

Appendix A Summary of Meetings

Rangeley Region
Prospective Planning and Zoning Project
HIGHLIGHTS OF RANGELEY MEETINGS

Lincoln and Magalloway Plantations

June 9, 1999 (21 year round residents)

1. Growth. Growth isn't appropriate in this part of the region where remote character is a primary value. Local residents and others especially value the remote character of Aziscohos Lake and Magalloway River. Change the title on the maps from *Future Growth Plan* to *Future Land Use Plan*. Don't fuel speculative development. Want to make sure that local people still can use sites on lakes that are traditionally frequented, if more campsites/development must occur.

Subdivisions. LURC shouldn't allow subdivisions in Lincoln and Magalloway. Residents were angry that they had to fight LURC a couple of years ago when an applicant proposed rezoning for a subdivision that would have doubled the population. Development should be much more gradual and fit remote character and limited services.

Public Services. Services are limited in remote areas. Visitors in the backcountry expect plantation EMT's to arrive quickly in emergencies but it takes at least an hour to get in there, even if the unit is readily available. Impacts from remote campsites/development also include noise and other nuisances. Landowners should oversee public use sites full time not just weekdays.

- 4 Zones. Residents are happy living in the Management Zone because it doesn't encourage growth, but wish they had more flexibility in the kinds of uses permitted. Want home businesses and small businesses that allow local people to make a living and that fit local character.

Permitting. Some expressed frustration with LURC permitting. Cited inconsistency in how LURC approves building lots. A local family owned a lot for some time and was told that the lot was too small and

unbuildable. Someone else bought it and got LURC approval. Local people believe that the answer should be the same no matter who applies.

June 23, 1999 (14 residents)

1. Preferred Uses. The group discussed the kind of businesses that fit local character and needs. The following uses were preferred:
 - gift and bait shops
 - small restaurants, but no drive throughs
 - convenience stores w/ gas
 - commercial housekeeping cabins
 - small motels (not more than 10 to 20 units like the one in Errol)
 - bed and breakfasts
 - fly casting schools but not children's camps unless they have their own medical services
 - home occupations

One person stated that the plantations need to move toward a recreation-based economy, citing Bethel as a community to watch. Attendees generally agreed that they don't want this area to become like "The Forks" with a proliferation of commercial outfitters. They don't want to lose the area's unspoiled character. Already they have people in their backyards on the Magalloway River. Would rather encourage light, informal uses, truly dispersed, slow-paced, non-commercialized, such as forestry, touring cabins, seasonal camps. Sarah Medina from Seven Islands attended and explained the Pingree Heir's interest in development options, noting that the company may not do anything, at least in the near future. People expressed general support for low impact use.

Standards. Make sure that remote and local character is conserved through standards. The group favored limiting noise and night lighting, and ensuring that architecture, materials, and setbacks fit in. Keep businesses relatively small.

Services. Attendees liked the "code of the woods" idea, commented that self reliance is an important part of being in remote areas.

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- 4 Land Stewardship. Litter and refuse are a problem with campers in remote campsites. Don't permit them unless landowners/managers accept responsibility for oversight. Want land managers to retain public shore access in remote areas, especially places traditionally used by local people.
- 5 Minimum Lot Size. Want a minimum lot size that fits local character. Many people favored 5 acres per unit but some felt this would make lots too expensive for local young people to afford. Three acres seemed more reasonable to most, though one person thought it should be one.
- 6 Zones. Like "rural settlement" and "remote recreation" districts, but don't see the need for a "rural highway" district locally because of the extensive shoreland zone along Rte 16 between Wilson's Mills and Magalloway.

