



Shore and Harbor Planning Grants

Southwest Harbor

Harbor and waterfront management planning project (Fiscal Year 2017, grant awarded 2016)



Photo: Melissa Britsch

Project Description

Southwest Harbor was experiencing conflict among waterfront stakeholders who were competing for limited space on the water and at the waterfront. This project was designed to clarify the needs of different groups and identify steps for improving marine infrastructure and maintaining shore access. The town used the Shore and Harbor Planning Grant funding to develop a Harbor and Waterfront Management Plan to determine needs, action steps, and potential funding sources for future improvements. This was designed to help the town make choices about what to do with the harbor and the waterfront in short- and long-term situations

and be proactive when dealing with conflict. The town partnered with the Musson Group for the preparation of the Harbor Management Plan.

Project results

The completed Harbor Management Plan was added to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Harbor Management Plan outlined issues and action items for the town to address to reduce crowding and conflict at the waterfront. These included increasing accessibility, creating a mooring management plan, and identifying new access points, among other things. The plan also created implementation timelines and described which town officials should be responsible for implementing aspects of the plan. The project is currently on hold, but the Harbor Committee and Select Board will use the ideas in the plan when the further work is done on Southwest Harbor's waterfront.

Project follow-up

The planning process showed future opportunities for the facility, but work is on hold as of spring 2022.

Lessons Learned

It is important for committee members to be on the same page about projects and for towns to make sure that plans represent the views of all relevant user groups, not only the plans of a single group.



Photos: (L) Southwest Harbor Harbor Management Plan, (R) Melissa Britsch

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