

To: Peter Stanton, Chair, and Members of the CPIC
From: Tex Haeuser, Planning Director 
Cc: Scott Morelli, City Manager
Hannah Holmes, Chairwoman, Arts & Historic Preservation Committee
Knightville Fore & Aft Subscribers
Date: May 5, 2018
Re: **Draft Knightville Fore & Aft Work Plan**

This memo accompanies and provides explanations for elements of the draft Knightville Fore & Aft Timeline. Knightville Fore & Aft is a planning project by the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) that was requested by the South Portland City Council.

The work plan is divided into four sections:

- Policy-Making process
- Citizen-Participation process
- Approval process; and
- Products

The policy-making elements are those that involve addressing the challenges and opportunities that the CPIC members and CPIC meeting attendees have provisionally identified to date. The citizen participation process includes various ways in which opportunities will be provided to both Knightville property owners/occupants and citizens of South Portland as a whole to provide input during the policy-making process. The approval process contains the steps that will be needed to implement the CPIC's policy and other recommendations.

Expressed as objectives, the provisional list of challenges and opportunities previously discussed with the CPIC includes:

- Ensure zoning protects property owners without preventing what we most value in our village centers.
- Attract businesses, including niche trades and manufacturing, that would benefit Knightville residents.
- Provide a range of housing opportunities.
- Improve architectural quality, interest, historic features, and resiliency.
- Ensure there is sufficient public and private parking while maintaining safe and convenient access to all properties.
- Improve facilities and services for walking, bicycling, transit, and other alternative modes of transportation.

The first step listed under the Policy-Making Process on the Timeline chart is to develop the planning process. This is the main topic for discussion on May 10th and hopefully will be finalized by the Committee on May 17th.

Next comes survey development. This step could have been listed instead under the Citizen Participation Process, but as a key part of the planning process I included it under Policy-Making. I am anticipating a non-scientific, web-based survey. Knightville residents and business operators would be especially encouraged to take the survey, but it would be available to everyone in the City (or beyond) by virtue of being on the City's website. This broader availability of the survey reflects Knightville's status as an urban village with a draw that extends to parts of Portland and Cape Elizabeth as well as to other areas of South Portland.

It will take some thought, and time, to develop the survey questions. I propose to work on the survey over the coming weeks and to have a draft for CPIC consideration ready for the June 21st meeting. The goal would be to have the survey start running on the website by the last week of June. Some of the questions relate to historical preservation and are being developed by the Arts & Historical Preservation Committee. We may want to invite suggestions for questions from other City groups and staff. We may also want to see if there are CPIC members who would want to help with the survey as a subcommittee.

Business attraction/retention/enhancement is a process proposed to run from mid-June to mid-October. It is anticipated to benefit from having some of the services of the City's new Economic Development Director beginning, possibly, later this month. The objective is to attract or support businesses that are desired by the neighborhood and that help establish a critical mass so that all the businesses do better as a whole. A principal goal for Knightville ever since the work to re-route the Million Dollar Bridge has been to create a virtuous cycle of support, benefit, and growth in Knightville (and Mill Creek) between residents and businesses.

Historic preservation and architectural design standards are related planning processes. They have to do with preserving and recovering distinctive architectural styles in existing buildings and with promoting high quality, compatible design in new buildings. The Arts & Historic Preservation Committee (AHPC) has selected Knightville as a focus area and has already discussed seeking to ascertain the extent to which Knightville residents and business owners would want historic preservation regulations and/or incentives/education. There also is a question as to whether the existing Knightville design standards, which are contained in the Zoning Ordinance and primarily cover properties along Ocean Street, should be improved and/or extended to the entire neighborhood. According to the timeline, we would be hoping for the AHPC's historic preservation recommendations by mid-September. The recommendations for the design standards, which would be worked on jointly by the AHPC and my office's new Community Planner (who scheduled to start the beginning of August), is scheduled to conclude in mid-December.

The work on the zoning regulations is not expected to be open-ended, given the Comprehensive Plan's stated policy to more or less maintain the existing zoning, and thus will be limited to determining whether there is a need to fine-tune the list of permitted uses and the space & bulk standards (height, density, setbacks, etc.) to better meet the needs of the village. However, it also will seek to reconcile the apparent disconnect between current zoning standards, like the off-street parking requirements, with what we like when we visit other small downtown and village center areas in Maine and other New England states. Other issues, such as whether to re-draw the zoning boundaries so that lots are not

bisected into two different zones, may also be discussed. I see this discussion running from September to the end of January.

The infrastructure planning process (November through February) mainly will look at the adequacy of the village's sidewalks and other physical assets, but it also will evaluate the availability of high-speed internet and other services.

The final topic proposed for the project is addressing the previously mentioned objective of ensuring there is sufficient public and private parking while maintaining safe and convenient access to all properties.

In addition to the CPIC meetings every third Thursday of the month (6:00 – 8:00 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers), the Citizen Participation Plan includes:

- Developing an email subscriber list from an all-owners, all-occupants mailing and other means.
- Posting agendas, minutes, and packet materials on the City's CPIC webpage.
- Maintaining information about the project on the City's Facebook account (and on Nextdoor).
- Providing public information and feedback forums at the end of June and the end of September.
- Holding a pair of public City Council workshops in November and February.

Additional efforts to reach out to the neighborhood may be possible depending on the degree that Committee members are available to volunteer to plan and implement them.

The Knightville Fore & Aft Final Report is not anticipated to be a master plan as such but more of a collection of recommendations related to the planning objectives. We would seek to obtain City Council adoption of the report, and of any zoning amendments, by the end of June, 2019. Any capital improvement recommendations, such as for sidewalk improvements, would be included in the Planning Department's Capital Improvement Budget request in late fall 2019.

The Final Report would be built from a series of memos and reports generated at the conclusion of each planning process. These are proposed to include:

1. Memo summarizing problems and opportunities with a planning process encompassing policy-making and citizen participation processes.
2. SurveyMonkey survey placed on the City website.
3. Report generated from results of the on-line survey.
4. Memo summarizing goals, objectives, and implementation strategies for attracting, retaining, and enhancing businesses that support the virtuous residents/businesses cycle.
5. Report from the Arts & Historic Preservation Committee on recommendations for whatever degree of historic preservation is desired by the property owners and the City as a whole.
6. Memo describing existing architectural design standards in Knightville and any proposed additions or modifications.
7. Memo summarizing proposed zoning amendments.
8. Memo summarizing proposed infrastructure improvements.
9. Memo summarizing parking recommendations.
10. Final report.