

MEETING 2
OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY GUIDED PLANNING PROCESS
June 15, 2015, 4-6 pm
Princeton Town Office, 15 Depot Street, Princeton, Maine

Attendance: Betsy Fitzgerald, Washington County Manager; Karen Holmes, Cathance Lake Association; John Dudley, Alexander resident and regional historian; John Bryant, American Forest Management (BBC lands); Charles Rudelitch and Susan Hatton, Sunrise County Economic Council; Jeremy Gabrielson, Maine Coast Heritage Trust; David Bell, Cherryfield Foods; Elgin Turner, H.C. Haynes, Inc.; Brenda Gove, Town of Cooper; David Montague, Downeast Lakes Land Trust.

Staff: Judy East, Washington County Council of Governments; Sarah Strickland, Consultant; Samantha Horn Olsen, Land Use Planning Commission; Frank O'Hara, Planning Decisions; Alison Truesdale, LandForms; Heron Weston, Washington County UT (Regrets: Dean Preston, Supervisor, Washington County UT)

Agenda

- 4:00 Introductions
- 4:10 Update on first meeting
 - Comments, additions, changes to minutes
- 4:30 Review Draft Process Document including:
 - Anticipated products – Judy
 - List of key issues – Judy
 - Geographic sub-regions agree on boundaries – Judy
 - Revised schedule of work – Judy
 - Decision-making process – Frank
- 5:30 Test Survey Instrument and Ideas for Outreach
- 5:40 Response and suggestions (discussion)
- 5:55 Need for third meeting?
- 6:00 Adjourn

After everyone introduced themselves, Judy announced that the minutes from the last meeting are posted on the CGP&Z website (<http://www.wccog.net/cgp-and-z-process.htm>) She invited everyone to send her edits and she will make corrections and repost the final minutes.

Review Draft Process Document including

Anticipated products

- Judy mentioned that WCCOG has a long standing partnership with Tora Johnson and her students at the University of Maine at Machias GIS Service Center and Laboratory; they have already completed a development suitability map in one area of the UT; the development suitability map is a product of an analysis of layers of information describing conservation or resource values; feature limiting/inhibiting development; features supporting or near existing development; and infrastructure and services supporting development. Tora will be teaching classes in Advanced GIS, Applied Projects in GIS (in the fall) and in Municipal Applications of GIS and Web GIS (in the Spring) The prospective planning effort for the Washington County UT will use this expertise and these mapping resources to support the planning effort. The students need and benefit from such real world projects and we get sophisticated tools for nearly zero cost.

- Judy envisions public Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that will accompany the plan that is developed through this process.
Questions:
 - Can you see the CIP involving dams? If a dam rises to the top of the priorities in the development plan, yes. In particular modification of a dam might benefit fish passage for community economic support, yes.
 - Who finances the development? The public agency (LUPC) will put the zones in place, but the private sector will have to come up with the funds for the development. There was concern expressed about public funds being used for private gain and that the CIP should direct investment of tax dollars wisely. Judy responded that a CIP identifies appropriate sources of funds for projects without funding them directly; she agreed that people need to be mindful of UT funding versus organized town funding.
 - There was also concern that the funds that are being used for this planning process are coming from organized townships, but are benefiting the unorganized areas of the county. Judy and Betsy explained that the UTs pay into the County budget also, and that we are using TIF funds from the UT to support this planning effort. There was another question about whether a regional plan or CIP would be useful in this project in addition to any zoning changes that are recommended. Samantha responded that this planning process and document can be used by the LUPC in future rezoning decisions that are based on landowner requests.

List of key issues – Judy

Judy noted that the list of key issues posted on the web site was reviewed at the May 27, 2015 Process meeting (as reflected in those minutes) but that it could be organized and/or prioritized to be more useful. She asked people to suggest 3 of their top key issues.

Elgin: residential and commercial growth, Energy sources, forest products industry

Betsy: stormwater and hydrology (related to residential and commercial growth, fish passage, emergency response, forest products) (2+ inches of rain in 24 hours shuts down the clam flats for 2 weeks).

David Bell: residential & commercial development, natural resource Industries; energy infrastructure and sources; telecommunication infrastructure.

Charles R: agriculture activity (land conversion, infrastructure, telecommunications); fish passage at dams and dam maintenance.

Elgin: solid waste management should not be dealt with through this process. Group agree to limit this topic to siting issues (not management).

John B: tourism and recreational infrastructure;

Judy mentioned the various transportation corridor plans that had been done recently; the group agreed that transportation planning for the county is up to date and does not need to be addressed.

John: the connections between Routes 1 and 9 could be improved, and bike lanes on the major routes could improve regional recreation.

