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# HCPC NEWSLETTER

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Hancock County Planning Commission

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## PLANNING NEWS

*By Tom Martin*

### **A SUMMARY OF RELEVANT STATE LEGISLATION ENACTED IN THE 2005-2006 SESSION**

Here are some of the more significant laws pertaining to planning and land use that were enacted in the most recent Maine legislative session. For details on a specific law, please check: <http://janus.state.me.us/legis/>. Feel free to contact Tom Martin if you have any questions.

#### ***LD 1930 – An Act Regarding Working Waterfront Covenants. Enacted; PL 2005, c. 574***

This Act implements authority given to the Land for Maine's Future Board to be a party to working waterfront covenants and provides the definitions and provisions for creation, conveyance, acceptance and duration of working waterfront covenants, along with provisions for the scope and validity of such covenants, as well as applicability provisions.

#### ***LD 141 – An Act To Ensure Proper Disposal of Debris and Protection of the Environment. Enacted; PL 2005, c. 617***

This emergency Act establishes that wood from construction and demolition debris may not exceed 50% of the total fuel by weight combusted in a boiler.

***LD 1535 – An Act Making Improvements to the Laws Regarding Local Land Use Ordinances. Enacted; PL 2005, c. 597***

This Act (1) requires the municipality's "implementation program" of its comprehensive plan to include something about the municipality's "full range of spending and borrowing powers"; (2) clarifies that "impact fees" may be charged to cover a portion of the costs associated with new development; (3) clarifies that a development moratoria can be applied to all development or only certain types of development; and (4) establishes a three-part requirement for municipal rate of growth ordinances consisting of: (i) the number of permits allowed must equal at least 105% of the ten-year average number of permits issued; (ii) there must be an additional 10% set aside for affordable housing; and (iii) the number of permits allowed must be recalculated every 3 years.

***LD 1860 – An Act Concerning Certain Provisions Regarding Protection of Natural Resources Related to Activities in Coastal Areas. Enacted; PL 2005, c. 548***

This emergency Act clarifies that certain emergency actions may be taken without a permit when the integrity of a seawall, bulkhead, retaining wall or similar structure in a coastal sand dune system is destroyed or threatened by specifying that protective materials may be left in place to shore up a structure for no more than 18 months and by providing that actions taken to strengthen structures must be limited to those necessary to alleviate the imminent threat.

**CLUES TO GAUGE THE CHANCES FOR SMALL TOWN SURVIVAL**

*Detect if your community has what it takes to survive with a list of 20 clues from the Heartland Center for Leadership Development.*

Why does one community fare better than another? No significant differences appear, yet one town prospers while another withers.

The Heartland Center for Leadership Development has produced "Clues to Rural Community Survival." The information it provides on survival for small communities is ageless. Every model of community development that spews forth a new way of working actually owes its roots to some very basic principles.

Authors Vicki Luther and Milan Wall list 20 clues to the survival of small rural communities. These clues act as a map for people to use to look at their own community and grade it accordingly. They are:

- Evidence of community pride.
- Emphasis on quality in business and community life.
- Willingness to invest in the future.
- Participatory approach to community decision making.
- Cooperative community spirit.
- Realistic appraisal of future opportunities.
- Awareness of competitive positioning.
- Knowledge of the physical environment.
- Active economic development program.
- Deliberate transition of power to a younger generation of leaders.
- Acceptance of women in leadership roles.
- Strong belief in and support of education.
- Problem-solving approach to providing health care.
- Strong multi-generational family orientation.
- Strong presence of traditional institutions integral to community life.
- Sound and well maintained infrastructure.
- Careful use of fiscal resources.
- Sophisticated use of information sources.
- Willingness to seek help from the outside.
- Conviction that, in the long run, you have to do it yourself.

Any community can use these points to assess its situation. Many small rural communities do very well in some areas but fall short in others. Take a look at your own community and use these 20 clues to see if you have what it takes to survive.

