plan—embed functional and design standards characteristic of what we want the town to become in policies and ordinances.

Design/refine zoning to include greenways, parks, and design standards appropriate to each community/zone area of town.

Do our best to insure that the Hampden Academy property is privately redeveloped as a model town center and is positioned to be the center piece of a walkable, historically significant riverside community stretching from Carriage Street to Summer Street and from the Penobscot River to Main Road north and south.

Work with neighboring towns to coordinate greenway development.

Find and develop relationships with strong, innovative developers who are excited by the kind of development we are purposing.

Figure out how the purposed master plan can be financed.

3. What are your top five priorities for action/consideration by the Town Council in 2011/2012 to maintain and strengthen Hampden's immediate future and to prepare for the development needed to achieve the ten year goal?

--Get agreement within the Town Council of the principles that will guide town goals and planning over the next several years. This should embrace much of what is espoused by Randall Arendt.

--Implement the Comprehensive Plan through reformulation of relevant ordinances consistent with the principles listed above.

--Get agreement with the School Board that Hampden Academy in its entirety be offered for transfer to the Town of Hampden, including, perhaps, an agreement by the Town to transfer town owned property in the four mile square to the School Board.

--Thoroughly review the proposed statewide "Highway Simplification" program for its implications for road development and maintenance in Hampden and lobby our legislators with respect to possible implementing legislation.

--Push for extension of natural gas supply from Bangor to the Triangle and beyond to enhance development in the triangle and to bring less expensive energy to Hampden.

--Explore an "electric cooperative" arrangement with Casella landfill power.

--Review and redesign, as appropriate, the employee compensation and benefits system. Explore shifting more of the burden of health care to employees. Insure fair and competitive compensation for solidly performing seasoned employees and the ability to provide significant incentives to truly outstanding and vitally important employees to retain and motivate them.

4. What areas of Town government – consider all department operations – cause you concern?

--Our reluctance—agonizing slow effort to deal with deteriorating properties at the upper and lower corners of town. These two corners should be historic highlights of the town, not eye-sores. With respect to the upper corner property opposite Irving's Randall Arendt reportedly told Dean Bennett the town should buy it, renovate it, and resell it to the public. That's an ideal worth pursuing.

Our overly conservative investment policy and an out-of-date TIF policy.

Our neglect of the Papermill Road Park.

5. What areas of Town government do you think work well – and why?

Public Safety, Public Works, General Administration. These are the backbone of the town and they are generally well regarded by the public. My own experience with these departments has been very positive. GIS is outstanding. I think most of what Recreation, the Library, and Planning and Development do is also good,

6. What specific suggestions do you have for improving local government in Hampden?

Convey to the School District the need to creatively control school expenses. In retrospect it was probably foolish for them to allow their budget to become overly dependent upon federal recovery money. They are going to need to become more flexible and innovative in restructuring educational programs and employment costs.

Town Council and administration are going to have to be both demanding and understanding in enforcing the new building codes mandated by the state that demand more rigorous weatherization standards—insulation and air leakage control. Code Enforcement may need additional resources to carry out its responsibilities.

7. Do you think that the Town should actively explore more regional opportunities for service consolidation? What types of regional cooperation seem most promising to you?

Yes, though we should not assume that consolidation will necessarily lead to reduced cost. Public Safety and Public Works should periodically review potential efficiencies with our neighbors. Town Councils/ Selectmen should periodically explore regional economic and community development opportunities. The Bangor Region Development Alliance seems relatively unproductive. Our Director of Economic and Community Development should review its value for the Town Council. Hampden is tied to Bangor in many ways; we should keep abreast of their plans and our relationship vis-à-vis transportation, greenways, and economic development strategies.

8. Are there areas of the Town's ordinances and policies that are not state mandated and are unnecessarily burdensome? If so, what are they and how should they be changed?

I'm not sure. Perhaps we should conduct a professionally designed and administered survey of public opinion on items 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

9. Are there areas of the town's ordinance and policies that are too weak or ineffective in protecting the good name and public values of the town? If so, how should they be changed?