The group then attempted to organize the key issues within three areas:

1. Stormwater/hydrology

- Shellfish
- Hydroelectric management
- Emergency management

- Fish passage
 - Outdoor recreation
 - Forest products
2. Residential/commercial growth (growth and rural areas)
 - Energy infrastructure
 3. Economic Development
 - Energy Sources
 - Telecommunications
 - Emergency management
 - Recreation/tourism
 - Forestry/Ag
 - Processing capacity

Group discussion noted that many key issues fall under or affect each of the three areas; Samantha suggested that the group consider the issues in light of prospective zoning; some may not need to be addressed. For example, she pointed out that energy infrastructure development is already allowed in all zones.

David: plan might recommend infrastructure investment to another agency.
 Samantha encouraged the group to think about the planning process as a way of describing the conditions the group is trying to bring about, think about what you can change and what you can't, then focus on the former.

Geographic sub-regions

Judy asked for comments on the map of the subregions that came out of the previous meeting. The group agreed that the boundary between the Lakes and Western Regions should shift south by 1-2 twps. Likewise, the boundary between the Lakes and Northern Regions may shift.

Question: Are plantations part of this process?

Yes. Judy pointed out that one third of the county Unorganized Territory's population resides in the Plantations. Samantha commented that Plantations could have areas that have high development potential, and LUPC is responsible for all their zoning. She mentioned Baring Plt. in particular as having some areas of high development potential.

Revised schedule of work

The key issues discussion above and the public input discussion below affects the schedule of work – the revisions will be reflected in the Process Document

Public Input

Sarah and Judy feel that the best way to get initial public input in the planning process is for WCCOG to attend community groups' meetings, rather than expect people to come to regional meetings. Sarah asked those in attendance to write down groups, venues and events (including contact people) that hold well-attended meetings where we could do outreach. That input is summarized here:

Please NOTE – some of the input was hard to read; if you can decipher any places where there are

question marks or have other input please contact Judy (jceast@wccog.net) or Sarah (sbs04671@gmail.com)

Quoddy Tides, Calais Advertiser town reporters - to find out about local meetings and suppers (454-2583 Cooper person in QT from last meeting)

Local gathering places for breakfast/coffee

- Snack bar - TWP 22 -
- Carol Oakes - Randy's Variety - Alexander
- Holly Been (?) Vanceboro
- Sheri Hawkins (?) store - Crawford

4 Wheeler and Snowmobile Clubs - annual meetings and suppers

Blueberry Hill Trade Show and Field Day
Blueberry Festival, Machias
Grand Lake Stream Festival (Cathy Shamel)
Salmon Festival, Eastport
Jonesboro Blueberry Meeting - by UM Coop ?
Perry Harvest Farm Festival

Lakes Associations/Regional Camp Owners Associations - annual meetings/breakfasts

- Cathance Lake
- Cowle Lead Roads (?)

GLS Guides Association Meeting (Dale Tobey 796-2884)

Town Selectmen Meetings/School meetings/Town Managers
Baring Plt - Moosehorn Wildlife Refuge - Select Board (Dale Olsson 454-2280)
Cooper School Budget meeting 6/20
Danforth

Decision-making process

Frank discussed the pros and cons of consensus, modified consensus, and majority voting decision-making processes. He said that a consensus process can tend to produce a plan that revolves around easy decisions, leaving hard issues for another time.

Charles asked if a super majority voting system may be simpler and less cumbersome.

Sarah mentioned that consensus requires a more open-minded approach to the process. Alison mentioned that a voting process can create strategic factions where the members only work together so long as they make a majority, but otherwise don't work with each other.

Frank explained that the modified consensus process ("consensus minus one") is designed to prevent one person from holding the rest of the group hostage until they get their way on an issue. Samantha suggested the group try consensus, but be open to changing the process if it doesn't work.

Judy said that the County Commissioners will appoint the planning committee members from Judy's list

of recommendations. The Commissioners have received all of the e-mails to date on the developing stakeholders, Process Committee and Planning Committee lists. Judy will ask people again to be considered for the committee. Meetings will be open to the public for input.

Judy asked Samantha about the open access rules and how they apply to this process. Samantha said that the public meetings have to be publicized, but don't need to be in the paper; they can be on the COG website and listserv. Also, the public has to have access to any documents the committee prepares. Meetings that solicit public input should get the broadest publicity, including a press release.

Question: How do other groups' committees integrate public input into the planning product? Samantha replied that it has varied in the two regions so far, but when a public meeting is held to get reactions to specific ideas or products, there is a lot of notice given.

Test Survey Instrument and Ideas for Outreach

Judy had the group try devices that allow for instant tabulation of meeting participants' survey responses, with the results projected on a screen. She said this type of survey is particularly useful for getting reactions to the survey results which will stimulate discussion. Using demographic information about the meeting participants could be very valuable in relation to particular issues. Cross tabulation is possible.

Need for third meeting?

Everyone was comfortable with not having a third meeting, and approving the minutes and process documents via email. In particular staff and consultants will meet to refine and finalize the organization of the key issues and update the planning schedule accordingly.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20PM