

Maine Quality of Place Council
April 1, 2009
1:30p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Conference Room, State Planning Office, 184 State Street, Augusta

Next Meeting of the Council: TENTATIVELY: Wednesday, May 13, 2009, 1:30pm to 4:30pm. Location to be determined

Present: Council Members: Richard Barringer (chair), Edward Barrett, Martha Freeman, Eleanor Kinney, Donna McNeil, Robert Thompson, Robin Zinchuk, **Council Staff:** Jody Harris, Tim Glidden, Linda LaPlante, Michael LeVert. **Others:** Maggie Drummond, GrowSmart Maine

Introductions and Greetings: Richard Barringer opened the meeting at 1:30pm with the introduction of council members, staff, and as they arrived, guests. The agenda was discussed and all agreed that the order would be changed to discuss business first and Donna McNeil's presentation would round out the afternoon.

Quality of Place Legislation: The Governor's bill, LD 1389; *An Act to Create State and Regional Quality of Place Investment Strategies for High-value Jobs, Products and Services in Maine*, has been printed.

Sue Inches arranged for the sponsors: Sponsor: Senator Dennis Damon; Co-sponsors: Senator Elizabeth Schneider; Senator Jonathan Courtney; Senator Peter Mills; Representative Nancy Smith; Representative John Piotti; Representative Robert Duchesne; Representative Seth Berry.

No substantive changes from January copy. Bill will go to leadership for assignment and then to a committee. There will be a public hearing on the bill. If council members are not able to attend the public hearing, they can write letters to the committee. Dick said that we should get effective representation from around the state and different sectors to advocate for the bill.

Robin Zinchuck reported a large coalition is building against the proposed changes to the Site Law, which is seen as preventing development. She commented that if the QOP bill is aligned with that bill in any way or appears to hold back jobs, construction, etc, there may be a backlash against it. Other council members reinforced that the intent of the QOP bill is not regulatory, but is to help local economic development strategies and put local people in charge.

Staff will create talking points on the economic development, jobs and prosperity goals of the Q of P of bill, and will let Council members know when the public hearing is scheduled.

Quality of Place-related Bond Proposals: A number of bond proposals have been introduced that support Quality of Place, including:

LD 913, Governor's Bond Package

- New Century Program
- Land for Maine's Future
- Working Waterfronts

- Endangered Buildings

LD 775, Communities for Maine's Future

- Community Development Grants
- Endangered Buildings

Related Land and Environmental Bonds

- LD 153 - Land for Maine's Future Board
- LD 222 - State Parks
- LD 230 - Protection of Traditional Hunting Grounds
- LD 684 - Public Land and Water Access, Conservation, Wildlife and Fish Habitat, Outdoor Recreation Including Hunting and Fishing and Farmland Preservation
- LD 776 - Land for Maine's Future Board

Related Economic Development Bonds

- LD 280 - Traditional Meeting Houses
- LD 894 - Support Maine's Traditional Industries
- LD 911 - Affordable Housing

These proposals offer opportunity for the Council to place Quality of Place before the BRED committee as an economic development strategy.

Governor Baldacci: Governor Baldacci arrived at 2:30pm. He was greeted warmly by the Chair and members of the Council. The Governor told of an article he was interviewed for in the *Portland Press Herald* called, "Gaining Mainers by the truckload." Maine leads the nation as moving families' destination by 18%. People are choosing to come to Maine due in large part to quality of place and the quality of Maine people. Bill Nimitz is doing a story on this soon.

The Governor said he appreciates the leadership of the Council. As the economy slows, we need to get the message out to people that we need to cut/balance and invest. We need to work together to build our local and regional economies. Eleanor Kinney noted that if we don't support our Quality of Place, we will not succeed in our other efforts such as R&D and green jobs. The message the Governor is trying to get out is Maine is not as bad off as other states, and he really appreciates the work the Council is doing to help this cause along.

Mobilize Maine: A press conference has been scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2006 at 1:00pm in the Capitol Building, Hall of Flags. The Governor will announce the partnership between the Department of Economic and Community Development, FairPoint Communications, Maine Quality of Place Council, and the state's six economic development districts to build a new strategic approach to development based on Quality of Place assets. Elaine Scott of DECD is organizing the press conference. Dick invited the Council and the previous council members to attend. Council members who attend will be recognized.

A **Mobilize Maine** power-point presentation developed by the EDDs and FairPoint and will be used to introduce and roll-out the effort. The Council previewed the presentation, which provides an overview of:

- Mobilize Maine is...
- What makes it different?
- Asset vs. Needs Based CED
- Core Principles
- Economic Development Districts
- Phase/Milestone Schedule
- 2009 Goals and Objectives
- Long Term Goals and Objectives

Dick suggested that this presentation very well captures the future of the state's economic development focus.

Donna McNeil: Creative Economy – Quality of Place – Maine's Cultural Assets: Donna provided an overview of Maine's creative economy and the arts as a Beacon of Hope that we need to recognize as contributing to Quality of Place in Maine.

- Maine's #1 Growth Industry – 20.6% increase
- Maine's Cultural Community – 17th of 50 states
- The Cultural Traveler –
 - Historical/Cultural travel volume is up 13% from 1996
 - Ages 18-34, 75% interested in trips where they can learn something
 - Spend more - \$623 vs. \$457
 - More likely to have graduate degree
 - Use motel/hotel – 62%
 - Travel longer
 - Travel by air – 19%
- Maine "creative" destinations
 - Bangor
 - Portland
 - Rockland
 - Stonington
 - St. John Valley
 - Eastport
- St John Valley Pilot will:
 - Identify readiness for arts
 - Improve market information
 - Develop a Creative Economy Plan
 - Describe mechanisms for fostering rural innovation and entrepreneurship
 - Provide recommendations for strong leadership

Fine presentation with a video by Eepybird.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40pm **Next meeting: Tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, 2009, 1:30 to 4:30pm**

Respectfully submitted by Linda LaPlante, April 7, 2009