

Ellsworth Downtown Parking Study Committee

Notes from May 29, 2007 Meeting with Downtown Business Owners:

Present were Tom Gorrill of Gorrill-Palmer Consulting Engineers, Inc., City Planner Michele Gagnon, Deputy Planner Jef Fitzgerald and representation from The Downtown Merchants Association and the Chamber of Commerce.

1. Michele Gagnon explained the goals for the parking study and the meeting. Michele and Jef Fitzgerald shared the results of the parking facility inventory conducted by the Planning Department. A GIS map has been posted on the Planning Study Website at: <http://www.cityofellsworthme.org/planning/parking.htm>.

A total of 1423 on and off-street non-residential parking spaces were counted in the study area, which is depicted on the map. Of the total, 422 are located in City owned or leased lots, 98 are on Hancock County-owned land, 72 are owned by churches, 51 are owned by the Post Office and 780 are privately owned.

2. Tom Gorrill gave a presentation describing his firm's approach to gathering and analyzing data, forecasting future parking needs as well as composing an implementation plan to upgrade and add to Ellsworth's parking infrastructure. The following points were discussed during the presentation:

- The best time to conduct the one-day parking space demand study was determined to be on a day of likely heavy use of downtown facilities. A good candidate would be a drizzly Monday (when court is in session) during late July. Spaces will be closely monitored to see how they are being utilized.
- Good sidewalks and lighting are important to encourage use of parking areas and the downtown in general.
- The website will be used to keep everyone updated.

3. The following points were discussed during the time for questioning:

- The physical appearance of parking areas is important.
- Consider aspects of human psychology in the downtown design. Need more green space and a parking garage?
- More signs are needed direct motorists to existing parking lots.
- More regulation of parking areas such as time management space assignments for employees may be needed.

- Create incentives for carpooling?
- The draft plan should be done by the end of October. This would be a good time for the next formal meeting.
- Should we survey business owners for more data and suggestions?
- Maintenance needed—paving, striping, etc. of parking and crosswalks.
- Areas beyond the study area, such as Pine Street, are gaining commercial development.
- Parking regulations can be seasonal.

A copy of the map was given to the Downtown Business Association members to help gather more information and ideas for the study.