

TOWN OF BUCKSPORT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

Meeting of November 09, 2015

Jewett School Conference Room

Bridge Street, Bucksport Maine

MINUTES

1. Chairman Jef Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.
2. **Members Present:** Mark Eastman, Hans Krichels, Brian McDonald, Kathy Downes, Valorie Shaffner, Mary Jane Bush, George MacLeod, Christopher Johnson, Jef Fitzgerald.
Staff Present: Jeff Hammond Bucksport CEO
Consultant Present: Tom Martin, Hancock County Planning Commission
Public Present: Don Houghton, Publisher Bucksport Enterprise Newspaper
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting: On a motion by Mary Jane Bush, seconded by Kathy Downes, the minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously accepted.
4. Chairman's Report
 - a. Consultant Tom Martin will be away until December 8, 2015. He requested permission to refer the Town of Searsport Comprehensive Plan Committee to the Town of Bucksport Comprehensive Plan Committee to see what was being done. Mr. Martin also expressed the hope to arrange a joint meeting with the Orland Comprehensive Planning Board concerning water resources.
 - b. Chairman Fitzgerald reported he followed up some of the comments made at the last meeting by meeting with the Bucksport Town Manager. He was not sure if any action had been taken since those discussions by the Manager or the Town Council. Kathy Downes reported there was a comment about water resources at the last Council meeting, but no definitive plans are set on how to proceed. They are looking at forming a committee. Rick Knowlton from Maine Water Company had suggested forming a lake watershed association to research the issues.
 - c. The next CP meeting will be December 14, 2015.
5. Chapter 9 Natural Resources
 - a. Chairman Fitzgerald asked Tom Martin if the current chapter format would remain, with the question in place. Mr. Martin answered it would be up to the board, but he thought it might help. Mr. Martin had questions concerning changing culvert standards to meet some of the new culvert standards from the Maine Department of Transportation. The Chairman mentioned the new standards are referred to in Paragraph D and the need for evaluation suggested.

- b. Tom Martin also asked if the new State Shore Land Zoning standards had been brought up to date yet. (See Question #2). Jeff Hammond responded that they haven't, but the Planning Board was starting work on them. The only inconsistency in the present plan was in the lot coverage standard in the General Development District. A general discussion was held on some of the new standard changes.
- c. The committee discussed Question #3 concerning what regulatory and non-regulatory steps have or can be taken concerning protecting natural resources. Besides Shore Land Zoning, there is also Town wide land use zoning.
- d. Tom Martin added the Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust to the regional cooperation partnership question (Question #4). The mention of the Box Turtle was removed. Chris Johnson asked where the data was acquired to reference the Box Turtle. Mr. Martin said it came from the Beginning with Habitat website. The validity of the sighting and record was in question. The chairman suggested keeping the sighting might cause more confusion than address a critical need. Mr. Johnson asked if removing one species from mention should also result in removing all species mentioned in page 6 and 7 of the handout. Mr. Hammond asked how all the species on page 6 and 7 would be referenced or regulated during Town planning review processes and would that duty fall on the applicant. Mr. Martin stated all your requirements would already be laid out in your ordinances.

Chairman Fitzgerald said there might be a need to explain why the list is in the comprehensive plan. He suggested that the extent of undeveloped land in Bucksport provided plenty of opportunity for these species to survive in general. More information on specifics would make the list be more helpful. Eventually as land changes came about, we might have to address habitat issues. Mr. Johnson didn't see the need for the list being placed. Mr. MacLeod discussed the outcome options from the review. Other things in Town may affect the issues, but we may need to be more comprehensive with our review and stay as flexible as possible.

Tom Martin mentioned the list could be for future reference. Jeff Hammond reviewed the current ordinance rules. The group discussed the impact of keeping the species list in the ordinance to future reviews.

Mary Jane Bush's believed the list should stay in the plan. Chairman Fitzgerald felt the proposed language might be broader than the State recommends. Some members felt there should not be an undue burden on applicants, but there should be distinct problems identified for future reviews. Maybe we should match locations with species on the list.

