

**Winthrop Comprehensive Planning Process  
Downtown Economic Development  
March 23, 2009**

Committee Attendance:

Committee plus approx 30 members of the community

Patrice Putman	John Callinah
Amy Lawson (adjunct member)	Ken Johnson
Andy Wess	Kristen Bartlett
Brian Ketchen	Phil Locashio
Harold Burnett	Sarah Fuller
Jack Kaiser	Cornell Knight
Jim Norris	Chris Huck

7:00pm—Meeting begins

Patrice Putman opens with a summary of the 2000 Downtown Revitalization Plan's Vision and Recommendations for an economic downtown which is available on the town's website. The Committee members and the public then broke up into 6 groups to draw or list the things that they thought would be included in a perfect downtown. The following is a list of various ideas presented. At the end of the meeting it was suggested that the first subcommittee be created to delve more deeply into plans and recommendations for the downtown. Ken Johnson and Brian Ketchen offered to serve as the Committee's liaisons to the Downtown Subcommittee. Members of the audience were invited to sign up for the subcommittee. Brian Ketchen took that list to begin work with the subcommittee.

**Landuse Suggestions:**

- Redevelopment plan to include restoration of old rail service
- Replace building by the train track, western Kennebec valley business alliance may have ideas to tear down existing building and rebuild property worth renting
- Another bank
- Develop area near the waterfall
- More green space, plant growth
- Public garden
- Bigger farmers market and new accessible green attractive location made available (due to post office)
- Green beautification efforts/ opportunity to market i.e. Town street lighting, Schools energy use
- Walkable, Bikeable path beach to Main Street
- Accessible paths (shoveled in the winter) connecting Squire Hill to downtown
- Develop Winthrop as a hub
- Expand downtown to include Royal, do so by walking paths
- Address parking problem downtown, enforce one hour parking
- Preserve town character, attract small business unique to town, avoid large chains

**Retail Suggestions**

- Condos, Health services, restaurant in the Winthrop Commerce Center
- Muffin shop, bakery, not a chain
- Royal Street development. Consider existing housing here to be redeveloped for commercial use
- Cyber café (different theme nights to include more age groups)
- Retail space, more restaurants in the old mill
- Diner while maintaining downtown character
- Reny's
- General Store
- Sports shop
- Art Galleries, Artist destination
- Craft Shop
- Whole foods, Organic grocery options
- Large waterfront hotel
- Classic pharmacy like the old days, includes soda fountain
- Restaurants with outdoor seating
- Waterfront restaurant on the Water so you can promote VIEWS
- Do a better job of attracting tourists. There ARENT nice hotels even in Augusta, a waterfront hotel will bring in surrounding town's guests!
- Attract artists for their creativity, contribution/investment in the community
- Artisan-al Zone in the downtown area, discounted studio space
- Pine Tree zoning strains retail interest
- Difficult to bring existing commercial space up to code, grant money, difficult for existing owners to pay for (grandfathered) reconstruction. Contact: Jeff, re: work in motion to improve standards
- Tax breaks for the downtown businesses in a competitive (town to town) development arena. Tax credits, tiffs.
- Brewery
- More high-end clothing
- Electronic store
- Image processing center, healthcare service center into Winthrop Health Center, Dialysis unit so the Winthrop residents don't have to go to Augusta or Lewiston
- Bring Employers to town! Some downtown, but large opportunity for 202 region. Retail business will follow
- Incubator for new small business attempts, startup discounts
- Larger emphasis on GO GREEN recycle bags for Hannaford (make it mandatory)
- Mill space, commercial rental space is largely discounted compared to Augusta, Hallowell
- People SAY that they want a general store in town to shop at, but will they ACTUALLY shop there? With the Walmarts, RiteAids, Targets, and Online Shopping so routine
- Training & Education (similar to CATC) in town to tie the youth to the local businesses. i.e. Culinary school, Test Kitch. Contact: Jeff, re: Saco's attempt to use grant money to pilot similar program that has yet to work.

- Floating restaurant

### **Recreational Suggestions**

- Ferris Wheel at Norcross Point, Carousels like France has
- More public benches, connected
- Senior Center activities
- Indoor tennis, swimming pool, health facility
- Condo village using the Maranacook ledge view
- Encouraging healthy lifestyle
- Additional trails, marketing opportunities
- Long and Short distance access to rail system
- Shuffleboard court
- Poker tables
- Ping Pong tables
- Town activities to increase cross town visibility, attract merchants— Farmers/Artists market; Holiday parade; 4<sup>th</sup> of July; Green spaces
- Church involvement— luncheons, craft fairs
- Expand Fun After School program
- More benches outside, connected
- More town events while downtown businesses are open
- Increase public restrooms
- Canoe, Kayak rentals to entertain tourists. Access lakes, make parking available.

### **Housing and Transportations Suggestions**

- Affordable housing options in downtown
- Public transportation opportunities between lower Main St and upper Main St.
- Commuter transportation
- Increase street signage for Skateboarders to use more caution, slow
- Lunch hour shuttle
- Promote activities with signage (Activities board) on 202, attract daily out of town commuters to skate park, beach, tennis courts, farmers market, Mt Pisgah trails (In addition to “Welcome to Winthrop” sign
- Concerts on the lake, like Cobbossee

### **Miscellaneous**

- Town meeting to rate/vote on what kind of retail the town should be approaching
- Help the Town distinctly brand itself for marketability

Motion to create a Downtown subcommittee

9:00pm— Meeting adjourns

Next meeting Monday, April 13 Topic: Transportation