

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.
DIRECTOR

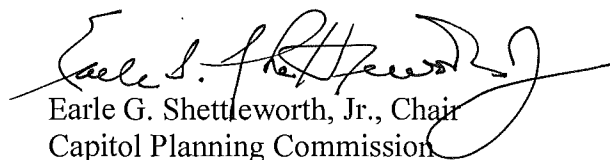
October 24, 2011

Senator Douglas A. Thomas
Representative H. David Cotta
Committee on State and Local Government
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Senator Thomas and Representative Cotta:

In response to your letter of May 1, 2011, I am submitting the Capitol Planning Commission's Program Evaluation Report. Should you or your staff need further information from the Commission, please do not hesitate to let me know. Likewise, as your review of the Commission proceeds, I would be pleased to meet with your committee and/or its staff to assist in this process.

Sincerely,


Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Chair
Capitol Planning Commission

cc: Betty Lamoreau

Capitol Planning Commission Program Evaluation Report

The Capitol Planning Commission (“CPC”) was created by statute in 1967. It originally had jurisdiction over property in the vicinity of the State House, on the West side of the Kennebec River, but in 1991, the State’s East Campus was added to the CPC’s jurisdiction. The Commission is charged with establishing and maintaining a master plan for the orderly development of state buildings and grounds in the Capitol Area. The statute creating the CPC declares that “it is the policy of the State of Maine that the development of the Capitol Area shall proceed with economy, careful planning, aesthetic consideration and with due regard to the public interests involved.” The Commission consists of nine members, with the Director of the Bureau of General Services serving as the Secretariat. (5 MRSA c. 14-A § 297 – 308).

From 1999 through 2000, the Commission joined the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and many other stakeholders in the development of a Master Plan for Augusta area facilities. A professional planning firm was hired to assess all the State’s holdings in Augusta, Hallowell, Gardiner, and Vassalboro.

The Plan addressed crucial facility issues including which buildings to retain, renovate, or demolish; which to designate as “excess property” and offer to the private sector for reuse; which locations are available for new construction; and which locations are to be preserved as green space. The Plan has proved invaluable to the State’s facility decisions. It is a blueprint for development and for preservation. For example, when it was proposed that the East Campus green space be bisected by a roadway to serve as a bridge approach, the Master Plan put the issue conclusively to rest.

The State Facilities Master Plan has been approved by the Legislature as a “Resolve.” It is a credit to the CPC that the Legislature entrusted the Commission with responsibility for administering the Plan: all amendments must be considered and approved by the CPC, and since the Plan is now a decade old with many of its recommendations accomplished, the Commission will be reviewing and revising the Plan as appropriate and reporting its findings to the Governor and the Legislature.

The Commission’s Rules and Regulations, attached as Exhibit A, essentially create zoning districts. Proposed projects within the zones must apply to and receive the Commission’s approval before construction is undertaken. The Commission must approve all projects in the Capitol Area before construction, development, or change of use is allowed.

The rules and zoning districts have been revised to recognize the Kennebec Arsenal National Historic Landmark; the Capitol Complex Historic District; the historic State House; the East Campus Historic District; the Riverview Psychiatric Center; the Capitol Park area; the green spaces on both sides of the River; and the need for “gateway” approaches to the State’s facilities. Generally, the revised rules will lead to the preservation of historic properties while recognizing that some will undergo adaptive reuse.

Design standards guiding the types of development and the quality of materials were drafted to accompany the zoning map changes.

Projects overseen by the CPC since 1995 have incorporated high performance standards and high quality, durable materials. For example, lower Capitol Street and Union Street were rebuilt to high standards, with granite curbing and architectural lighting. Arsenal Street on the East Campus was rebuilt to similar standards, as was the lighting on the East Campus. In addition, underground utility installations are required whenever possible. A landscaping plan for the green space at the site of the former Department of Education Building was implemented.

Despite the routine nature of these types of projects, they have a major impact on the overall aesthetics of the streetscapes and landscapes of the East and West campuses. The Commission has endeavored to control the visual impact of such unspectacular installations as electrical transformers, utility poles, street lighting and pump stations. These infrastructure components are the backbone of the State's campuses yet can destroy views and the aesthetics of their environments if not properly designed and sited.

The Capitol Planning Commission has also overseen many other projects in more recent years such as the creation of a Maine Memorial Park and Augusta Greenway Trail on the East Campus, the renovation of the former Labor Building at 19 Union Street, ADA improvements at the Nash School Building, interior and exterior improvements at the Ray Building on the East Campus and the former PUC Building at 242 State Street, the electrical project at the Blaine House which replaced all of the knob and tube wiring, the West Campus Parking Lot renovations, and is presently exploring future uses for the Gannett House.

The historic and aesthetic qualities of the State's facilities have incrementally improved over the past ten years. It is the CPC's hope to continue to create pleasing environments for State employees, visitors, and all citizens of the State of Maine.

**CAPITOL PLANNING COMMISSION
2011 – 2012 REGULATORY AGENDA**

AGENCY UMBRELLA-UNIT NUMBER: **18-134**
AGENCY NAME: **State Capitol Planning Commission**

CONTACT PERSON: Betty M. Lamoreau, Acting Director, Bureau of General Services,
77 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333. Tel. (207) 624-7344
betty.m.lamoreau@maine.gov

EMERGENCY RULES ADOPTED SINCE THE LAST REGULATORY AGENDA: None

CONSENSUS-BASED RULE DEVELOPMENT: None contemplated.

EXPECTED 2011-2012 RULE-MAKING ACTIVITY:

CHAPTER 1

STATUTORY AUTHORITY 5 MRSA §298

PURPOSE Amend this rule to improve the definition of zones within the Capitol Planning District, define uses within those zones, and set out new construction and site development guidelines for each of the zones within the District.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE Possible amendment prior to October 2012.

AFFECTED PARTIES The City of Augusta, the Bureau of General Services, State agencies, developers and property owners within the District boundaries.