See item 8.

Thank you, in advance, for your help in preparing for this important meeting.

Janet Hynes

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES SESSION

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1. What type of community do you wish to see Hampden become in ten years?

I hope to see Hampden continue to flourish as a community of choice. A community that is viewed as having strong municipal service including recreation, top schools, and a strong community connectivity. I hope to see the business climate to be perceived as more favorable than the past, ( a continuation of our recent efforts), and see a balance of environment and business. Conservative development schemes are desired without burdening the citizens and businesses with unnecessary costs or ineffective zoning.

What should be its noteworthy features? Its major accomplishments?  
Noteworthy features I would like to continue to see would be the high regards to K-12 education, maintaining existing resources of the Pool and the library, improved care and/or expansion of parks and public/open space. Open space to be used by the community without removing the potential for business and/or industrial development which should co-exist and is also an important part of our tax base and job opportunities.

Its reputation in the state?

Continue the Town Manager managed Town, and continue to run as a well managed community. Maintain a reputation for being financially healthy, and fiscally conservative. We should be part of a conservative development approach, but find it unnecessary to be the leader in the

state for conservative design. I'm not sure what that will bring to the community.

2. What are the key steps we need to take in the next five years to make your vision of Hampden possible?
  - We need to ensure that the downtown area as it currently exists receives the appropriate investment and is developed in a manner consistent with our vision for the Town.
  - We need to take control of the school redevelopment.
  - We need to continue to place value on the business park as it appears that the Town has lost interest in its viability. We don't need to make money, though decisions have been made in the past that should be followed through unless there IS DATA AND INFORMATION that prove otherwise. We don't seem to have a good grip on the viability of the Park.
  - Explore the value of the industrial park currently privately held, improve the relationship with the Owner, identify any partnerships or support to make that area a success (ie infrastructure), and most especially if a shared vision is not supported by the Owner, especially work to conserve industrial land not turn it to Open Space.
  - Remove blight from the downtown area and/or gateways to the community.
  - Improve connectivity to parks and community services by pedestrian trails and sidewalks. Improve connectivity to downtown Bangor and the gateway from the North (Main Road No.) to the Town.
  - Connect the Coldbrook area to the downtown area so we do not create another separate "downtown".
  
3. What are your top five priorities for action/consideration by the Town Council in 2011/2012 to maintain and strengthen Hampden's immediate future and to prepare for the development needed to achieve the ten year goal?

In addition to the same priority as all, to develop responsible zoning to support the Comp Plan... See items #2 through #5 above.

4. What areas of Town government – consider all department operations – cause you concern?

I have no current concerns.

5. What areas of Town government do you think work well – and why?

Andre summed it up well on his response. Ditto.

6. What specific suggestions do you have for improving local government in Hampden?

None at this time.

7. Do you think that the Town should actively explore more regional opportunities for service consolidation? What types of regional cooperation seem most promising to you?

Regional cooperation where viable in areas such as water, sewer, and stormwater. Outreach to neighboring communities to identify potential opportunities may be helpful to best understand how we could share services and/or promote development opportunities.

8. Are there areas of the Town's ordinances and policies that are not state mandated and are unnecessarily burdensome? If so, what are they and how should they be changed?

Yes I believe there are unnecessary environmental and other zoning ordinances that place unnecessary burden on business owners and developers. Maine already has some of the most restrictive environmental rules and regulations, and I see no need for the Town to be more restrictive in some areas such as stormwater and some land use regulations. As we have seen by Randall A....., there are other methods to make development more environmentally friendly and less of an impact, than be developing more stringent regulations. Development still needs to be efficient. Signage continues to be a concern, and should be explored to the greatest extent to resolve and make more enforceable as well. I believe we should be more aware of impacts to landowners before making planning decisions.

9. Are there areas of the town's ordinance and policies that are too weak or ineffective in protecting the good name and public values of the town? If so, how should they be changed?

