

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR THE
TOWN OF VIENNA, MAINE

MARCH, 1979

CONTENTS:

Introduction
A Short History of Vienna
Vienna Today
Our Town in the Future
Appendix - Land Use Regulations - An Overview

Submitted by the Town Planning Board
Coleman Von Graff, Chairman
Charles A. Lord, Secretary
H. Edwin Kelley
Knutte M. Kilponen
Joseph F. Wilkey

Alternates:

George R. Jones
Waine P. Whittier

INTRODUCTION

Most of our state statutes concerning local planning, land use regulation and subdivision controls were revised or eliminated during past legislative sessions. Municipalities may now by virtue of "Home Rule Establishing Provisions" (30 M.R.S.A. #1917) establish Planning Boards by ordinance.

Vienna chose, in 1973, to establish a Planning Board. One of the tasks of Vienna's early Planning Board was to prepare a Comprehensive Plan which was approved by the townspeople in March 1974. Several Ordinances have since then been submitted by the Planning Board, in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan, to the townspeople for consideration. Specifically, the following ordinances have been adopted:

Shoreland Zoning Ordinance
Flood Control Regulations
Subdivision Regulations
Notification of Construction Regulation

A proposed Building Code was also submitted to the townspeople but not approved.

In addition to the above tasks the Planning Board has prepared a Road Map, contained herein, in an attempt to document the names of our roads, prepared tax maps and administered the new ordinances and regulations mentioned above.

The Planning Board has not to date submitted any Land Use Regulations for consideration.

State law requires that the Planning Board maintain and update the Comprehensive Plan. Indeed, the Comprehensive Plan is not a one time effort. It is an ever changing guideline adopted and updated by the town to bring about the changes we anticipate in an orderly way to the benefit of us all. To that end this Comprehensive Plan is written. It does not differ greatly from the Comprehensive Plan of 1974, but is an update of it.

It should be noted that the Comprehensive Plan is a guide to the townspeople and Planning Board, not a law that we must live by. If conditions arise that need to be resolved, they should be resolved in accordance with the philosophies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan. The elected officials can only implement and enforce established ordinances. If the people or the Planning Board believe new ordinances or regulations are necessary they must first be submitted to the townspeople for consideration. Public hearings must be held and public records must be kept so that we all can help in guiding the future of our Town.

The Town Planning Board cannot arbitrarily dictate its will on the citizens and/or fail to give the individual the opportunity to appeal where regulations may foster hardship. State laws exist governing variances and exceptions to make the application of our regulations and ordinances fair and adequate.

A SHORT HISTORY OF VIENNA, MAINE.

Vienna, Maine is the most northwesterly town of Kennebec County, surrounded by Chesterville, Fayette, Mount Vernon, Rome and New Sharon. It is approximately six miles long and six miles wide and was purchased in 1782 from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for about ten cents an acre by a well-known surveyor, Jedidiah Prescott and his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Whittier. The Prescotts and the Whittiers had come from New Hampshire and settled in East Readfield near Winthrop. Before 1782 Vienna had been a part of the Wyman Plantation, call Goshen. The date of incorporation was February 20, 1802, although settlement had begun in the early 1780's and Prescott had surveyed it in 1792. Vienna was the 132nd town to incorporate into the Province of Maine. The name "Vienna" was given in honor of one of the oldest cities of Europe, the capital of the former Austrian Empire. It was chosen by Daniel Morrill of Salisbury, Massachusetts who had been designated to make the choice. The early town meetings of Vienna were held in homes and school houses until a new town house was constructed in 1855. It was built partly of lumber that was taken from the old "yellow meeting house" that stood on the east side of Franklin cemetery. This new building was given to his native town by Joseph Whittier of Boston. Surrounding the town house were several dwellings and shops not now standing. People referred to this area as the "Upper Village".

The shape of Vienna has changed somewhat since the original survey map.

A large portion of the land around Parker Pond, originally in the Wyman Plantation, was lost to Fayette, Mount Vernon and Chesterville between 1802 and 1814. Vienna has been enlarged by two strips of territory taken from Rome in 1814 and from Mount Vernon in 1833.

