



Town of Hampden  
**Planning and Development Committee**  
Wednesday March 1, 2017, 6:00 pm  
Municipal Building Council Chambers  
**Minutes**

Attending:

Committee/Council

Ivan McPike-Chair  
Terry McAvoy  
David Ryder  
Dennis Marble  
Mark Cormier  
Greg Sirois

Staff

Angus Jennings, Town Manager  
Karen Cullen, Town Planner

Public

Danny Lafayette, Shelby Wright, Susan Starbird, Bill  
Boyington, Jim Kiser, Edie Smith (Senator King's office),  
Carol Woodcock (Senator Collins' office)  
Sarah Woodworth, W-ZHA, LLC

Chairman McPike called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

1. Approval of February 2, 2017 Minutes – **Motion** to approve as submitted made by Councilor McAvoy with second by Councilor Marble; carried 5/0/0.
2. Committee Applications: None.
3. Updates:
  - a. Staff Report:
    - i. Planner Cullen reported that the Planning Board's Ordinance Committee had met the previous evening and have passed the amendments regarding accessory apartments and Article 1 dealing with the amendment process forward to the Planning Board for public hearing. Those hearing will be held on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The committee also discussed the proposed amendments to allow flexibility in some of the design standards (parking, signage, etc.) and decided they need more work to add guidance for the permit granting authority in acting on such waiver requests.
4. Old Business:
  - a. Market Study – presentation of consultant report by Sarah Woodworth of W-ZHA, LLC.

Sarah Woodworth presented her report, which is available online in the P&D Committee packet for this meeting. After her presentation, there were comments, questions and answers, and discussion, including the following:

- There is a direct relationship between real estate taxes and services, including amenities such as recreation, the library, etc. Since the data presented suggest that industrial development is not going to solve the tax base issue, the town needs to look at better diversification of the housing stock, particularly in the high end multi-family type of product, and to retain current residents who may want to “age in place.”
- Based on feedback to the consultant from realtors and brokers, real estate taxes on the residential side do not appear to be an issue in regards to competitiveness with area towns, it is the industrial sector where that seems to be the bigger issue. Direct competition with Hermon is an issue; heard that multiple times in the focus group interviews.
- Need diversification in the housing stock, and waterfront is a prime location for providing a range of types. That particular area, given its proximity to Bangor and the river, has the potential to attract a diverse audience (i.e. young people, empty nesters, etc.) and could support multi-family as well as villa condo types of development – the key being smaller, high-end units and common ownership and care of the grounds, enabling the residents to have more freedom to travel and do other things besides yard maintenance. In addition, Hampden is well positioned for aging in place opportunities as well as continuing care communities for elderly residents.
- Bangor has been working for decades to improve their economy and despite the difficulties faced by outsiders to get there (weather, transportation), they continue to work toward a stronger economy. Once they reach the point where new multi-family construction is supported, rent levels will increase which will make redevelopment of the waterfront in Hampden more viable.
- Despite the inherent competitiveness among municipalities in the region due to the real estate tax structure, it is clear that Hampden’s success is tied to Bangor and their success. Many of the amenities and “third places” that people seek are found in Bangor.
- Amenities (recreation, library, café’s, etc.) are important to maintaining Hampden as a desirable place to live. These amenities can help boost economic development. Once the waterfront is developed, a walkway along the river would be such an amenity; this is being seen in other places in Maine. Work could be done to lay the groundwork for such a walkway.
- There is concern that the amenities Hampden has now are not up to the standards desired by those who use them. There is a need to reinvest in these community amenities to maintain our reputation as a good place to live.
- The town center was not the focus of this study, which took a broader approach. In the town center, and the waterfront area after that, staff’s key focus is on addressing the zoning issues to create the opportunity for new investment.
- Sporting venues and/or events, especially when there are tournaments involved, can bring in significant economic development dollars. Generally speaking you get a lot of bang for the buck.
- The cost of healthcare and taxes are driving the higher than national average cost of living in the Bangor Metropolitan Area (which is Penobscot County).

Chairman McPike said the next step in this work is for the P&D Committee to review this data and decide whether it is worth doing phase 2 – more detailed analysis of specific sectors of the economy – or if this gives us enough information to allow Town Council to use the information to help guide their policy decisions. Town Manager Jennings added that the P&D has a very ambitious work plan and we are focusing on zoning work; there is a need to fix the problems in the zoning in order to attract businesses and industries to Hampden and remove barriers to investment presented by current regulations.

5. New Business: None.
6. Zoning Considerations/Discussion: None.
7. Citizen Initiatives: None.
8. Public Comments: None.
9. Committee Member Comments: Councilor Marble commented that between the work done by Sarah and staff, the Council is well positioned to use the information in their decision making going forward. Town Manager Jennings also thanked the many participants in the focus group sessions as well as those in attendance tonight for their input, which was valuable to the project.
10. Adjournment: **Motion** to adjourn at 7:36 pm by Councilor McAvoy; seconded by Mayor Ryder, carried 5/0/0.

*Respectfully submitted by  
Karen Cullen, Town Planner*