Contact Michael Holton at [michaelh@cfra.org](mailto:michaelh@cfra.org) for more information.

## **SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT AND PERSONAL PROPERTY RIGHTS:**

### ***Striking a Balance in Hancock County***

*by Tom Martin*

### ***Striking a Balance* workshop scheduled for September 28**

The HCPC, in conjunction with the Union River Watershed Coalition, the Downeast RC & D and Gouldsboro planning board, is sponsoring another in its series of workshops on September 28 from 5:00 PM – 8:30 PM at the VFW Hall on Washington Junction Road in Ellsworth. The preliminary agenda includes the film **Save Our Land, Save Our Towns:** (produced by Thomas Hylton) which focuses on sprawl and alternative ways for regions to grow and prosper. Also featured will be a presentation by Ciona Ulbrich of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust on conservation easements as one option for land protection. The workshop series has been made possible in part through generous funding from Bar Harbor Banking and Trust.

Registration is required by September 22nd. The \$17 fee includes a light meal, soft drinks and copies of the hand-outs. Please contact Sheri Walsh at the HCPC (667-7131 e-mail: [hcpc@hcpcme.org](mailto:hcpc@hcpcme.org)) for registration details.

## **NEW STANDARDS ENACTED FOR VERNAL POOLS**

*adapted from a DEP fact sheet*

### **What is a vernal pool?**

*Vernal pools* or "spring pools" are shallow depressions that usually contain water for only part of the year. They are often associated with forested wetlands. While no specific data are, as of yet, available, vernal pools are wide spread in Hancock County.

### **Why are vernal pools important?**

The vernal pools serve as essential breeding habitat for certain species of wildlife, including salamanders and frogs (amphibians). Juvenile and adult amphibians associated with vernal pools provide an important food source for small carnivores as well as large game species.

In Maine, species that must have access to vernal pools in order to survive and reproduce include wood frogs, spotted and blue-spotted salamanders (two types of mole salamanders) and fairy shrimp. Avoiding impacts to significant vernal pools and their surrounding habitat is important because many amphibian species are pool specific: they must return to the pond in which they were born to breed.

The loss of vernal pools and the critical terrestrial habitat around them leads to local loss of amphibian species, a decrease in biodiversity, and a decline in food available for many other animals that live in these areas. In Maine, vernal pools with high value for wildlife are called *significant vernal pools*.

### **Are all vernal pools considered significant?**

Not all vernal pool habitats are considered "significant". In general, a vernal pool habitat is "significant" if it has a high habitat value, either because (1) a state-listed threatened or endangered species, such as a spotted turtle, uses it to complete a critical part of its life history, or (2) there is a notable abundance of specific wildlife, such as blue spotted salamander, wood frog, or fairy shrimp.

### **I have a vernal pool on my property. How do I know if it is "significant"?**

The specific criteria describing a significant vernal pool are listed in DEP Rules, Chapter 335, and allow these resources to be identified in the field.

Using these criteria:

- A person who has experience and training in either wetland ecology or wildlife ecology

may identify and document a significant vernal pool; or

- The DEP may provide a written determination concerning whether or not a vernal pool habitat is significant.

### **Are significant vernal pools protected?**

Starting September 1, 2007, *significant vernal pool habitat* is protected by law under the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA). An activity in, on, over or adjacent to these areas must avoid unreasonable impacts on the significant vernal pool habitat and obtain approval from the DEP, through a Permit by Rule or individual approval.

"Significant vernal pool habitat" includes the vernal pool itself and the area within a 250 foot radius of the spring or fall high water mark of the pool, which is considered critical terrestrial habitat. Most activities within 75 feet of the significant vernal pool habitat require permits and are eligible for Permit by Rule.