Unlike many Maine towns and villages, Vienna has not become the quiet shadow of a formerly busy industrial area. It has always been a "country town". However, there has been a constant decline in the population of Vienna over the past years until 1960. This has been due primarily to under-development of the general area and a consequent lack of employment opportunities. This in turn resulted in a lower tax base during the 1900's as compared to other Maine localities. Population statistics from census figure. since 1850 are as follows:

1850-871	1890-495	1930-318	1970-205
1860-878	1900-406	1940-301	
1870-740	1910-403	1950- 231	
1880-644	1920-366	1960-160	

The people of Vienna did not differ greatly from the people of the rest of the State. There was some influx of other Nationalities, yet the occupations of most residents were connected to their land, farming and lumbering being the major ones, tourist guides for hunting and fishing, mill work on textiles and footwear in nearby towns. Vienna itself had at one time four mills: a fulling and a carding mill, a grist mill and a saw mill.

In the mid 1800's, Vienna had one distinguishing feature from other area towns. It had its own newspaper, "The Glenwood Valley Times", with Rufus M. Mansur its Editor and proprietor. Subscriptions, in 1850, were 25¢ a year paid in advance or 37 1/2¢ a year if paid within six months. The latest issue on record (on microfilm at the University of Maine in Farmington Library) is dated 1857. Dorothy Waugh, the Town Treasurer, has original copies of the newspaper at her home.

According to the census a hundred years ago, there were three carriage-makers, a general store, three blacksmiths, a wheelwright, a cooperage, a brick kiln, a granite quarry and a cattle broker doing business within the town limits of Vienna, with a population under a thousand souls. Their standard of living was the average for the State of Maine in general, but the steadfast endurance of the people of the area has maintained them through good times and bad ever since the act of incorporation.

Back of these tough, rugged people is a long line of pioneers—explorers, fisherman, woodsmen, farmers, traders, soldiers, sailors, artists—all with courage and stamina, self-will and a faith in freedom and independence.

The modest rise evident in the population figure from 1960 to 1970 is attributable to "people from away", the reflection of a probable trend in migration from the more developed areas where the jobs are, to rural areas where the quality of living is finer and the pace slower. Modern automobiles and highway improvements have bridged the two as it could never have been done in the past. If this does indeed reflect the start of a "trend", Vienna promises to become one of the rural commuter communities for Augusta, Winthrop, Farmington, and Wilton—perhaps even for Waterville and Skowhegan. Its traditionally rural character which has been preserved through the past century and which holds so much appeal for present-day city dwellers, however, is still in existence.

The increase in population has necessitated increased services, including a Town Volunteer Fire Department. In 1973 the Town's first fire truck was purchased and subsequently a two-bay firehouse has been

built. Money for these new ventures has been raised almost entirely by the Volunteer Fire Department and its Auxiliary.

VIENNA — TODAY

This is a report concerning interesting facts about the Town of Vienna as it exists today, including natural features; physical features; population and related facts; government, revenue, and expenditures; and services which are presently available.

I. Natural features

- A. Vienna is enveloped by the Towns of New Sharon, Rome, Mt. Vernon, Fayette, and Chesterville (starting in the north and moving clockwise). The total land area in acres for Vienna is 16,090 which breaks down into 14,816 acres of land, 634 acres of inland water and 640 acres of bog or swamp.
- B. Inland ponds include Black Pond, Kidder Pond, Bent Pond, Mill Stream Pond, Davis Pond, Whittier Pond, and Boody Pond. Those shared by surrounding towns include Flying Pond, Parker Pond, Kimball Pond, Egypt Pond, and Crowell Pond.
- C. John Brown Mountain, Vienna Mountain, Eaton Mountain, and McGaffey Mountain embank the Vienna area.