Sandy River Plantation

August 23 1999 (27, mostly year round residents)

1. Process. Inform all landowners of next meeting. Hold public hearing at a time when seasonal residents can attend -- if not summer, then on a weekend.
2. Zones. Need an alternative to existing "general development" zone that allows slightly larger structures than currently is the case. Don't need convenience stores in "community settlement" district (current residential zone) if are allowed in two other zones, i.e. "community center" (current general development) and "rural settlement" (new zone). Gas stations belong in either "rural settlement" or "rural highway" (new zones). Residential zone on shore of Long Pond should be stricter, limited to primarily single family homes and camps.

Locations. Consensus was reached on limiting commercial development to a particular part of the plantation. General support expressed for such a zone at the intersection of Route 4 and South Shore Road, though some attendees had reservations about wetlands and the lake. One

person suggested putting the land at the transfer station in an industrial zone.

4. Standards. Strong support for standards limiting noise, night lighting, traffic impacts, air and water quality impacts, environmental harm in general, and making sure new development fits with the appearance of traditional development in the area.

Other Issues. Make sure zoning changes do not cause property taxes to bear the impact of speculative land values. Assessors now assess based on current use. Make sure that prospective zones will be flexible enough to respond to new ideas or needs, though attendees generally agreed that zoning petitions should not be easily approved after prospective zoning occurs. One attendee asked for information on the number of zoning permits over the last several years.

September 13, 1999 (21 year round and seasonal residents)

1. Regional Issues. Don't permit development that will sap the vitality of existing development, i.e. Rangeley Downtown and Oquossic.
2. Shoreland Residential Zone. When asked whether the group had a collective opinion about whether a new residential shoreland zone should be created, one person said she worried about making the zone too restrictive. Her children may want to create a bed and breakfast at some time, for instance. Another asked if LURC makes a distinction between camp rentals and bed and breakfasts, and was told that LURC does not get involved in whether people rent their camps to the public, but regulates B & Bs currently as a home occupation, and is considering changes. The group decided it wanted more time to think about whether another residential zone should be created.
3. Favored Uses. The group reviewed the responses of the first 14 people from Sandy River Plt who had completed the checklist concerning preferred uses for the zone changes. It was noted that people seem to be filling the checklist out based upon what they want locally not what the jurisdiction should allow in general in each zone. One person noted the apparent lack of interest in a "rural highway" zone based upon the kinds of uses that people had checked. One person asked if produce stands

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mean only site-grown produce; and noted one could probably not make a go of such an operation without bringing in produce.

- 4 Small Group Discussions. People attending the meeting broke into 4 groups to review a draft zoning map that Leslie Ferguson, the assessors' representative on this issue, had put together after talking with landowners about their ideas. The group reports follow:

Group I.

Instead of "community center" (current general development), make the stretch along Route 4 from Greenvale Cove to Socher Drive residential because of its environmental sensitivity. Why not put the two potential campground areas in a "remote recreation" district (new zone). Make sure that all commercial uses are well buffered. Consider not including the Beauregard property (So Shore and Route 4) in a community center zone because of its sensitivity. LURC staff noted that the zoning change to D-GN has already occurred, but only for a portion of the land.

Group II.

Members of this group think that there should be no change in character for Beaver Mountain Lake zoning. It should stay residential.

Group III.

This group generally agreed with Leslie's map. But they would allow more types of business to occur in residential areas along Route 4 from the Ellis to Webber properties, provided that on-site parking and time of operation limitations apply. Businesses such as art galleries should be allowed. Prefer larger lot sizes for remaining developable land on Long Pond (Beaver Mountain Lake) so that undeveloped character is conserved.

Group IV.

This group also generally agreed with Leslie's map, but are concerned that homes in commercial areas would be taxed at the commercial value. LURC staff noted that this is one reason for calling the development zones "settlement" and "community

center" rather than "commercial" because the jurisdiction is primarily residential settlement areas with compatible businesses. One person in this group mentioned to staff also the idea of indexing lot sizes to the size and impact of businesses, rather than having an arbitrary minimum.