### **What happens if I have a significant vernal pool on my property and need a permit for my project?**

A permit by rule is available if certain standards are met, and can be approved within 14 days. The standards do not create a mandatory setback or no-build zone, but do affect what can be done, so it is advisable to plan ahead. For more information on the NRPA, a copy of the rules addressing significant vernal pools, application forms, and related materials, see the NRPA page at:

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docstand/nrpapage.htm>

### **What are the standards I have to meet to get a Permit by Rule?**

- No disturbance within the vernal pool depression.
- Maintain a minimum of 75% of the critical terrestrial habitat as unfragmented forest with at least a partly-closed canopy of overstory trees to provide shade, deep litter and woody debris.

- Maintain or restore forest corridors connecting wetlands and significant vernal pools.
- Minimize forest floor disturbance.
- Maintain native understory vegetation and downed woody debris.

If the Permit by Rule standards cannot be met, the applicant may apply for an individual permit.

### **Does it help if I want to restore some of the land that was previously developed?**

If more than 25% of the critical terrestrial habitat has been previously developed, restoring a portion of the developed area through supplemental planting or regrowth of native forest plants and trees may be considered toward meeting these standards. "Developed area" includes disturbed areas, excluding areas that are returned to a condition with the same drainage patterns and the same or improved cover type that existed prior to the disturbance.

### **I have questions, need hard copies of materials, or would like to request a field determination.**

Contact the Bangor DEP regional office, and ask to speak to the "on-call" person in the Land & Water Bureau, Division of Land Resource Regulation, 106 Hogan Road, Bangor, ME 0440; Phone: 207-941-4570 or 1-888-769-1137. Also, feel free to contact Tom Martin at the HCPC. The HCPC will be keeping towns informed on these rules as new information becomes available.

## **HANCOCK COUNTY BROWNFIELDS INITIATIVE**

The HCPC is seeking U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funding to conduct an assessment of potential brownfields sites in Hancock County. This grant would allow us to hire a consultant to determine if a site has environmental problems and help with the clean-up. This makes a property safe for reuse.

### **What are brownfields?**

Brownfields “are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination” (EPA). Potential sites in Hancock County include, but are not limited to, abandoned metal mines and waste disposal sites, closed factories, former gasoline stations and junk yards.

### **Why should a municipal government be concerned about brownfields?**

Generally speaking, brownfields generate little tax revenue and may be a threat to the value of adjoining properties due to contamination or a blighted appearance. There have been many successful cases in Maine of property being cleaned up and converted to a more productive use. For example, brownfields funds have been used in Ellsworth and Bangor as part of the waterfront revitalization process. At a time when prime industrial and commercial space is in high demand, cleaned-up brownfields sites offer a good location for many businesses. In some cases, brownfields can be reused as open space or a recreational area.

### **How can we obtain funding?**

The first step is for the HCPC to obtain a county-wide grant for the initial assessment work. A successful grant requires substantial community involvement and we need a steering committee that reflects a cross-section of the county. This committee, which will meet two to three times between now and December, will help us identify potential sites, recommend priorities and serve as a sounding board for ideas. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Tom Martin at the HCPC.

### **How can we learn more?**

We are holding an initial meeting on September 20, 2006 from 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM at the Ellsworth City Hall upper level meeting room. Nick Hodgkins, brownfields coordinator for the Maine DEP will be discussing how the state may assist in the process. Glenn Daukas, an engineer of Campbell Environmental Group, will present some examples of how sites have been cleaned up

and show us some of the steps in the process. *Everyone is welcome to attend!*

## **CDBG NEWS**

*by Tom Martin*

### **Proposed 2007 Program Statement Released**

The Maine Office of Community Development (OCD) has released the proposed program rules for the 2007 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program rules. The rules will be finalized in September. Contact Tom Martin at the HCPC if you have any questions.

