

Community Guided Planning and Zoning (CGPZ) Meeting Minutes January 8, 2014

Attendees: Mark Draper, David Cambridge, Kathy Mazzuchelli, Doug Beaulieu, Cheryl St. Peter, Bill Patterson (via conference call), Kathy Mazzuchelli, Ned Berce, Ked Coffin, James May, and Sarah Medina

Others present: Robert Dorsey, Jamie Francomano, Billie MacLean, Dania Saucier

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting opened at 9:15 with Mark Draper, Chair offering a welcome and introductions.

Minutes of December 11, 2013 meeting

Meeting minutes of the December 11th meeting were approved, by consensus, with the following amendments:

Fix several typographical errors. “overview,” “sub districts,” and “plantations”

Under Mobile Maine, 5th sentence originally read: *“Bob also emphasized the need for new industry, like mining, and the challenges associated with the declining 18 to 44 year-old workforce in the region.”* Was changed to read *“Bob also emphasized the need for the development of new industry, such as mining and the challenges of maintaining a strong workforce due to the region’s declining 18 to 44 year old population.”*

Future Meeting Topics

Due to the guest speaker running slightly behind schedule, the Committee discussed meeting dates and future agenda items. It was agreed, by consensus, to change the regularly scheduled meeting date to the third Wednesday of each month to better accommodate steering committee and LUPC staff schedules. Future agenda items include:

- Rangeley Plan- What was the previous experience, what was the process, what could have been improved upon?
- Plum Creek- What did LUPC Look at
- Irving Concept Plan
- Inventory what resources are in the region
- Review of Permit activity
- Lot size issues
- Adjacency issues
- Rezoning Issues

Guest Speaker- Mobilize Northern Maine Forestry Working Group- Dana Saucier

Dana provided a brief overview of his background which included working for International Paper and managed the mill in Masardis. Dana has a background in business.

Dana felt that there were three (3) main issues impacting the forest industry in the region. These included:

- **High Energy costs and lack of easily available energy:** The lack of a connection between Aroostook County and the New England grid is a concern and there has been calls for the development of a transmission line to be constructed that connects the region to southern New England.
- **Image of the region's natural resources:** The constant battle between "conservationists" and "preservations." Preservationists seem to have a greater voice in the public which is not something that is Maine related but exists all over the country.
- **Workforce:** Aroostook County has a declining workforce and has seen a significant decrease in the 18-44 year old population (Working Aged). It is widely believed that this population group must be greater than 30 percent of the entire population in order for the workforce to be sustainable. In 2011, Aroostook County's 18-44 age group was approximately 27% of the total population.

What is ahead for the next 5 to 10 years?

- Potential for up to four (4) mills to be constructed in the region.
- Potential for additional biomass mills as the 2020 rules that require European countries to utilize renewable energy sources
- Maine has high potential to serve European markets due to the availability of deep water ports.
- Mill growth is dependent on siting and proximity to the fiber resources. Transportation of fiber from the woods to the mill is an issue. 60-75 miles is acceptable but not ideal, 100 miles is stretching, and over 100 miles is not profitable.
- Off road linkages are the key.
- Logical location is the Route 11 corridor but it is unknown how easily and effectively a mill can be sited there.
- Maine is ill prepared for the next Spruce Budworm infestation which is currently located along the north shore of the St. Lawrence and moving into New Brunswick and Maine.
 - The loss of mills since 1985 has made salvage difficult.
 - Chemicals are not as effective as they once were and expensive.
 - Logging contractors cannot absorb large harvest increases.
- Cost of equipment is huge and the region cannot build its labor force fast enough.
- Maine's zoning and regulations need to be addressed so that they are less complex and easy to work with.

Public Awareness Plan

Jay presented a DRAFT Public Awareness plan for review. In an effort to increase public input for the Community Guided Planning and Zoning (CGPZ) project, the Steering Committee has proposed a plan that outlines public participation. After a review, the Committee agreed to leave the timeline for public meetings blank until milestones were reached and to not be tied into having meetings from 6:00 to 8:00 PM allowing for greater flexibility of members and scheduling. The Committee also felt that it would be better to have a product for the public to comment on rather than a “wide open” type meeting.

Other business.

The Committee discussed future guest speakers and what type of information best suits their needs. It was determined that when speakers are asked to attend meetings that a list of three (3) question be asked. These include:

- What is currently going on in the region?
- What are the future plans?
- What impediments are existing land uses, zones, and regulations creating to the industry?

The next meeting will be February 19, 2014 at NMDC in Caribou

The meeting adjourned at 12:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Jay Kamm
Senior Planner