Rangeley Plantation

August 16, 1999 (39, mostly year round residents)

1. General discussion. Several attendees voiced their displeasure with government in general, LURC, and the Town of Rangeley. Many stated that they feel that only year-round residents should have a say about zoning districts. Some were displeased that LURC had not sent notices to residents about the meeting. This meeting was the first time many had heard that LURC was considering changes of a larger scale than former LURC staff member Will Johnston had mentioned. The group requested that meeting notices be sent ahead of the next meeting to all landowners. In response to the staff's request for ideas about the kinds of uses and zones that Rangeley Plt people desire, the group agreed that LURC should put descriptions of the proposed new zones in writing.
2. Regional Vision. One person spoke against the draft regional vision that proposes that commercial business serving regional needs are best concentrated in the Town of Rangeley downtown and Oquossic. He believes that the Town of R. has run out of room for such business. Competition is good. Wants a grocery store in Rangeley Plt. The speaker's ideas were not generally supported. One person spoke of the conflict between development and his desire that the plantation's "wilderness" character endure. Others are more concerned about making sure the place is a "living, breathing community."

Issues. People generally agreed that regulations and enforcement should be fairly applied; and that new uses should not drive up property taxes (examples cited include: cemeteries, private schools demanding special education assistance).

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4 Zones. People generally agreed that commercial development should be concentrated in the vicinity of Route 17 and Herbie Welch Road, though not strung along Route 17 because of its status as a scenic highway.

August 30, 1999 (56+, about half and half year round and seasonal residents, 1-2 from other communities)

1. Enforcement. While many supported the general direction that LURC is headed with zoning changes, they do not feel LURC should move ahead unless changes are accompanied by stronger enforcement. What good is planning without enforcement? They cited loopholes in subdivision law that a landowner on Cupsuptic Lake has used to create a subdivision that LURC had turned down.

Process. One speaker believes that the 20-year planning timeframe is too short; and that more townships belong in the study area. Urged staff to be as precise and specific as possible without being inflexible in detailing allowed uses. The context for planning should be the region not just a single plantation.

Zoning changes. Perhaps as many as half of those who attended agreed that the system should stay the same -- existing standards offer enough protection, such as prohibiting gravel extraction in residential districts and requiring shoreland buffers. Suggested that noise should be handled through nuisance laws. Asked whether the plantation has the option to keep system as is. Staff replied that revisions to development district regulations will probably change because people at other meetings generally agree that some changes are essential. Zone locations don't necessarily need to change in R. Plt. but people need to understand that criteria for approving rezoning petitions will be more difficult to meet in future if this planning effort is to be worthwhile.

About half (or so) agreed that residential zone should be more restrictive in shoreland areas to maintain the non-commercial, 'get away from it all' character of these areas. Many favored allowing only single family homes/camps in such areas, excluding home occupations and other businesses. Supporters of changes in the regulations cited performance standards that would be helpful, including: noise, odor, water quality,

and traffic

One person spoke in favor of allowing child and elderly day care in residential areas, (making no distinction between shore and upland residential areas). Beauty parlors and home offices were cited as acceptable home occupations by some.

Local input. People appreciated the opportunity to share their opinions with LURC, the community having asked for some time to do so.

Townships: C, D, E, Adamstown, and Richardsontown

August 24, 1999 (11 landowners, including 1 year round and 8 seasonal residents)

Utilities. One person questioned whether restrictions on utilities should be mandatory, but could see appropriateness of limiting them at South Arm Campground.

Locations for development. The group generally agreed that they want the lakes to stay the same. Some questioned why Lower Richardson has to accept more development when Upper Richardson will get little more. Why shouldn't development, if any has to occur, be distributed between both, still conserving their remote character?

If development has to occur on Lower Richardson Lake, the group preferred remote campsites to additional camp lease sites, but want campsites restricted to places without archeological or historical value: (e.g. avoid Whitney Point, Richardson Farm). If camps are developed, existing camp owners would prefer them to be located in pockets, but not so close together that they detract from remote experience. Would like to see a schematic drawing of how camps can be sited; Seven Islands subdivision on Aziscohos Lake was cited as a model. Prefer camps to sporting camp development and housekeeping cabins. A certain type of housekeeping cabin operation may be appealing, e.g. rental camps like Macannamak camps on Haymock Lake.