I think we are being too weak with the school of which I share blame. (Public Value).

I believe we should continue to make the development process easier to meet and follow. The "old" reputation is improving however still exists in the developer arena.

Thank you, in advance, for you help in preparing for this important meeting.

Tom BRANN

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES SESSION

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1. What type of community do you wish to see Hampden become in ten years?

I hope to see Hampden continue to flourish as a community of choice. A community that is viewed as having strong municipal service including recreation, top schools, and a strong community connectivity. I hope to see the business climate to be perceived as more favorable than the past, ( a continuation of our recent efforts), and see a balance of environment and business. Conservative development schemes are desired without burdening the citizens and businesses with unnecessary costs or ineffective zoning.

What should be its noteworthy features? Its major accomplishments? Noteworthy features I would like to continue to see would be the high regards to K-12 education, maintaining existing resources of the Pool and the library, improved care and/or expansion of parks and public/open space. Open space to be used by the community without removing the potential for business and/or industrial development which should co-exist and is also an important part of our tax base and job opportunities.

Off site open space? In the past we have required open space on a site by site basis. This, in my opinion ( all rusty comments are my opinion at present , only) has been a mistake.

Cash in for openspace. Consolidate open space. Fee simple to the town, no covenants! Business should not pay tax or carry open space for the benefit of the whole town.

Avoid urban impact runoff => permeable parking lots ( asphalt or concrete)

Its reputation in the state?

Continue the Town Manager managed Town, and continue to run as a well managed community. Maintain a reputation for being financially healthy, and fiscally conservative. We should be part of a conservative development approach, but find it unnecessary to be the leader in the state for conservative design. I'm not sure what that will bring to the community.

I don't know the future either. Conservation is a reasonable alternative.

2. What are the key steps we need to take in the next five years to make your vision of Hampden possible?
  - We need to ensure that the downtown area as it currently exists receives the appropriate investment and is developed in a manner consistent with our vision for the Town. If it were only up to me, which thankfully it is not, Main road center leisure shopping retail. Walking shopping, food, entertainment...
  - 
  - We need to take control of the school redevelopment. Absolutely by zoning and development standards if nothing else works. We created a special use school district, the RSU needs to stay in it.
  - We need to continue to place value on the business park as it appears that the Town has lost interest in its viability. We don't need to make money, though decisions have been made in the past that should be followed through unless there IS DATA AND INFORMATION that prove otherwise. We don't seem to have a good grip on the viability of the Park. I don't think I've lost interest, but I do not think the town should remain in the commercial real estate business nor does the park need to be built out in the next 10 years. The town is in a position where, the town can be very selective as to what goes into the park, and how, OR move the park to private hand with strong development standards. We need to pick one!
  - Explore the value of the industrial park currently privately held, improve the relationship with the Owner, identify any partnerships or support to make that area a success (ie infrastructure), and most especially if a shared vision is not supported by the Owner, especially work to conserve industrial land not turn it to Open Space. There is a potential to link the two parks, should they both be in private hands. If that's the way to go, it needs to be done while there are still vacant lots in the

Economic D park to support combined development. The town also needs to consider zoning the land along 95 to facilitate connecting Ammo to Cold Brook, and use the open space requirement to expand the green space at the center.

- 
- Remove blight from the downtown area and/or gateways to the community. Let's landscape up the Main Road North right of way. Use the right of way to locate attractive signage, installed a business expense maintained by the town. Do something imaginative with parking? There exists a separation between the towns business zones, and that's not a bad thing the town can manage the zones for very effective traffic control if it wishes. The "you develop it and the town will deal with it" o the past 100 years should not be where the town goes in the future.
- Improve connectivity to parks and community services by pedestrian trails and sidewalks. Road edge side walks are not trails and not an effective "connectivity solution" the town can , and must do better. What we have now is not an asset. Improve connectivity to downtown Bangor and the gateway from the North (Main Road No.) to the Town.
- Connect the Coldbrook area to the downtown area so we do not create another separate "downtown". Separation is not bad if the business focus at each location is consistent and not to competitive with anther district. If a consumer has objective A which is inconsistent with a another consumers objective B. traffic management Ops exist to keep them out of grid lock. Example main-meal-food-service vs. automobile service vs. novelty shops.

