



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
Governor

MARTHA E. FREEMAN
Director

July 18, 2008

Dana Lee, Town Manager
Town of Poland
1231 Maine Street
Poland, ME 04274

Dear Mr. Lee:

Thank you for submitting the 2008 Town of Poland Comprehensive Plan (Enactment Version) to the State Planning Office (Office) for review for consistency with the Maine Growth Management Act (M.R.S.A. 30-A §4312 et seq - the Act). The Town and the Comprehensive Planning Committee are to be congratulated for all of the hard work that went into producing the Plan, and for its time and monetary commitment necessary to complete this Plan.

The Office has completed our review of your Plan for consistency with the Act using the “old” Comprehensive Planning Criteria Rule (Chapter 202), per the request of the Town. We are pleased to inform you that the State Planning Office finds the Town of Poland Comprehensive Plan (Enactment Version) to be *consistent* with the Act and Rule.

These finding consist of three sections:

1. The first provides the State Planning Office’s (SPO) general Conclusions about the Plan, indicating overall 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.
3. The third section identifies Other Agency Comments that have been received from State agencies, regional councils, or other interested parties (attached and printed on blue paper). 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 interest and goals.

SECTION I – CONCLUSIONS

The Comprehensive Planning Committee clearly gathered and considered a good deal of information, and the Plan is well-written. The Committee has written a very thorough plan and it should be noted that State Agency comments (attached on blue paper) all take note of the quality of the plan.

In the Future Land Use Plan (Pages 15-19) the “Limited Residential District” is labeled as a growth area and tends to include much of Poland’s lakefront property. The classification of the district as a growth area for

the purposes of the Growth Management Act is consistent with the Act in this case due to the following factors:

1. The Minimum lot size in the “Limited Residential District” is the same as Poland Rural Residential District.
2. The allowed uses in the “Limited Residential District” are essentially the same as those allowed in the “Rural Residential District”.
3. The vast majority of the land in the “Limited Residential District” has already been developed.
4. The Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Watershed Management did not object to the growth area designation nor have they cited any significant water quality issued. (The Department of Environmental Protections comments are attached).

SECTION II – SUGGESTIONS

Although not necessary for consistency with the Act, some constructive comments that would help strengthen your Plan are outlined below. Please let me know if you would like any additional information or suggestions.

1. Update and be sure to include all Beginning with Habitat and Maine Natural Areas Program data. Some of this data has not been adequately represented in the plan. Particularly inland wading bird and waterfowl habitats are inaccurately represented (some of this missing data may be due to a recent update to the statewide inland wading bird and waterfowl habitat data layer that has been made since the drafting of the plan). Missing data include known occurrences of spotted turtle, bald eagle, and a rare plant occurrence. See these and additional comment in the attached Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife letter (blue paper).
2. The plan should better assess the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve critical natural resource as well as significant historic and archeological resources. The plan should elaborate on the successes and/or shortcomings of existing measures to protect these resources.

SECTION III – OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS

The following agencies reviewed and provided comments on your Plan:

- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- Maine Forest Service
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

These comments are attached (blue sheets). Their comments provide additional detail and other suggestions that you might find useful as you complete your final draft. While the State Planning Office agrees that the inclusion of these suggestions would improve the plan, 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 this plan becomes adopted we ask that you send a final copy to us for our records. If we can be of assistance in

any way, please contact me at 287-3215 or 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: John Maloney, Androscoggin Council of Governments

Enclosures:

- Section IV - COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES.

SECTION IV

COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES