

Gas Pump Land Use Ordinance Change Discussion

At the April Planning Board meeting they moved a warrant article (proposed by the Selectboard) to lift the 2-pump minimum from the land use ordinance, with all other gas station provisions staying the same. This could entice new development for a gas station elsewhere in town. Redline attached.

The Planning Board mentioned that the Comprehensive Planning Committee may have an opinion at the Town Meeting. I figured CDAC may as well. The Comp Plan is enticing all types of development in both District 1 & 2. Below in italics is the pertinent language from the Comp Plan which starts on page 13 attached.

While the Selectboard discussed it at their meeting, I think a deeper discussion ensued at this Planning Board meeting if you are interested in hearing what they had to say when first presented with this. You can watch it here at minute 42:00

https://townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=52&id=65967

From the 2024 Comp Plan...

Land Use

Bowdoinham is a rural community on Merrymeeting Bay. Much of the landmass is highly forested and undeveloped, providing regionally significant habitat through its contiguous undeveloped blocks in the Residential/Agricultural District and along Merrymeeting Bay and its tributaries. These areas provide passive recreation, working/productive landscapes, play a large role in climate mitigation and carbon sequestration. The Bay provides abundant fishing and hunting opportunities and supports high value agricultural soil. Village District I (VDI) is the most densely populated section of town centrally located on the banks of the Cathance River. Village District II flanks VDI to the west around the interstate and hosts some larger businesses and two housing developments.

Goals

Be proactive in developing strategies to ensure residents can continue to afford to stay here, while protecting our cultural, ecological and agricultural resources, rural character, and make efficient use of public services.

Key Issues

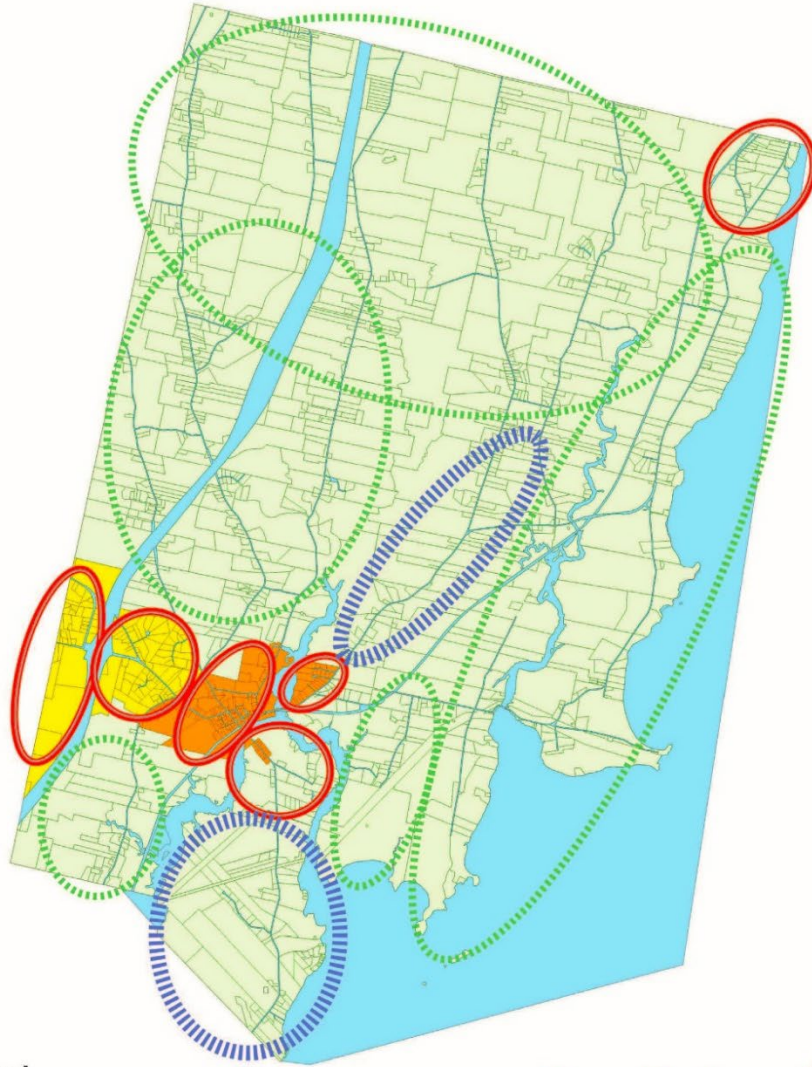
How can we maintain the ability of property owners to develop their land, keep taxes low to allow families to stay here, and prioritize the conservation of natural and agricultural resources while maintaining our rural character?

