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November 26, 2008

Terry Barnes, 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman  
Kristen Wittine, Comprehensive Planning Committee Chair  
Town of Danforth  
P.O. Box 117  
Danforth, Maine 04424

Dear Mr. Barnes and Ms. Wittine,

Thank you for submitting the 2008 Town of Danforth Comprehensive Plan for review for consistency with the Maine Growth Management Act (the Act). You and the entire Comprehensive Planning Committee are to be congratulated for all of the hard work that went into producing the plan, and for your commitment to the time and money necessary to complete it.

We have completed our review of your plan for consistency with the Act and the Comprehensive Planning Criteria Rule. We are pleased to inform you that the State Planning Office finds the 2008 Town of Danforth Comprehensive Plan *consistent* with the Act and Rule.

These findings consist of three sections:

1. The first provides the State Planning Office's (SPO) general Conclusions about the Plan, indicating specific strengths and weaknesses.
2. The second section provides Suggestions for how the Town might modify the Plan or issues it might explore to improve or strengthen the Plan to better meet State and local goals. It is not necessary for the Town to respond to suggestions in order to be found consistent with the Act. Suggestions are simply offered as advice on how the Town could improve its Plan.
3. The third section identifies Other Agency Comments that have been received from State agencies, regional councils, or other interested parties. These comments are attached to this letter. As with the Suggestions from our office, incorporation of the Agency Comments are not necessary in order for the Plan to be found consistent, however they point up areas where the town might strengthen sections of the Plan to better address agency interests and goals.

### SECTION I – CONCLUSIONS

The Danforth Plan is well prepared to provide the Town with a good set of policies and strategies for guiding growth and development during the planning period.

The Plan is well organized and contains numerous pictures which make it both informative and enjoyable to read. The Committee has done a commendable job presenting their pride in the past and a commitment to improvements in the future.

The absence of some available information limits the plan's value as a guide for natural resource protection.

## SECTION II – SUGGESTIONS

Below are a number of suggestions intended to improve the accuracy of the Plan as well as to improve the value of the Plan to those tasked with its implementation. Although not necessary to make the plan consistent with the Act, we believe addressing the comments and including the suggestions, particularly those of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, will improve the accuracy of the Plan and enhance its value to those tasked with its implementation.

1. Incorporating the attached suggestions of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) for updating natural resource information is particularly important. A Resource Package containing information gathered from state agencies was prepared by SPO for Danforth in May of 2006, however, it appears that it did not include the most detailed, town-specific natural resource maps and information available through the Beginning with Habitat (BwH) program. Without the benefit of these maps and information, the usefulness of the Comprehensive Plan as a resource and guide for the protection of Danforth's critical natural resources is greatly reduced. We strongly urge the Committee to consult with BwH staff and to revise the draft Plan to incorporate updated maps and data prior to presenting the Plan for adoption at Town Meeting.
2. It appears the resource package also lacked detailed lake watershed maps available from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Citing low development pressure around Danforth's lakes and ponds, DEP's Division of Watershed Management concludes that its Phosphorous Allocation Method need not be included in the Plan. On the other hand, the Transportation section notes increasing subdivision pressure around the East Grand and Hot Brook Lake areas. While the magnitude of this pressure may not warrant phosphorus allocation measures, the Committee may still want to obtain watershed boundary information from DEP to add to the Plan's Water Resources Map.
3. Natural Resources Strategy 1.B. (p. 83) calls for possible development of land-use ordinance standards to preserve scenic views, however it is unclear how this strategy relates to the Million Dollar View Scenic Byway discussed in the Transportation chapter (p. 53-54). That discussion includes the following statement: "...the Million Dollar View Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan should be adopted by the Town of Danforth and referenced in the Comprehensive Plan." The Committee may want to consider proposing this language as an additional Regional Coordination Program strategy in both the Transportation and Natural Resources sections. Doing so would allow the Town to incorporate protection standards from the Corridor Management Plan into the proposed land use ordinance. It would also make it clear that Natural Resources Strategy 1.B refers to scenic resources other than those associated with the Million Dollar Byway.
4. There appears to be a conflict between Natural Resources Strategy 1.B (p. 84) and Land Use Strategy 1.C (p. 137) regarding an Aquifer Overlay District. To eliminate the conflict and to protect the aquifer we suggest removing the word "consider" in the Natural Resources strategy.

5. The Public Facilities and Services section mentions the Danforth Wastewater Treatment Facility (p. 35), however no details are provided about the facility or the sewer system that it serves. A summary similar to that provided for the Danforth Water District, stipulating its owner, operator, governance, infrastructure condition, number of subscribers and capacity to accommodate future growth, is in order. A map showing the service areas of both the water and sewer systems and their major components would also be helpful.

6. Since “Rural Residential” is included among the land use districts shown on the Proposed Land Use Map (p.142), the parenthetical comment in Land Use Strategy 4.A.1 (p.139) questioning the need for such a district should be removed.

### **SECTION III – COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES**

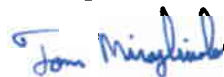
The following agencies reviewed and provided comments on your Plan:

- Department of Environmental Protection (Shoreland Zoning Unit)
- Department of Environmental Protection (Division of Watershed Management)
- Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (Beginning with Habitat Program)
- Department of Conservation (Maine Forest Service)
- Maine Historic Preservation Commission
- Department of Transportation

These attached comments provide additional detail and other suggestions that you might find useful as you complete your final draft. The Office concurs with the comments and recommendations for Plan improvement provided by the agencies, however our finding of consistency is not conditioned on their inclusion.

In closing, thank you again for submitting this plan for review and for all of your hard work so far. If we can be of assistance in any way, please contact me (287-3215 or [tom.miragliuolo@maine.gov](mailto:tom.miragliuolo@maine.gov)). I would be happy to work with the Comprehensive Planning Committee or your consultant to address any questions you might have.

Best regards,



Tom Miragliuolo  
Senior Planner

Cc: Jay Kamm, Northern Maine Development Commission  
Liz Hertz, Director, SPO Land Use Program

## **SECTION III**

### **COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES**