



WASHINGTON COUNTY
COMMUNITY GUIDED PLANNING and
ZONING PROCESS

Planning Committee Meeting Minutes and
Follow Up "to dos"
5-7 PM April 21, 2016



Torrey Hall Room 228 University of Maine at Machias - Machias, Maine

Attendees:

Judy East, Washington County Council of Governments
John Hough, Edmunds Twp
Karen Bolstridge, Land Use Planning Commission
Stacie Beyer, Land Use Planning Commission
Crystal Hitchings, Washington County Council of Governments, Downeast&Acadia Regional Tourism
Heron Weston, Interim Supervisor Washington County UT
Charles Rudelitch, Sunrise County Economic Council
Al May, Maine CDC/Trescott resident
Tora Johnson, University of Maine GIS Service Center and Laboratory
Susan Hatton, Sunrise County Economic Council
Heather Almeda, St Croix International Waterway Commission

Regrets:

Sarah Strickland
David Bell, Cherryfield Foods, ME Wild Blueberries
John Bryant, American Forest Management
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Jacob Van De Sande, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Dwayne Shaw, Downeast Salmon Federation
John Dudley, Town of Alexander

Meeting Goals: a) finalize decisions on where to conduct prospective zoning, b) familiarize ourselves with the LUPC zoning districts we will use in our next step, and c) review method and outputs of suitability analyses and provide ranking input to the models

Review of other-residential permit activity (Charts in Powerpoint; analysis in handout)

The Committee reviewed the addition of other-residential permit activity along with new residential permit activity. Recall that if the # of new residential permits is more than 20 permits over 20 years, then we would conduct prospective zoning in: Trescott, Cathance, Marion, Edmunds, and Baring. If the # of other-residential permits is more that 100 permits over 20 years, then we would conduct prospective zoning in: Trescott, Grand Lake Stream, Cathance, Edmunds, and Marion.

We also looked at trends over the 1995-2015 time period. These charts are provided in the 4-21-2016 Powerpoint and group townships in descending order from the most # of other-residential permits to the least:

- a) The 5 UTs and Plantations with more than 100 other-residential permits between 1995-2015 (Trescott, Grand Lake Stream, Cathance, Edmunds, and Marion)
- b) The 5 UTs and Plantations with between 50 and 100 other-residential permits between 1995-2015 (Big Lake, Forest City, T6 ND BPP, Baring, and Brookton)
- c) The 5 UTs and Plantations with between 40 and 50 other-residential permits between 1995-2015 (Lambert Lake, Devereaux, Greenlaw Chopping, Twp 18 MD, and Twp24)
- d) The final set of UTs and Plantations with between 20 and 35 other-residential permits between 1995-2015 (Twp 26, Forest Twp, Kossuth, Twp 19, and Sakom)

UTs and Plantation with 20 or less other-residential permits over 20 years are not plotted.

The following conclusions can be drawn from tracking other-residential permits over time:

- a) As with new residential permits, the highest amount of other-residential permit activity is clustered in the same 4 UTs (Trescott, Cathance, Edmunds, Marion). However Grand Lake Stream has replaced Baring among the top 5 MCDs and, while other-residential permit activity is generally declining in the 4 top UTs, it is increasing in recent years (2013-2015) in Grand Lake Stream.
- b) Among the second set of MCDs, those with between 50 and 100 other-residential permits over the 1995-2015 period, there is a steady decrease in activity in Brookton and Forest City, steady permit activity in Baring, and spurts of activity, some recent in Big Lake and Twp 6 (encompassing West Grand Lake).
- c) Among the third set of MCDs, those with between 40 and 50 other-residential permits over the 1995-2015 period, there is a steady decline in activity in Lambert Lake and Greenlaw Chopping, and more recent activity in Devereaux, Twp 24 and Twp18 in the Western Region.
- d) Among the 4th set of MCDs, those with between 20 and 35 other-residential permits over the 1995-2015 period, there is a steady decline in Forest Twp and Kossuth, more recent activity in Twp 26, and limited but steady activity in Twp 19 and Sakom.

We incorporated these results into the Criteria Summary chart and concluded:

The first tier will examine entire townships for prospective zoning and includes 4 Townships (Trescott, Edmunds, Marion, Cathance) and 2 Plantations (Baring and Grand Lake Stream). The 2nd tier will propose prospective zoning in portions of 2 townships (Big Lake, Twp 24) and a 3rd tier includes all of the 1st and 2nd tier townships plus Forest City, Lambert Lake and Brookton where the Rural Business Development zone developed in Aroostook County will be adapted for Washington County. We also recognized that the county wide recreational analysis may modify these conclusions as we continue our work.