Recommendations

1. *Allow for smaller lot sizes, road frontage, setbacks and higher density to encourage development in the village districts.*
2. *Expand Village Districts to encompass all areas served by Bowdoinham Water District.*
3. *Create a new land use district that encompasses areas that are or could be served by the Richmond Utilities District.*
4. *Encourage alternative and cooperative wastewater treatment systems to support increased housing density.*
5. *Continue to allow for mixed use development throughout Town with buffering between different uses.*
6. *Explore strategies such as but not limited to a Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program, transfer of development rights, and easements which would allow for greater development densities in Village districts, while increasing preservation of high valued areas, such as agricultural soils, natural resources, and habitat in the Residential-Agricultural District.*
7. *Limit division of large contiguous parcels of land in the Residential/Agricultural District through exploring strategies like, but not limited to, increasing open space requirement for large subdivisions, reducing the density of new residential developments on large contiguous lots of land, directing new residential developments towards public roads by minimizing residential back-lots, and setting a maximum lot size so new developments have smaller “footprints” while maintaining land-owners’ options.*
8. *Minimize non-agricultural development on Prime Agricultural Soil, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland Soils of Local Importance.*
9. *Protect the viability of active agricultural activities from negative impacts of new development.*
10. *Minimize the impact of development in and around high valued areas, such as wetlands, waterbodies, and wildlife.*
11. *Continue to encourage the preservation of open space, creation of greenspace, and access to land and water resources.*

12. *Allow diverse housing types within the Town's ordinances including cluster development, co-housing, and multi-family.*
13. *Support efforts to develop affordable, seasonal and workforce housing including the diverse housing types mentioned.*
14. *Encourage the development of housing opportunities for the elderly and disabled, including supported living.*
15. *Implement the Walkable Village Plan.*
16. *Implement the Waterfront Plan.*
17. *Continue to coordinate and partner with other municipalities, land trusts, and other organizations to protect natural resources.*
18. *Continue to maintain and protect our critical natural resources through our Town, State and Federal regulations, including (but not limited to) Shoreland Zoning, Floodplain Management, Natural Resources Protection Act, Subdivision, Site Plan Review, and Stormwater Management.*
19. *Maintain, enact, or amend local ordinances as appropriate to:*
 - a. *Clearly define the desired scale, intensity, and location of future development.*
 - b. *Establish and maintain fair and efficient permitting procedures.*
 - c. *Explore streamlining permitting procedures in growth areas.*
 - d. *Clearly define protective measures for critical and important natural resources.*
 - e. *Ensure that the Town's Land Use Ordinance is consistent with applicable State laws and rules regarding critical natural resources.*
 - f. *Review and update Shoreland Zoning rules.*
20. *Assign responsibility for implementing the Future Land Use Plan to the appropriate committee(s), boards(s), or municipal official(s).*
 - a. *Establish and support a housing sub-committee to recommend ways to increase housing in accordance with the comprehensive plan.*

Future Land Use Map



Legend

Districts

-  Residential/Agricultural
-  Village District I
-  Village District II

- Growth Area** 
- Transitional Area** 
- Rural Area** 

Growth Area

This Growth Area will allow the Town's historical village area to be maintained and grow into the surrounding developed area: Main Street to the highway interchange area and Pond Road, "Little Brooklyn" (the waterfront area to Wallentine Road), the area around the Bowdoinham Community School, Fisher Road where smaller lots currently exist, and the existing subdivision area around Browns Point Road. The northeast corner of Bowdoinham that is currently served by Richmond Utility District also has potential for growth. To allow for new development in the growth area, the required lot size will need to be reduced and residential density will need to be increased and provisions for cluster subdivisions and multi-family developments should be considered. The existing lots in the historic village area are 10,000 to 20,000 square feet. To keep in character with our historic village area, mixed-use development (residential, agricultural, commercial, institutional, and industrial) should be allowed to continue. The Town's Site Plan rules created in 2008 to address mixed-use development through-out Town should be improved to align with goals the comprehensive plan as mixed-use is allowed to continue. Due to the Shoreland Zone and Floodplain areas within this growth area, some industrial and commercial uses will have to continue to be restricted. As the village area develops, the Town will need to continue with its capital investments (sidewalks, three phase power, public utilities, and other amenities) as planned.