

Some of the issues facing Ogunquit extend beyond the boundaries of the Town and, therefore, require cooperation and coordination among municipalities to be successfully addressed. This chapter identifies the issues of regional concern. It also looks at how the policies of the Town compare with the adopted policies of the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission for the region.

A. Issues of Regional Concern

During the comprehensive planning process, the Ogunquit community has recognized that some of the issues facing the Town transcend the municipal boundaries. While this plan contains policies and actions to address many of these issues, the Town recognizes that cooperation and coordination with other communities and regional organizations will be needed to fully address these issues.

1. Ogunquit Village School

Maintaining the Ogunquit Village School as a viable educational facility for the community is an important element in keeping Ogunquit as a community that appeals to people of all age groups including younger families with children. The future of the school involves the overall operation of the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District. It is vital that the Ogunquit community play an active role in the decision-making process about the future of the school and assure that all parties recognize the importance of this school to all of Ogunquit, not just the parents of school-aged children.

2. Route One Traffic Improvements

Traffic congestion on Route One is a regional issue that impacts all of the coastal York County communities. While each community seeks traffic improvements that address their particular situation, a long term solution will probably involve a regional effort. Therefore, it is important that Ogunquit be active in regional transportation planning activities and continues to advocate for long term regional solutions for Route One traffic.

3. Regional Public Safety Services

The provision of police, fire, and especially dispatch services on a town-by-town basis may not be the most cost efficient approach. The Town already participates in a shared dispatch system. The Town should continue to explore the possibilities for additional regional or multi-town approaches for providing these services.

4. Emergency Preparedness Planning

Planning for both natural and human emergencies is a significant undertaking given the peak summer population in Ogunquit. The possible need to evacuate the beach and downtown area will require involving resources beyond those available to the Town. Therefore, it is important that Ogunquit actively participate in inter-municipal and county-wide emergency preparedness activities and planning.

5. Management of Wells Bay

The Wells Bay ecosystem is partially within the Town of Ogunquit but encompasses a number of other communities as well. The community's tourist economy is dependent, in large measure, on the health of the bay. The long term management of the bay, including the implementation of the Wells Bay Management Plan, will require a regional approach involving the various municipalities and state agencies. The Town will need to play an active role in these activities.

6. Management of Off-Shore Sand Deposits

The presence of large deposits of sand in the off-shore area from Ogunquit Beach to Bald Head raises an important regional issue as other municipalities and state agencies look at these deposits as potential sources of sand for "beach replenishment" activities. The possibility that these deposits may be "mined" in the future means that Ogunquit must be extremely vigilant to assure that its interests are considered in these decisions and that any mining does not have negative consequences for the community and its natural resources. Therefore, the Town needs to be active in any discussion about the future use of these deposits.

7. Water System Improvements

The public water system serving Ogunquit is operated by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District. Assuring the adequacy of this system, especially for fire protection water supplies, is a key issue for the community. Therefore, it is important that the Town work with the District and actively participate in regional water service discussions including the possible desalinization of sea water as a future water source.

8. Open Space Preservation

Much of the key open space in the community is adjacent to Wells and York and is part of a larger system of open spaces that extend outside of the municipal boundaries. Preservation of this open space involves land trusts, state agencies, and other conservation groups. The Town needs to support regional open space preservation and land conservation approaches and to work with the other towns

and the regional and state interests as it develops its local open space acquisition program.

9. Housing for Seasonal Workers

The vitality of the tourist economy is dependent on having an adequate supply of labor during the summer season. Some of this labor supply comes from outside the region and, therefore, must find housing locally either through their employer or in the local housing market. This situation is the same in other coastal communities in York County. The Town should work with local and regional business organizations and other coastal towns to identify the need for housing for seasonal workers and to develop a regulatory framework that allows adequate, safe, and sanitary housing to be provided for these workers in a manner that does not create negative impacts on the larger community.

B. Conformance with Regional Goals and Policies

In 1992, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC) adopted Regional Policies for Southern Maine to serve as a guide for growth and development in the region and to provide for the regional coordination of local planning efforts. The Update of the Ogunquit Comprehensive Plan is generally consistent with the overall regional policy directions established by SMRPC but there are some specific areas where the local plan is not consistent with those regional policies:

1. The regional policies emphasize the use of joint purchasing and regional service delivery. While the update addresses regional coordination and the possibility of expanded regional approaches for service delivery, it does not specifically identify potential joint purchasing activities.
2. The regional policies discourage strip commercial development along arterials such as Route One. The Town's Future Land Use Plan recognizes that Route One in Ogunquit is almost fully developed and proposes that this corridor continue to be zoned for commercial use.
3. The regional policies address a number of issues relating to human needs including human service programs, homelessness, and chemical dependency. These topics are not addressed in the Update.
4. The regional policies propose groundwater protection actions that limit increases in the concentration of groundwater nitrates. This is not specifically addressed in the Update.

5. The regional policies propose local activities to encourage and support small-scale farming. These are not addressed in the Update.
6. The regional policies propose that municipalities identify specific areas or parcels that should be preserved as open space. While the Update identifies the Town's open space priorities in a general sense, it does not identify specific areas and their values.
7. The regional policies propose that coastal communities assure that there are adequate marine pump-out facilities. The Update does not specifically address this issue.