Do we need review from other groups in the Town for habitat and natural resource? GPMCT may be a resource. Do we need a conservation commission in the future? Regional partnerships may develop in the future. The Lower Penobscot Watershed Coalition was also mentioned as a resource.

Discussion was held concerning monitoring the Silver Lake water supply. Lake Association development was also discussed.

e. Scenic Views

The Committee reviewed the standard of Scenic Views as it related to the Town Land Use Standard. Various locations were identified and discussed. CEO Hammond noted more scenic views were present in the 2003 plan than in the current proposed listings. Extensive time was taken to discuss a broader approach to the Downtown scenic views. George MacLeod suggested identifying not only views, but the value of keeping existing buildings in place. What is the value of the view compared to the value of the existing building? How do you manage the issue? The Committee was unanimous that a lot more work was needed on the issue of scenic views. The Committee agreed the current list should be included in the new list.

Do Vernal Pools need to be mentioned in the plans? There is no current check off on Planning Board reviews. Vernal pools are protected by the State. Not specifically mentioned in the Town Ordinance. This may need to be included in the Town review standards.

- f. Chairman Fitzgerald discussed his findings concerning Town owned land at Orcutt Mountain. Natural Resource maps are available to view.

6. Citizen Outreach Bucksport Next

- a. Successful distribution of surveys during election. Thanks to Sandi Robshaw for staffing the table. Thanks for Kathy Downes patience during the election.
- b. George MacLeod discussed changing the computer programs and the difficulties inherent in maintaining a website. These difficulties mirror the landscape changes. Maine Street Downtown Group, Heart and Soul, YMCA, and GPMCT have added to the difficulties. Other messages are out there and Bucksport Next is competing with these groups. He has contacted the Town Manager and suggested an Economic Development Coordinator to help manage the process of each. Should the Comprehensive Plan Group meet with the various groups? Should we try to obtain a facilitator and create a network of interested parties that could all work together, and then have the network forum be the backbone for sharing information? The coordination of the groups could help all. Ask the Town to fund or organize a meeting of all the groups. It would allow the Comprehensive Plan group to assume a leadership position to help all. Everyone would have a place at the table.
- c. The website needs work. George would like to find someone who can run and develop the Bucksport Next website. It will integrate and inform the collective groups. The next Community Development director could be the website administrator and get immersed immediately into the process. The site needs constant work and effort to succeed. Time to bring into the Town for help on the discussion. We should make sure the Town Manager understands the need for the new person in the Community Development position needs to be computer savvy. We are not getting feedback from the folks outside the group. Where do we go now?

Chairman Fitzgerald mentioned the Councils support of the Heart and Soul process. He reviewed the methods employed to inform the Committee how Heart and Soul works.

Tom Martin feels that Heart and Soul will give the group and Town an exciting vision. There is concern about the budget situation and how the Heart and Soul may impact that.

Chris Johnson explained the current status of the Heart and Soul program, and the possible impact going forward. He felt there would not be a negative result, but that the Heart and Soul group would follow the Guideline book provided by the Orton Foundation. George MacLeod stated what he said was reflected in the Heart and Soul handbook. Mary Jane Bush agreed with George's points. She stated the groups should get together and find common ground, goals, common values, potential plans, possible collaborations. There is too much cliquishness, in the town. All these things should be part of the Comprehensive Plan development and will result in a better product.

Valorie Shaffner discussed a failure of the first listening session at the Middle School. People came, participated, and then were ignored. Where was the list of attendees? The information is now on the website.

Mary Jane Bush asked if we can use our January meeting to bring the groups together. The Council will announce the new Community Development candidate on Thursday November 18th. The Chairman would like to move on with the existing process and have another meeting in January or February.

December meeting will be Agricultural and Historic

January will be Existing Land Use

February will be Fiscal Capacity

Hans Krichels suggested the group should start with active solicitation among various groups/people. The Bucksport Next Subcommittee will divide up the groups among the participating members and seek out comments on the various chapters. Maybe the Community development director could assemble all the groups.

7. Adjournment

- a. On a motion by Chris Johnson, seconded by Kathy Downes, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Johnson

Recording Secretary