

**City of Lewiston**  
**PLANNING BOARD MEETING**  
*Minutes of August 20, 1996*

**I. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 PM

Members present: H. Milliken, T. Peters, D. Theriault, M. Goulet, L. Zidle

Members absent: H. Skelton, D. Jacques

Staff present: G. Arsenault, J. Lysen, G. Dycio

Committee members present: D. Boucher, D. Chittim

**II. PUBLIC HEARING**

**A. Review of the draft update of Lewiston's Comp. Plan**

Chairman Milliken opened the meeting by stating to the citizens in attendance that the meeting was not going to deal with the proposed turnpike interchange on Grove Street, but that the proposed interchange would be discussed as part of the transportation component of the comprehensive plan update.

Mr. Milliken then reviewed the agenda for members of the audience and stated that the Transportation component would be taken out of order and discussed as the second item under the Comp. Plan review.

At this point Mr. Milliken opened the Public Hearing and turned it over to Jim Lysen.

Mr. Lysen began by stating which draft components of the Comprehensive Plan would be discussed and that the first component would be natural resources. Mr. Lysen then introduced Bonnie Lounsbury from Androscoggin Greenways and stated that she would be presenting a slide show.

At this point Mr. Lysen turned the presentation over to Bonnie Lounsbury.

Mrs. Lounsbury began by handing out Androscoggin Land Trust brochures and explained that

purpose of the land trust is to preserve significant lands for the present and future benefit of the people of Androscoggin County. She continued stating that the land trust also works with municipalities and government agencies to create and/or conserve open space for public benefit, and told of how the land trust was formed after concerned residents from Lewiston/Auburn and surrounding towns joined together to preserve a large tract of land along the Androscoggin River in Turner.

At this point Mrs. Lounsbury began the slide show presentation.

Once the presentation was over, Tom Peters asked Mrs. Lounsbury if she knew of any entrepreneurs that were willing to help stimulate growth within the City by providing "greenways-type" amenities. Mrs. Lounsbury responded that she did not know of any. She continued by saying that there is existing open space along the Androscoggin River and it should be preserved, while additional open space needs to be added.

Chairman Milliken stated that he would like to see businesses like Pat's Pizza provide areas for scenic views and open space which could possibly stimulate the local economy. Mr. Milliken then referred to the seven (7) goals on p. 82 of the handout and reviewed them for the audience members.

Dennis Theriault asked why Garcelon Bog was omitted since it was specifically mentioned in the old/former Comp. plan. Jim Lysen stated that it would be included in the next draft.

David Chittim stated that he felt goals # 4 & 5 should be reversed, and a statement should be added to the surface waters reference that says "whenever consistent with prior goals".

Lorraine Comeau stated that she is very concerned about the connector which is proposed to go through the bog, and feels it, "the highway", will ruin the wildlife in the area. Mrs. Comeau added that she also feels that the heavy traffic will ruin the surrounding area. Dennis Theriault stated the he and Marc Goulet will be living there, building their homes, and he is also very concerned. Mr. Theriault assured Mrs. Comeau that the project would be heavily scrutinized.

Mrs. Ouellette (of Grove Street) feels that the Turnpike Interchange is not necessary and will be very dangerous to children.

Another resident of Grove Street questioned why build half the roadway (referring to the connector road) when the City is not sure if the second half will ever be built.

Chairman Milliken stated that the Planning Board is not the decision making Board and that the City Council will be making the final decision.

David Chittim suggested that the first three (3) word of Policy 8, strategy A, be eliminated and the sentence should begin with the word "Eliminate...".

Chairman Milliken stated that he was concerned with the City's ability to afford total CSO (combined sewer overflow) elimination within the next ten years. Further discussion continued at this point. In conclusion, Mr. Milliken suggested that the City should "Continue to separate...".

Bonnie Lounsbury stated that she remembers language that has already been developed by Public Works. Further discussion continued regarding the proposed language where it was determined that total CSO elimination within the next ten years may not be feasible.

At this point Tom Peters suggested an additional goal and stated to the Board that he would send a typed version to the Planning Office for insertion into the draft plan. Further discussion took place regarding open space and natural resources.

Bonnie Lounsbury felt that there is some confusion between the terms "open space" and "natural resources", and went on to explain the differences.

With no further comments, Chairman Milliken closed the Public Hearing on the Natural Resources portion of the Comp. Plan. The Board then moved on to the Transportation component of the Comp. Plan.

Jim Lysen opens the Public Hearing on the transportation component with a brief presentation, and reads the Turnpike Access statement from the transportation section for members of the audience. Mr. Lysen continued discussing rail service and how it was being eliminated in the 1980's with track removal, etc., and stated that the City, through the new Comp. plan, is looking to re-establish some rail service. Mr. Lysen continued reviewing the transportation component.

