

BUCKSPORT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2015

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2015

Jewett School Conference Room (66 Bridge St)

Members and Candidates in Attendance: Jef Fitzgerald, George McLeod, Diane O'Connell, Michael Ormsby, Larry Wahl, Chris Johnson, Mark Eastman, David Grant, Hans Krichels, Steve Feite, Kathy Downes and Sandra Robshaw.

Members not in Attendance: Mary Jane Bush, Jeremy Daigle, Glenn Findlay, Byron Vinton, Brian MacDonald

Staff in Attendance: David Milan, Jeff Hammond, Tom Martin HCPC (Consultant)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by Chairman Jef Fitzgerald

Minutes: Chairman discussed minutes distribution (website) or mail if necessary. Minutes will be reviewable before the next meeting. Meetings are also recorded and are also available on line. Motion to approve the March 9, 2015 minutes (Motion McLeod, 2nd Grant) Vote unanimous

Chapter Reviews: Mill Closure Effects

General Discussion points

- Procedure discussion for recording changes...Text Box insert on current records proposed. US Census and other data need not change for the CP.
- Need to get public more involved and increase transparency....Need to get info out to correct misinformation...Facebook page development planned...Forums too...
- Possible name change for group..."The Plan for Bucksports Future". Discussed establishing a "brand" for the future.
- Need increased contact with the Town Council...periodic updates???....

A. Population: Discussion points

- a We are looking at a rapidly Moving target... during a watershed period in the town's history
- b The Mill closing is double edged sword— There are positive and negative effects.
- c Population change questions: why or why not people come and whether they stay.
- d With what towns is Bucksport competing for population and economic growth?
- e What would make the town desirable? How much would mil rate be a factor in the population planning???

B. Economy: Discussion Points

- a. Discussion of mill closing numbers...Kaboom!!,...575 jobs lost..24% Bucksport residents...EMDC retraining efforts... Big loss in tax revenues!
- b. Mill site redevelopment efforts...2.6 multiplier effects of each job lost
- c. Discussion on terminology of event and impact
- d. Citizen retail employee discussed no negative impact on sales from mill closing yet. Optimistic on future volume.
- e. Priorities of Economic Development Dept....Need for outreach and improve public relations efforts and increase incentives to invest in Bucksport.
- f. Mill closing not all bad...some members happy for closure and are very optimistic for future...some say more positive than negative.

C. Housing: Discussion Points

- a. Discussion on housing prices: A small uptick has leveled off since the mill announcement.
- b. Review HUD funding and seek CDBG monies. Bucksport has a high rate of subsidized housing.
- c. No panic or “flight” measurable (to date) but fewer jobs and higher taxes will likely lessen demand until a new town image is crafted. d. Need to improve housing stock
- c. Fight blight...maybe a neighborhood participation solution
- d. Monitor foreclosure rates and all data available
- e. Should Bucksport primarily be a bedroom community or service center or??

D. Transportation: Discussion Points

- a. Less truck traffic expected. Rte 15 traffic remains steady.
- b. Whether to keep rail service to industrial sites
- c. Port...Money available for a port management plan development
- d. Would dredging port be worth pursuing?
- e. MDOT ratings of Rte 15 and 46 need to be monitored
- f. Possibility of rail trail, or hiking opportunities were discussed.

E. Citizen Outreach

Optional meeting in two weeks to discuss public outreach plan and use of social media to promote the committee's efforts. The next regular meeting is May 9, 2015.

Meeting was adjourned at 7: 53 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Johnson

Board Secretary

Follow-up notes regarding the 4/13/15 Comp Plan Meeting:

- *A Facebook page was created for the CP at <https://www.facebook.com/bucksportcompplan?fref=ts> and a link will be posted on the town CP website.*
- Note-- **Comprehensive Planning: A MANUAL FOR MAINE COMMUNITIES** is available at: http://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/docs/2005manual_lowres.pdf