3. What are your top five priorities for action/consideration by the Town Council in 2011/2012 to maintain and strengthen Hampden's immediate future and to prepare for the development needed to achieve the ten year goal?

- 1) Traffic management
- 2) Leisure time services that do not break the bank
- 3) Avoid urban development pitfalls
- 4) Protect the town's natural environment for the year 4000. Census maps urbanize Hampden by the year 2050. What a loss?
- 5) Absolutely maintain a local government that serves it citizens, economically, socially, and environmentally.

Over the years many citizens have described life in Hampden as a daily vacation from daily life. The town will change to accommodate an

ever increasing population but let's stay a psychological vacation destination.

In addition to the same priority as all, to develop responsible zoning to support the Comp Plan... See items #2 through #5 above.

4. What areas of Town government – consider all department operations – cause you concern?

I have no current concerns. Maintain a manageable government. There has been a tendency for government to expand to be able to handle a future need in advance of it's arrival. I don't think Hampden has done that. I have no "concerns" as such. I do have watch points. I expect the town manager to help the council avoid all concerns, which the current town manager does well.

This is not a priority order:

IT has expanded rapidly, this has been good, my "watch point", MANY IT systems have failed because they failed to appreciate it own growth. Hampden may be nearing the point where IT/communications could become a problem, as a part time function.

Natural resource overlord, conservation land expansion, town forest ( if the town designates one), trails, parks, resource-protection-zone protection. Tree City, RSU-22 restricted trails. Conservation residential subdivision, Conservation business subdivision, If economic development is a full time job. Is resource management/oversight a part time job?

GIS, the town created a GIS position to manage the towns spatial data needs. Boy! That was a great idea! Due to expanding IT and resource management, are we still "good"?

A good thing is that staff tend to stay with Hampden, watch out for retirements en mass that take too much institutional memory.

Recreation is a mainstay in Hampden. How's that going? Where and how fast?

5. What areas of Town government do you think work well – and why?

In Hampden, it's working well, We have a very good town manager. Why? For the most part the council does it's own job and stays out of the managers way so that the manager can manage effectively.

Andre summed it up well on his response. Ditto.

6. What specific suggestions do you have for improving local government in Hampden?

None at this time.

7. Do you think that the Town should actively explore more regional opportunities for service consolidation? What types of regional cooperation seem most promising to you?

We could provide regional GIS support.

We are providing a regional model for town government success.

Regional cooperation where viable in areas such as water, sewer, and stormwater. Outreach to neighboring communities to identify potential opportunities may be helpful to best understand how we could share services and/or promote development opportunities.

8. Are there areas of the Town's ordinances and policies that are not state mandated and are unnecessarily burdensome? If so, what are they and how should they be changed?

Caution here! When push and shove come together. The State quite often has larger problems than Hampden. We don't need to be "unnecessarily burdensome" but the town must watch out for it's own interests or disorganize and let the State take over. Some of those "burdensome" rules give the town the power to defend itself when the State is too busy.

Yes I believe there are unnecessary environmental and other zoning ordinances that place unnecessary burden on business owners and developers. Maine already has some of the most restrictive environmental rules and regulations, and I see no need for the Town to be more restrictive in some areas such as stormwater and some land use regulations. As we have seen by Randall A....., there are other methods to make development more environmentally friendly and less of an impact, than be developing more stringent regulations. Development still needs to be efficient. Signage continues to be a concern, and should be explored to the greatest extent to resolve and make more enforceable as well. I believe we should be more aware of impacts to landowners before making planning decisions.