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Management. If remote areas are developed, LURC needs to ensure strong landowner oversight of users to avoid behaviors that are out of keeping with the remote experience.

- 4 Densities. The group questioned the wisdom of having smaller minimum lot sizes in the proposed “remote recreation” district than in the “rural settlement” district.

Performance standards. Don’t want to hear or see development!! Believe that relaxed clearing standards for sporting camps or rental camps would be unfair.

- 6 Enforcement. Want effective enforcement citing Cupsuptic Lake development as an example. Want adherence to standards, too, by state agencies. One attendee gave the example of MDOT road improvements where a stream has gradually been obliterated on Route 16.
7. Union Water Power Co. Zoning revisions may penalize UWP because company has already given up easements and agreed to development densities through FERC relicensing process. To avoid problems, UWP may proceed with development applications under existing rules before any zoning changes are made.

Dallas Plantation

August 31, 1999 (8 residents, 2 corporate landowners, 2 Madrid residents)

- 1 Problems with existing system. Rezoning takes a long time to go through. The uncertainty/lack of specificity about what is allowed is difficult.
- 2 Capital improvement planning. One assessor asked who would pay for capital improvement planning. Cited the Saddleback Road as a problem for the plantation because Sandy River gets the tax revenues while Dallas has to maintain the road.

Process. One person asked how much local opinion would count in the Commission’s deliberations. Staff replied that the Commission takes a

particular interest in local opinions and wants to hear them first, but welcomes and must take into account all opinions.

- 4 Zoning Locations. Assessors had talked to Dallas Company about putting some of the company’s land into commercial use on Route 16. A company representative reported that the company is now thinking about housing that is affordably priced in that location. One person suggested that any new development should locate as close to the Town of Rangeley as possible. Another advised against permitting backland development around lake shores, i.e. Loon Lake.
- 5 Issues. Don’t make changes that will increase property values and make things less affordable. Consider centralizing septic systems and green space in developments. Make lots large enough to anticipate septic system failures. Don’t impact how people make a living in their homes.

August 31, 1999 (special committee meeting: 4 residents, 1 corporate landowner)

- 1 Zoning locations. The committee came up with options for the application of new zones throughout the community. LURC staff will put the zones on a map for the committee to review at its next meeting.

October 6, 1999 (special committee meeting: residents, corporate landowner)

Planned development zone. Existing zone is too cumbersome. Requires too much up front investment before rezoning determination. Why can’t a landowner prepare a conceptual master plan with phases, and do more detailed studies as development permits are sought for each phase? Apply the General Development zone instead, but with the master plan caveat. Saddleback is permitted for about 540 homes now. Allow some flexibility in siting some of these in Dallas Plantation instead of in the existing Planned Development area.

Connector road. In the long term, the community wants a connector road between Saddleback Road/Dallas Hill Road and Route 16. Plan

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future growth areas so that landowners are encouraged to work toward this goal as development occurs.

Growth area priorities. Priority areas for growth include: the area south of Dallas Hill Rd. adjacent to the Town of Rangeley and Sandy River Plt.; the area between Saddleback Lake and Route 16 (where connector road would be located); and the area closest to Saddleback Ski Area. The committee proposed other areas as well.

4. Public facilities. Plan ahead for a post office, in the vicinity of the Town Office, in case the community grows substantially as well as for more public works.
5. Golf courses. Should be allowed in residential zones.