It. Physical features

- A. Roads maintained or partially maintained by the town include the Bean Road, the Bessey Road, the Tower Road, the Trask Road, the Davis Road, the Kidder Road, the Beck Road, the Stream or Capt. Si Whittier Road, and the Kimball Road. State Aid roads involve 5.63 miles, town ways involve 16.93 miles and State Route #41 involves 4.9 miles.
- B. Public buildings include a Baptist church, a Methodist church, a post office, the Town House, and fire station.
- C. Recreational buildings in town are the Mill Stream Grange Hall and the Union Hall.
- O. For housing, Vienna has 274 dwelling units within the town lines, of which 151 are seasonal. The remaining 123 are year-round residences.
- E. Cemeteries include the Vienna Village Cemetery, the Franklin Cemetery, and the Seavey Cemetery (sometimes referred to as the Carr Cemetery).

III. Population and related facts

- A. According to the Bureau of Statistics, Vienna's population has fluctuated from 231 (1950 Census), down to 160 (1960 Census) and back up to 205 people (1970 Census).
8. For the school population, present data indicates that 60 children

are bussed to New Sharon (elementary) and Farmington (Mt. Blue High and Junior High).

- C. Out-of-town industries provide work for most of the residents. Vienna does have profit-making industries such as farming, lumbering, blueberrying, a saw mill and auto body shop.

IV. Available services

- A. Stamp printing.
- B. Beauty salon.
- C. Landscaping and excavating.
- D. Public Health services (connected with SAD 49 and County agencies).
- E. Ambulance service.
- F. Project Independence for Senior Citizens.
- C. Bookmobile.
- H. Utility services such as Central Maine Power Company and Community Service Telephone Company.
- I. Food and lodging.
- J. Hunting and fishing guides.

V. Government, revenue, and expenditures

- A. Our town officials include three selectmen who also serve as assessors and overseers of the poor, town clerk, SAD #9 board member, treasurer, tax collector, constable, road commissioner, fire warden, code enforcement officer and plumbing inspector.

- B. Revenue for 1977 consisted of \$56,701.58 collected as taxes on real estate and personal property, \$1,791.07 from State Revenue Sharing and \$5880.00 in State reimbursement for winter roads.

C. Expenditure.

	(1962)	(1972)	(1977)
1. Administration charges	\$2,149.29	\$3,871.33	\$9,378.49
2. Street lights	144.90	281.28	725.00
3. Fire Department	4.00	145.00	1,000.00
4. Workmen's Compensation		132.00	
5. Public Health Services	45.00	200.71	
6. Ambulance service		512.00	
7. Highway and bridges	1,986.40	3,387.06	3,500.00
8. Cutting bushes	239.80	168.75	500.00
9. Tarring town improved roads	1,076.96	4,989.00	
10. Winter work	3,920.17	10,116.54	6,000.00
11. State aid road construction	3,300.00	1,066.00	
12. Schools	10,421.35	28,176.00	33815.33
13. Kennebec County soil and water conservation district		50.00	
14. Franklin Area Mental Health		102.00	205.00
15. Flags for soldier's graves	18.75	31.15	45.00
16. Town dump		957.90	1,600.00
17. Interest on loan	59.50	193.33	300.00
18. County tax	272.70	884.00	2,145.00
19. Franklin Cemetery	25.00	25.00	40.00

OUR TOWN IN THE FUTURE

Let us take a look at the Vienna of the future, perhaps five, ten or twenty years distant. Let's consider two possibilities:

- 1) A town where change is left to chance.
- 2) A town where the people take an active part in shaping its future.

In either case, the most apparent changes will be brought about by new buildings, new roads and the loss of open spaces. The orderly or disorderly appearance of the "Town" will be the first thing one will notice.

THE DO NOTHING APPROACH

If everything is left to chance then all decisions that will bring about changes are left to the individual land owners, resident or non-resident alike. In turn, the way these decisions will be made will depend on who makes them and what motivates these persons. Many people sell property for profit. Even though not many of these people are irresponsible, some are. They may sell to some non-descript corporation or individual who in turn is only interested in the profit margin and would not hesitate to build whatever would bring the most return, whether this be a shopping center, a manufacturing plant, ski lift, trailer camp, or, perhaps a settlement for the under-privileged or a drug rehabilitation center.