9. Are there areas of the town's ordinance and policies that are too weak or ineffective in protecting the good name and public values of the town? If so, how should they be changed?

I think we are being too weak with the school of which I share blame. (Public Value). Dedicate the Town Forest and demand the town \$50000. Only agree to maintain the required land area of forested wetlands as working forested wetlands. No specific location. No formal boundaries. We have fulfilled our responsibility, where's the cash!

I believe we should continue to make the development process easier to meet and follow. The "old" reputation is improving however still exists in the developer arena.

When asked government interests are always in the way of developers. Developers are in business their responsibility is to the bottom line. An average development will not survive into the next century and they do not expect to. The Town of Hampden must expect to survive the century and has responsibilities to the citizens of that century, not just in rhetoric, but in actions.

Should the Town be obstructive, NO! Must the Town be long sighted, YES!  
Will there be disagreements, I hope so.

Thank you, in advance, for your help in preparing for this important meeting.

Andre Cushing

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1. What type of community do you wish to see Hampden become in ten years?

I would desire to see Hampden continue to grow into a community that is viewed as open and welcoming to both those who wish to live here and develop small businesses which would create jobs and economic benefits to our community members and the local organizations that support us.

What should be its noteworthy features? I think of the numerous recipients of the HBA Business of the Year Award as examples of those who helped to make Hampden the community of choice in central Maine. I also feel we need to be viewed as a community that seeks to get things done and act as facilitators to help businesses grow, not roadblocks to those seeking to start or expand a business.

.Its major accomplishments?

Improving the experience with town government. We have started on this course with things like broadcasting of town meetings, use of the website and newsletter to communicate with our citizens, changing town office hours and seeking community input on important subjects (ex: comp plan, HS project, BEAR program, marina park)

Its reputation in the state?

We are viewed as a well run and well managed community. We can build on this reputation and be a model for other communities in efficiency and creative application of services and resources. (Ex: Development team, Storm water management, GIS, Public Safety, Communications, REC programs)

2. What are the key steps we need to take in the next five years to make your vision of Hampden possible? Adapting our comp plan to land use and zoning that encourages creative development of quality residential and commercial development and opportunities for affordable-workforce housing. Looking to redevelop our downtown sector and improve the entry ways on Coldbrook Rd & Main Rd No. Adapting many of the ideas from Randall Arendt in our new regs
  
3. What are your top five priorities for action/consideration by the Town Council in 2011/2012 to maintain and strengthen Hampden's immediate future and to prepare for the development needed to achieve the ten year goal?
  - Develop new zoning and land use regs
  - Create incentives for businesses and residential improvements (façade improvements, landscaping, reducing curb cuts on major thoroughfares).
  - Improve the delivery of information and services to citizens through use of technology and user friendly services (online registration for rec and community programs) enhanced website services (more pdf format documents available on website, more interactive use of website for registration purposes, planning, economic development and CEO functions)
  - More robust programming on local access channel with on demand streaming of programming and use of YouTube type instructional and informational clips.
  - Redesigning of development regs so we can truly create "connectivity" in green space, parks, trail systems and walking opportunities (sidewalks). Reallocate underutilized green spaces in current developments to create more parks or rec oriented spaces.
  
4. What areas of Town government – consider all department operations – cause you concern? Planning, CEO, Rec,

School also is concern, as it is biggest cost driver and I do not feel the type of educational opportunities effectively serve all students. No real focus on vocational services or direct connections with businesses and professions in the community. We also have limited cooperation on joint projects with the town as it relates to school activities and a poor level of pro-active communications on events that take place in school, that would be of interest to community members (plays, concerts-band/chorus, mock trial, athletic events, science fairs, inventors nights, elementary school programs.)

5. What areas of Town government do you think work well – and why?

The administration and financial affairs run very well. Accountability is present assuring that proper funds are in place and accounted for. Documentation and proposed expenditures are readily available and understandable.