### **A Summary of the Major 2007 CDBG Program Proposed Changes**

1. Eliminate the Phase II Planning Grant program. Funds, up to \$2,500 will be available for project development phase activities but included within the maximum program award amount.
2. Establish a community factor for all potential applicants, which will be published in the Program Statement allowing applicants to view their standing for this aspect of the scoring process.
3. Reduce the maximum award amount for Public Infrastructure Activity Group 3 (re-construction of streets/roads/sidewalks, parking, curbs, gutters) to \$100,000
4. Remove Public Service and Economic Development programs as eligible activities under the Downtown Revitalization Grant program.
5. Change the maximum award amount for the Downtown Revitalization program to \$500,000.
6. The Community Enterprise Grant program would have only one “activity group” listing all currently eligible activities with a maximum award amount of \$150,000. Communities may include one or any combination of the eligible

activities within the maximum award amount of \$150,000.

7. Under the Economic Development program, change the maximum award amount for Development Fund Loan activities to \$400,000. Eligible Development Fund Loan program activities will consist of only acquisition of existing facilities or land and site improvements for a new facility.
8. Add a provision to past performance requirements that they may be waived concerning Economic Development Program awards where the job benefit has not yet been met.
9. Combine Economic Development Program budget allotment into one amount without separating Pine Tree Zone businesses from non Pine Tree Zone businesses.
10. Change Housing Assistance Program maximum award amount to \$250,000.

## **Major Grant Programs and Application Deadlines**

### **1. HOUSING ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

Funds may be used for activities such as acquisition, rehabilitation of substandard housing, alternative housing, demolition, down payment assistance, lead-based paint removal, new housing construction, removal of architectural barriers and provision of water and septic systems. A 10 percent match of funds is required for housing rehabilitation activities; a 20 percent match is required for all other housing activities. *For 2007, the proposed maximum grant award is \$250,000. The anticipated due date for letters of intent is January 12, 2007.*

### **2. PUBLIC FACILITIES GRANTS**

There are five sub-categories of public facility grants. Applications can mix project types within, but not between sub-categories. Category one is for fire stations. Category two consists of community, child, senior and health centers, libraries, sheltered workshops, homeless shelters and piers/wharves. Category three is restricted to

the removal of architectural barriers and Category four is for historic preservation projects. Category five consists of fire fighting equipment, dams, salt/sand storage sheds, transfer stations, park and recreation facilities and public works garages. All projects must have at least a 25 percent cash match of other funds. Historic preservation and architectural barrier removal projects do not always require a town to be 51% LMI (low to moderate income). *Letters of intent are due on December 1, 2006.*

### **3. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS**

There are three sub-categories under this program. Activity group one projects include public water, sewer and storm drainage improvements and utility infrastructure. Activity group two consists of infrastructure in support of new LMI-affordable housing. Activity group three projects include streets, roads, sidewalks, parking, curbs and gutters. A 25 percent cash match is required for all projects. *Letters of intent are due on December 1, 2006.*

### **4. PUBLIC SERVICE GRANTS**

These grants are designed to address human resource needs by providing funding for operating expenses, equipment, and program materials for public service programs to benefit low to moderate income persons. Funds may be used for expenses related to child care and health care centers, job training, education and recreation programs, public safety services, fair housing activities, drug abuse counseling, homeless services, energy conservation counseling and testing for low-income persons. A 20 percent match is required. *Letters of intent are due on January 26, 2007.*

### **5. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANTS**

These grants are for comprehensive downtown improvement programs. A 25 percent cash match is required. Applicants must have completed a comprehensive downtown revitalization planning process and provide evidence that the proposed project is located in a blighted area or that over 51 percent of the residents are low to moderate income. The grant maximum this year is



\$500,000. *Letters of intent are due on February 9, 2007.*

## 6. **COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE GRANT PROGRAM**

The program provides grant funds to assist in innovative solutions to problems faced by small or micro-businesses and to facilitate good management practices and business façade improvements in downtown/village areas. Both loan and grant assistance is possible. *Letters of intent are due on February 9, 2007.*

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT -- Project Category Description:**