One could go on with these speculations and draw some disturbing pictures. A drive-in theater next to the church, a garage for busses by Mill Pond, gas stations and grocery stores all along Route #41, junk shops and second-hand shops with old refrigerators and mattress springs cluttering up the fronts of the shops. All that and much more. This is often referred to as "Strip Development". Almost all, developments will occur along the main artery of traffic - in our case, Route #41. There could be a conglomeration of stores and homes, some valuable, some in a state of deterioration, some so close to the road that parking can be a real danger. Stores and businesses will have signs and lights and traffic jams. We are only too familiar with this type of development. It has happened all over the country and the number of problems that this brings to a community are too numerous to mention here. Needless to say, some of these changes also bring some benefit to our community. There are many people who would welcome some of these changes. A shopping center can bring a substantial tax revenue and employment. A light manufacturing plant, if clean and non-polluting, may bring employment and taxes and could certainly be attractive—a nice building, properly landscaped - but we are leaving things to chance — and the chance of that happening is slim.

We all have seen gas stations that were beautiful in design and upkeep, but left to chance the possibilities are slim that we will get one of these. More likely we are going to have one with wrecked cars and old tires and oil spills all over the place. If by chance an area should develop into an orderly residential community, someone in the area will want to establish some commercial venture, and, no matter how obnoxious, there will be little people in the area can do to stop it. There may be nothing wrong with this aforementioned venture as such; yet, there may be a better place for it than in a residential area.

With everything left to chance, all or some of the above may happen. There will be many unhappy people, people that in their disappointment will

sell their property and hopefully get enough money so they can settle somewhere else where conditions are the way they were before "THE BIG CHANGE". These people will sell to anyone that has the money no matter what the new owner intends to do with the land. Now, the chain reaction has started.

THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE

The second possibility for the future of Vienna, where the people take an active part in shaping its future, is much more difficult than the default case of change left to chance. It will require continued efforts by the Planning Board, heated debates at public meetings, and determination by us all to shape Vienna as best we can.

Most changes will come about because of an influx of people of divergent backgrounds buying up land in our town and requiring increased services.

Much of the land around our ponds is already sold. Some to vacationers — who came, liked what they saw and wanted to own some of it. The biggest development going on now is on Flying Pond and Black Pond. Here all the lots will be sold and resold, new roads will be built and second rows of homes will spring up in back of the first. Land speculation will be in progress, with developers buying land and subdividing. Many of the cabins will be turned into year round homes and the Town will be plowing and tarring roads, cutting bushes and sending schoolbusses to pick up the children. These developments will cost the Town a great deal of money. There will be demands for fire and Police protection, welfare, etc.

What do we all want?

Preferences and priorities in Vienna vary drastically with different people. Yet there is much we all do agree upon. If we set up some standards, some goals, some priorities, there is no doubt that our agreements can be substantial. To be sure, we have to protect ourselves from being overzealous. Yet, basically, there should be little quarrel among the permanent residents as to what directions WE want the town to take.

We will want to maintain safe healthful standards, be aware of the general welfare of the community and its people, prevent and control water pollution, protect fish and aquatic life as well as the birds and other wildlife which is yet so abundant in this area.

We will want to maintain the natural beauty of our surroundings and the "home town" atmosphere of our community.

We will want to protect all property and its value as well as our unpolluted surroundings so essential to good living.

We will want to control in some way what people are going to do in the future, where it would be detrimental to the town. Some may have the best intentions but are not aware of the consequences of their actions. Others may be strictly concerned with material gains and can plunge our community into an intolerable situation. We know our controls can and should be only very limited, since they infringe on the freedom of our citizens.

We will NOT want to restrict in any way the property rights of our citizens.

We will NOT want to force upon them changes in their way of living.

We will NOT want to force them to make changes to their homes.

We will NOT want to change anything that was their heritage and custom as far as such things may be in existence now.

What we do want to do is to guide what is coming. All around us we see rapid expansion taking place and we are seeing the same expansion coming to our community.