DISCUSSIONS WITH INDIVIDUAL LARGE LANDOWNERS/MANAGERS IN RANGELEY AREA

(Seven Islands, IP, Mead, Dallas Co., Franklin Timber Co., S.C. Noyes and Co., Cuisineau)

The representatives of one or more companies brought up the following points:

Flexibility. Provide incentives/options so landowners can hang on to their lands without subdividing. Allow more flexibility for uses in the existing management zone that are compatible with forestry management, i.e. enough dispersed, low impact recreation density to be more attractive than creating 2 in 5 year subdivisions. Cite having to subdivide if want to establish and lease a system of remote rental yurts or cabins for touring cross-country skiers or snowmobilers. Give landowners the option of defining density in exchange for enhancement of public values. Consider allowing large landowners the ability to sell or trade development rights for application in places where growth is deemed appropriate. Consider allowing more intensive development (such as condos) than currently is allowed in appropriate areas in exchange for money for public purchase of an area with higher resource value.

2. Backcountry/shoreland recreation. Define the limits of backcountry capacity based upon available research. Keep development well back from water and ensure common land on the shore, i.e. don't load up backland density with only a small amount of common land. Cluster to increase density. Allow landowners who own land on more than one body to trade off densities among the properties to concentrate on those where development is most appropriate and allowed.
3. High Mountain Areas. Consider an approach like NH's which allows companies to put low impact rental cabins/yurts for hikers above 2700' following state guidelines and through a review process rather than having an outright prohibition.
4. To sell or lease. Landowners face the dilemma of what to do with high value lands. If they lease, they get requests to allow electrification. If they try to sell large tracts, they have difficulty finding a buyer because of the uncertainty of LURC permitting. If they sell off lots or lease lots to camp owners, they come under pressure to make the road public and sell off more land. They must also respond to requests from communities to set aside land for public facilities and community expansion.
5. Traffic/Highway Access. Landowners are encountering more problems for trucks from highway development in difficult places such as Route 4 in Sandy River. Increased conflicts also arise from sharing highway with more motorists, e.g. need a truck route around Height of Land but can't afford to build one – irony: paper company built the original route.
6. Other problems. Favor going to an organized community when locating a major forest-processing facility because they don't have to contend with public outcry against the project and they frequently garner local support. Find permitting process to be faster in New Hampshire than in Maine communities or LURC.
7. Public Use Accommodation Zone. Create a zone where landowners can accommodate dispersed recreational development such as lease camps, sporting camps, remote rental camps, and campgrounds/campsites.

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Because landowners cannot determine which specific parts of their lands along a lake, for instance, are the right places for such a zone, consider zoning the whole shore or assigning density allocations to each lake management class.

Richardson Twp: Upper Dam – Union Water Power Company
Twp C: Middle Dam – Union Water Power Company; shore of
Lower Richardson – Pingree Family/Seven Islands

8. Resource Processing Zone. Create a zone where primary and secondary resource processing enterprises, along with support housing and services, can be developed by a company. Current planned development district has too many problems for such use, but it, or another zone, could be revised for this purpose.
9. Incentives rather than penalties. Landowners who have kept their lands in forestry use have been penalized as restrictions have tightened over the years. Those who have already developed have benefited while those who have thus far conserved their lands are penalized. Densities should be prorated among landowners to offset unfairness. Protect against the shadow effect of conserved or public lands, i.e. the argument that a place should be protected since it is next to lands that have been conserved.
10. Subdivision. Avoid fragmentation by putting an upper limit on the size of lots subdivided for development use, rather than establishing only minimum lot sizes.
11. Permit by rule. The Commission directed the staff to pursue more opportunities for permit by rule. Staff has not done so. Want permit by rule for projects that do not have permanent footprints and for small accessory structures such as woodsheds.
12. Development locations. The locations under discussion for prospective zoning changes include:
 - Dallas Plt: east side of Rte 16 in Dallas Plantation – Dallas Co.;
 - Saddleback access road vicinity – Franklin Timber Co.
(Saddleback)
 - Sandy River Plt.: south east shore of Long Pond – Cuisineau
 - Lincoln Plt: shore of Aziscohos Lake – Pingree Family/Seven Islands