Public Safety and Public Works also operate very well with good reserve funding, creative efforts to supplement town budgeted funds and a good team spirit among employees. Pool is well run and has continually sought to reduce expenses while improving services and building community use. Economic & Community Development has raised awareness of the needs of existing businesses and offered a positive image for those seeking to locate in Hampden. CEO has been proactive in working regionally. GIS/IT provides many resources a)to the administration of the town and through community activities like cleanup programs and open space development. The IT support has more than proven its worth in improving service and accountability and reducing much of the required paper storage.

6. What specific suggestions do you have for improving local government in Hampden?

7. Do you think that the Town should actively explore more regional opportunities for service consolidation? What types of regional cooperation seem most promising to you?

We should continue to develop on these lines noted above and seek to improve our reputation regionally and find ways to collaborate more with other communities.

Focus on Ec Development, planning, GIS CEO, public works

AC

8. Are there areas of the Town's ordinances and policies that are not state mandated and are unnecessarily burdensome? If so, what are they and how should they be changed?

Yes-signage, development, zoning, to name a few, we need to review all ordinances improve certain definitions, reduce certain requirements where appropriate and tie our ordinances into our comp plan as much as possible. We need input from various stakeholders and town boards and staff who must implement these regs (CEO, Planning board, Ec Dev)

9. Are there areas of the town's ordinance and policies that are too weak or ineffective in protecting the good name and public values of the town? If so, how should they be changed? Can't speak to this issue right now, need to review ordinances; other than the more arbitrary numbers in certain development regs for lot sizes, road frontage and open space requirements. There also is the issue of what is permitted and not permitted in certain zones. (Ex: problems we faced with tile business building, general contractors limited on barn size and aircraft manufacturing business building size limits)

Thank you, in advance, for you help in preparing for this important meeting.

*Jean Lawlis*

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES SESSION

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In order to make this session as productive as possible, some pre-work on the part of each Councilor is necessary. If you would take the time to consider the following questions and respond to them by January 10<sup>th</sup> that would allow sufficient time to consolidate the responses and prepare the final agenda before the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Response space has been left after each question but feel free to use whatever space/pages necessary to convey your thoughts. The meeting will be facilitated by Walt Cupples and his wife Deborah. Their role will be to keep the discussion on track, insure that all have an opportunity to participate equally, and assist in formulating a 'next steps' strategy that will allow the work from this session to have scheduled, concrete actions to follow.

1. What type of community do you wish to see Hampden become in ten years? What should be its noteworthy features? Its major accomplishments? Its reputation in the state?

A good place to work, live, and do business. Focus on businesses offering needed goods and services and/or good jobs to the community and enhancing the tax base. Some businesses are of greater benefit to the town than others are.

In terms of a good place to live, a town that is walkable, bikable, has a good school system, places for recreation and for socializing and has maintained the feel of a semi-rural Maine town. A place of civility and social responsibility where citizens feel they have a voice and that they have ways to contribute and are part of a caring community. Where taxes are regarded as a fair value.

Gradually create a town center in the area of Hampden Academy where shops, restaurants, parks invite socialization and commerce.

2. What are the key steps we need to take in the next five years to make your vision of Hampden possible?

Through zoning revisions consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and conservation-sensitive developments establish protections for the areas identified as being desirable for conservation, wild-life, park, or of historic or aesthetic importance.

Empower the conservation commission to participate in the up-front process of all developments as a required part of the development process (as suggested by Randall Arendt).

As roads are upgraded and/or new developments occur, require that the project build in pedestrian and bike friendly paths/walkways/sidewalks.