The Government, being aware of what has happened in many other communities, has given us the power with which, if properly used, what we visualize to be "our community" can be accomplished. This is the way the town takes an active part in shaping its future.

Two ways the Government will let us put controls over development and expansion in our community are through "Land Use Regulations" and, if we elect to have one, a "Building Code". Land Use Regulations for this community, notwithstanding past misconceptions and opposition to the term "zoning", would help to preserve our non-urban qualities, help protect our environment and aid us in preparing for our residential and economic growth.

In the past we have suffered from population loss due to under-employment and under-development. This trend seems to have reversed itself in the last few years. Many people moving into our community are interested in living here and working elsewhere. If we let the area be destroyed or let conditions change drastically this trend may reverse itself again. Our Tax Structure compares favorably with other communities, but if the demand for services rises, our taxes will rise proportionately. Another factor affecting our Tax Structure is a large number of non-resident taxpayers who need only limited service. These non-residents are people who like it here the way it is — the quiet open spaces, the clean water, etc. Destroy that and we destroy their reason for wanting to be here. The key to our future is in "land use regulation". This means we set our goals, we decide what we want and we foster expansion in that direction. Conversely, we are pointing out what we don't want, what seems to be detrimental to our community and what types of expansion we will discourage.

The "Lake Shore Properties" have already been defined and zoned. This was possible under a state law that allows this type of spot zoning. If we want to take an active part in shaping "our future", then we should establish other Land Use Regulations in accordance with what is presently the primary use of the land.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, this Planning Board recommends that:

- 1) Considering that Land Use Regulations in some form may be desirable for the Town of Vienna, the Planning Board may want to prepare a map for public review, discussion and eventual consideration as the basis for a Town Land Use Regulation Ordinance.
- 2) The Town may want to consider regulations for trailer parks, junk yards, or camping grounds or some other special regulations before such time as a Land Use Regulation Ordinance may be adopted.
- 3) The Town should be aware of the possible future need of public recreational facilities, such as a public beach, outdoor ballfield, scenic or historical areas or cross-country skiing area. Every opportunity to acquire property for such facilities should be seriously considered.

- 4) The Town Planning Board should make contacts with Planning Boards of adjoining towns in an effort to establish more uniform and effective regulations for lakes and ponds shared with those towns.

APPENDIX

LAND USE REGULATIONS - AN OVERVIEW

For Vienna, the primary goals of "Land Use Regulations" would be to resist drastic and unwelcome changes and developments within our Township, to keep the community in looks and composition close to what it is now and to be able to absorb expansion in such a way that it becomes part of the Town without noticeable change to its character.

A possible technique for developing Land Use Regulations would be to first define a number of land use types for consideration. This list could include, but would not have to include and would not have to be limited to, definitions of areas for recreational use, residential use, agricultural use, business use, small manufacturing use and open land use. Shorelands are already classified under "Shoreland Zoning" and forests under "Tree Growth Regulations".

Next, a Land Use Regulation map would be drawn up as the basis for the Land Use Regulation to be considered. It would be prepared giving primary consideration to the current use of the land and the individual landowners' thoughts as to what area his land should be included in. Such a map and any subsequent regulations would have to be given over to considerable public review and scrutiny before being voted upon for acceptance or rejection.

If the Selectmen continue to assess property the way they do now, then there should be no changes in taxes because of the classifying of land use. The value of a piece of property may, in time, change as a result of Land Use Regulations because certain types of land use will be restricted in some areas.

If Land Use Regulations are adopted, the individual would always have the opportunity to appeal a Planning Board decision to the Board itself, to the Board of Appeals and then to the courts if he feels a decision is unfair or fosters hardship. State laws exist governing variances, exceptions and land use reclassification to help make the application of Land Use Regulations fair and adequate.

The task of establishing Land Use Regulations will not be easy or quick and may take several years to accomplish. Benefits of Land Use Regulations will not be visible in one or two years, but will surface over the long term. Long range planning is what we are talking about. The later we start, the more difficult the task will, be. The later we start, the less effective the results will be.