Chairman Milliken suggested that the goals should still protect the environment as the City promotes transportation. Discussion continued regarding the proposed goals, primarily on the feasibility of re-establishing rail service.

Tom Peters commented on the Air Transportation paragraph to which Mr. Lysen responded that the policy is actually referred to in the Economic section. Mr. Lysen then discussed the policy.

A Grove Street resident stated that public transportation does not service outer Grove Street.

Another Grove Street resident talked about steep roads/hills/etc. and how City busses do not travel that far.

Gil Arsenault mentioned that Phase II of the Turnpike Connector road is not addressed in the Transportation component of the Comp. plan. Mr. Arsenault felt that it should be mentioned due to its importance to the City.

David Chittim stated that he feels the Turnpike connector and the Main Street "fly-over" may be deemed to be not in conformance with the Comp. plan due to the proposed language.

Chairman Milliken stated that Policy 1, item #2 (Transportation) may need to be adjusted. Further discussion continued regarding the proposed language and where possible adjustments could be made.

Tom Peters stated that since the rail road is privately owned, how does the City fit into this goal. He continued stating that he feels rail service will only be re-established if it is economically feasible for the rail road.

Bonnie Lounsbury tried to explain the difference between existing lines and abandoned lines, some of which could be re-utilized for other uses or possibly be re-established as the former rail service. Mrs. Lounsbury stressed that the City should work towards preserving what is existing and work towards acquiring other abandoned lines.

Tom Peters stated that he feels rail lines are abandoned because they are not making money for their owners, and that this may not be a goal for the City – that the goal should be realistic. At this point discussion continued with audience participation.

Ms. April Clark, a resident of Stetson Road, felt that more information is necessary in order to make an informed decision. She stated that she is concerned about possible rezoning and future uses that could impact her quality of life. She stated for the record that she does not want an assembly plant for an abutter.

Marc Goulet asked Ms. Clark if she knew that there was an existing rail line in place when she built her home, to which Ms. Clark responded "yes".

Chairman Milliken explained to the audience what the Comp. plan is all about; goals, objectives, and future land uses. At this point further discussion continued with audience participation.

Tom Peters stated that the Comp. Plan should promote development and not further impact existing residential uses. Again, further discussion took place regarding possible locations for future development. The discussion concluded with the Board and the audience agreeing that there are not many suitable areas within the City of Lewiston that will not impact, to some degree, existing residential uses.

Nell Roy, a resident of Grove Street, questioned the need for a new turnpike interchange, and questioned MDOT's plans showing minimal wetlands when the area is fed by two streams. He continued with examples of possible impacts and how he felt that the area is unsuitable for future traffic and land uses.

A Randall Road resident stated that he feels Randall Road cannot handle additional traffic as it is not designed as a collector street.

Tom Peters stated that he feels the specific location for a new turnpike interchange should be

struck from the Comp. plan, but language should be included stating the need for a second interchange. Specifically, the references to Grove Street and Crowley Road should be eliminated from the Comp. plan.

Nell Roy asked when the next meeting regarding the turnpike interchange would be held, and will a vote take place soon. Mr. Jean, Lewiston Taxpayers Assn., stated that the prior meeting with the City Council is when people should have come and voice their concerns, but there will be other meetings.

Chairman Milliken told members of the audience to check with the City Clerk's Office for the next council meeting which will discuss the proposed turnpike interchange.

At this point the Board took a 10 min. recess (9:33 PM).

The meeting was called to order again at 9:52 PM.

Chairman Milliken discussed possible dates with the Board members of when the Comp. plan would be forwarded to the City Council. Possible dates would be either late October or early November. Mr. Milliken then briefly discussed the next meetings agenda (August 27th). At this point a brief discussion took place regarding the Public Facilities and Services portion of the Comp. plan.

Tom Peters stated, for the record, that as a Board member he did not want to revisit the Wallace School closing debate. Mr. Peters cautioned Jim Lysen that his bias was showing and that he (Mr. Peters) did not wish to put the Planning Department and the Planning Board right back in the middle of the debate. Mr. Peters continued stating that a suggestion was made to soften this language because the draft statements, as shown, will surely raise the issue once again.

Jim Lysen thanked Mr. Peters for his input and stated that this type of feedback was just what he was looking for. Bernie Carpenter agreed with Mr. Peters that the reference to Wallace School should be removed due to its controversial nature.

Mr. Lysen told the Board that the language would be re-written to soften it and all references to Wallace School would be eliminated.

With no further discussion the Board entertained a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION:** by Tom Peters, seconded by Dennis Theriault to adjourn the meeting. (10:14 PM)

**VOTE:** 5 - 0

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Goulet  
Secretary