3. **What are your top five priorities for action/consideration by the Town Council in 2011/2012 to maintain and strengthen Hampden's immediate future and to prepare for the development needed to achieve the ten year goal?**
  - a) Acquire the rights to develop the Hampden Academy property, make appropriate plans for the redevelopment of the Hampden Academy, and establish appropriate partnerships for development.
  - b) Expand and improve parkland through the management/acquisition/redevelopment of properties including Dorothea Dix Park, The Marina area, the 202/Coldbrook area lands, and Papermill Road.
  - c) Retain and attract good town employees while reducing costs relative to taxbase (continuing to reduce the mill rate).
  - d) Define what "desirable" businesses are from a town resident point of view. And what "desirable" businesses are from a tax base point of view. Seek businesses at the intersection of these sets.
  - e) Create a residents-oriented business and dense residential zone in the old Hampden Academy property/neighborhood while building on and preserving the historical character of surrounding neighborhoods.

**4. What areas of Town government – consider all department operations – cause you concern?**

A tendency to regard any business opportunity as a good opportunity without considering whether it enhances the town as well as the town's tax base.

A tendency to want to loosen zoning restrictions to improve business friendliness without asking why the zoning was put in place initially and for what purpose. Zoning should function to encourage (not stop) development – but development that residents would generally agree is desirable development.

A tendency for some town employees to broker deals and have strategic discussions and then inform council committees so that the proposal is a "yes or no" instead of a "how best".

**5. What areas of Town government do you think work well – and why?**

Our front office people are helpful and nice people. The stereotype of dealing with a bureaucracy is officious people who make your life difficult. Ours are the opposite.

A great strength: having a town manager and a town clerk who run an efficient operation and do a good job keeping the council informed and focusing on appropriate policy issues while taking care of the running of the town and the democratic process.

Our roads are well-plowed and sanded.

The transfer station is well run and meets residents' needs. Not sure if it shouldn't be revisited to see what could be done differently or better. Is road side pickup worth looking at again? Should the fees be raised? And, it's not a joke, composting is worthwhile environmentally and economically if we can create a space for yard wastes and finished compost pickup, I think it would become a very popular program.

**6. What specific suggestions do you have for improving local government in Hampden?**

Somehow work towards more citizen involvement. Can the website and Hampden Highlights be used to solicit opinions/ideas? Survey Monkey makes putting surveys together easy... BEAR surveyed businesses, but most of our taxes come from our residents, how can we work to better understand their opinions?

**7. Do you think that the Town should actively explore more regional opportunities for service consolidation? What types of regional cooperation seem most promising to you?**

There are two aspects to this question: Quality and cost. If quality is increased and cost lowered – the answer seems clear as long as we are comfortable with the level of control that may be being given up. When there are no cost savings, we'd have to look very closely at what improvements in services were possible. Cost savings at the expense of service would have to come down to the matter of degree and just how far citizens were willing to go with that kind of trade off.

**8. Are there areas of the Town's ordinances and policies that are not state mandated and are unnecessarily burdensome? If so, what are they and how should they be changed?**

Not aware of any specific examples. But again, I'd be careful about eliminating restrictions without understanding why they were put in place and how residents would feel about the changes (if they are being driven solely by accommodating a specific business or group of businesses).

**9. Are there areas of the town's ordinance and policies that are too weak or ineffective in protecting the good name and public values of the town? If so, how should they be changed?**

I was surprised that OldField Estates is considered a clustered green development by our current zoning standards. It certainly doesn't look or feel like one, and it

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doesn't do a very good job of preserving the rural character of that particular property.

Thank you, in advance, for you help in preparing for this important meeting.

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*I have read this over many times, thought about it, and I have spoken with a number of residents. Because of this, I choose not to answer these questions. It is my opinion that the residents should be the ones to answer these questions. It is not up to seven elected officials to set the 'vision' for the entire town.*

*Sincerely, Kristen Hornbrook, Councilor-at-large*

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3. What are your top five priorities for action/consideration by the Town Council in 2011/2012 to maintain and strengthen Hampden's immediate future and to prepare for the development needed to achieve the ten year goal?
4. What areas of Town government – consider all department operations – cause you concern?
5. What areas of Town government do you think work well – and why?
6. What specific suggestions do you have for improving local government in Hampden?
7. Do you think that the Town should actively explore more regional opportunities for service consolidation? What types of regional cooperation seem most promising to you?
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