



City of Auburn, Maine
Office of Planning & Permitting
60 Court Street | Auburn, Maine 04210
www.auburnmaine.gov | 207.333.6601

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
September 23, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 60 Court Street

1. ROLL CALL

Ed Bearor (Chair), Tim DeRoche, Chelsea Eaton, Bob Hayes, Maureen Hopkins, Bilal Hussein, Kathy Shaw (arrived at 6:13pm), and Andrea Westbye

Absent: Riley Bergeron

Staff members present: DeCarlo Brown (Planning Director), Lauren Caffé (Long Range Planner) and Sam Peikes (Planning Coordinator)

2. MINUTES: Acceptance of the August 27 meeting minutes

Minutes were not reviewed because this meeting was a special workshop for the Auburn Planning Board to discuss the city's proposed comprehensive plan.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. WORKSHOP: Draft Comprehensive Plan Review– Comments, Questions, and Recommendations (<http://tinyurl.com/plan-auburn>)

The Planning Board has been tasked with providing recommendations to the City Council on the Comprehensive Plan.

During the review workshop, the Planning Board expressed general comfort with the presentation and structure of the plan, noting it as a well-organized, conceptual document. Members emphasized the need for clarity and flexibility, as the plan will serve as a foundational tool for future zoning ordinance and map amendments. The board flagged several specific topics for further discussion and potential recommendation, including:

- **Housing and Development:** Concerns regarding the practicality of housing goals, the need for objective regulatory standards to assist developers, and the desire to understand the fiscal impact of different housing types on municipal resources.
- **Community and Infrastructure:** Questions regarding digital connectivity, the definition of "farming," and the need for more specific policies concerning capital improvement projects.

- **Transportation:** The integration of e-bike and e-scooter policies and the importance of maintenance of, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure year-round.
- **Environmental Protection:** Discussion of Low Impact Development to improve local environmental outcomes, specifically highlighting the need for better landscaping, native plantings, and potential stormwater management fees to discourage excessive impervious surfaces.

4. OLD/CONTINUED BUSINESS

Old/continued business was not discussed because this meeting was a special workshop for the Auburn Planning Board to discuss the city's proposed comprehensive plan.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathy Shaw from Valley View Farm emphasized the need for stronger language in the Comprehensive Plan to explicitly commit to the preservation of agricultural lands and forests, noting that these areas are highly valued by residents. She also advocated including support for local food access, references to the right to farm, and principles of food sovereignty within the document. Additionally, she inquired about snowmobile trail networks in the plan.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

The Planning Board requested two specific lists from staff to help them finalize their work on the Comprehensive Plan:

- **Board Obligations:** A list of all tasks in the plan for which the Planning Board serves as the lead department, giving members a clear understanding of their responsibilities going forward.
- **Public Comments:** A summary of all feedback received to date. This allows the board to review each comment, discuss them as a group, and vote on which suggestions should be incorporated into the plan.

7. PLANNING BOARD ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

The Planning Board has established the following schedule to conclude their review of the Comprehensive Plan:

- **October 13, 2026:** A regular meeting will be held to revisit the Future Land Use section and discuss a compiled list of public comments.
- **October 14, 2026:** A joint public hearing with the City Council will take place to gather input from the community.
- **October 28, 2026:** The Board will convene to finalize their recommendations and conduct the required formal votes.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Bilal Hussein and seconded by Bob Hayes to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Vote 7-0, Motion Carries.

Auburn Planning Board meetings can be viewed live on the City of Auburn YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/c/CityofAuburnMaine>), and on Great Falls Television (Spectrum Cable Channel 11). Following live broadcasts, Planning Board meetings are rebroadcast at 7:00AM, noon, and 7:00PM on Tuesdays on GFTV and are available anytime on our YouTube channel.