Recreational cluster analysis; (Map and model output) – Heron Weston

Heron displayed the results of the recreation cluster analysis and drilled down into the analysis to describe the factors (recreation assets) and how they can be weighted in the model. All of the suitability models allow iterative feedback on how to weight inputs.

Heron, Tora and the Committee observed that some data was missing and offered the following steps/people to complete the inputs (where possible).

- ATV data above Route 6 – Heron to contact Aroostook County ATV associations
- Recreation (camping, canoeing, hiking) in the upper St Croix region – Heather to provide input and Tora to examine layers from last years project for the SCIWC by Heidi Powell
- Add LUPC Recreational Lodging Facilities' layer – Judy to provide Heron with Tim Beaucage contact info

Other comments:

- The # of recreational assets in the southern half of the county is so concentrated that it can reduce the visual impact of recreational assets in the northern half; this argues for running the model with the county cut in half or in each of the 4 sub-regions separately.
- Consider adding Coast Guard Stations to analysis? This led to the decision to look at Tora's development suitability analysis and to postpone the review of the existing zones until the start of our May meeting.

Development Suitability Analysis – Tora Johnson

Tora provided a demonstration of the development suitability model including model inputs and the mapped countywide output. The entire model essentially combines multiple small models (with assumptions) within two larger sub-models; all of which combines to create the entire development suitability output.

The two larger sub models focus on 1) proximity to residential and commercial development and 2) resource-dependent industry needs. Inputs to each sub-model are based on responses to the Criteria for Prospective Zoning survey circulated in late January – mid February (12 responses from Planning Committee; 11 responses from stakeholders) and reviewed at the Feb 25 Planning Committee meeting.

Note that the 2 other models (Conservation Suitability and Recreation Suitability) also incorporate the weightings provided by the Criteria for Prospective Zoning survey.

We reviewed the model and the output and suggested the following shifts in weighting of model factors:

- Add Lubec, Princeton, Danforth and Baileyville as “service centers” recognizing they provide significant services to the UT even though they do not meet the statewide definition of a Service Center according to the 1998 report to the Maine Legislative Task Force on Regional Service Centers (see https://www1.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/service_centers.shtml). Calais, Machias, Eastport and Milbridge do meet this definition and all are in the model except for Eastport as it is greater than 10 miles of driving distance from any UT. Note that the model uses

Euclidian distance, i.e. “as the crow flies” but we are aware of driving distances and can adjust the model as we go with such knowledge.

- Tora will request Life Flight points from Mike Hinerman and add them to the Ambulance database.
- Proximity to ambulance, fire/EMS, and police was initially grouped as one service in measuring proximity so they would not overemphasize the model as 3 inputs. Discussion concluded that this could result in equating Wesley with Calais, which is inaccurate. Tora will separate the 3 first response services to recognize the significance of larger first response capacity but attempt to dampen the overemphasis of that separation based on actual service possibility.
- There is a distance-from-fire-suppression-services limit for insurance purposes. Tora will check with an insurance agent to see if that provides an objective proximity criterion for us.
- Note GLS and Baring have fire departments – Heron will check to see if they are in the layer; if not add them.
- The distance from power and major roads criterion will be reclassified to 3 ranges: 0.25, 0.5, and 1 mile.
- Soils interpreted for their suitability to sustain low-density development are available countywide. However these values have not been added to the soils attribute table north of Route 9. Tora will add them.

Existing Zoning Districts presentation – Stacie Beyer - postponed

We chose, after Heron’s presentation of the Recreation Suitability Analysis, to postpone the Existing Zoning District presentation and, instead, to continue with our examination of the Development Suitability analysis. This kept our minds in that process and allowed us to provide input we will use in the May meeting. Recall that we will be using the results of all 4 Suitability Analyses (conservation; recreation; proximity to residential and commercial development; and resource-dependent industry needs) in May to inform our draft prospective zoning decisions. Thus a draft agenda for May follows:

1. Existing Zoning District presentation depicting images of development types in the zones we will be using for prospective zoning; descriptions of existing zones; proportion of different types of zones countywide and in each UT/Plantation.
2. Review of revised suitability analysis results; tweaking assumptions in real time
3. Interactive prospective zoning exercise using:
 - a. Single UT focus – likely starting with those that ranked highest in our criteria summary (therefore Trescott, Edmunds, Baring etc.)
 - b. Results of combined suitability analyses
 - c. Map app tool that allows drawing layers onto the output above

Next meetings: Monday May 23 5-7PM and Tuesday June 21 5-7PM

Both will be held in Rm 228 Torrey Hall University of Maine at Machias

Respectfully Submitted
Judy East