#### **1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

Funds are used for **gap** financing to assist businesses in the creation/retention of jobs for low to moderate income persons. There are both Business Assistance (B.A.) grants and Development Fund (D.F.) grants. B.A. funds may be used either for privately or municipally owned projects. For private projects, funds may be used for assisting an identified business to create or retain jobs for LMI persons. The municipal funds may be used to develop or improve public infrastructure or facilities that are essential for the expansion or location of an identified business or industry and as match for eligible economic development planning programs. *Pre-application deadlines are February 2, 2007 and May 4, 2007.*

### **PLANNING -- Project Category Description:**

#### **1. COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANTS**

This program is designed for towns that have a clearly identified local community or economic development problem and lack the resources to develop a strategy to solve that problem. Grants are for studies, analysis, data gathering, preparation of plans and maps and identification of actions that will implement plans. Engineering, architectural and design costs related to specific projects are **not** eligible. The maximum grant amount is \$10,000. A cash match of 25 percent is required. *Application deadlines are April 6, 2007 and August 3, 2007.*

This article was prepared with funds from the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development.

## **HCPC GRANT SAVES/RETAINS 40 JOBS**

The HCPC just concluded its multi-year CDBG Business Assistance grant to assist small-scale marine product processors. This grant allowed food processors to meet current federal food handling guidelines. We provided matching grant funds to ten qualifying businesses in the towns of Bucksport, Deer Isle, Hancock, Penobscot, Sedgwick, Stonington and Swan's Island. If there is still demand, we would be interested in submitting another grant application to assist more businesses. Feel free to contact Tom Martin at the HCPC if you have any questions.

## **TRANSPORTATION NEWS**

*by Jim Fisher*

### **Hancock County Transportation Plan**

#### **Planning Under Scarcity**

Higher gasoline prices have caused many to drive less and to purchase fuel efficient cars. While gasoline prices are likely to fluctuate in the future, prices will climb over the long run. Flat or declining sales of gasoline, a proportionate decline in state fuel excise tax revenues and higher costs for inputs like asphalt have caused significant delays in planned highway, bridge and other transportation infrastructure projects.

Federal and local elected representatives are lobbying for transportation dollars to support their regions, but this competition is a zero-sum game. Limited discretionary funds are replaced by transportation earmarks, and the relatively efficient process of allocating funds where the needs are greatest gives way to political pressure. The 2003 Congressional Six-Year Transportation Reauthorization was a landmark year for earmarking.

At the same time, towns are skeptical that a technical or bureaucratic alternative for allocating

transportation investments is legitimate or any more efficient. Leaders are elected to represent a constituency while bureaucrats would appear to be accountable primarily to the agencies for whom the work.

One way out of the cycle of insufficient funds driving inefficient investments is to create a process by which multi-town coalitions of local leaders work with technical staff to set priorities for regional transportation investments. This union of political and technical decision making has evolved over time through organizations such as the Regional Transportation Advisory Committees (RTAC), Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committees (CES) and Regional Transportation Forums.

For Hancock County this evolution has occurred at the same time that MaineDOT re-districting has expanded our region from Hancock and Washington County to a six county region that also includes Knox, Waldo, Piscataquis, Penobscot Counties. This expanded region precludes formation of a meaningful multi-town collaboration. The distances are too great.

### **Connecting Communities**

While our towns are diverse in economic, land use and cultural “character”, they are for the most part arranged in what economists call a hierarchical network. The central places for Hancock County are the two largest service centers, Ellsworth and Bucksport, followed by our smaller service centers Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, Blue Hill and Stonington. The rest of our towns host a variety of retail and service establishments, each serving smaller areas.

Transportation and communication are the critical linkages that tie our hierarchical network together. The arterial highways, Route 1, Route 1A, Route 3 and a portion of Route 15 connect the major service centers. Major collector highways such as Route 172, Route 186 and Route 102 connect the second tier of service centers to Ellsworth and Bucksport. The volume of traffic on major and minor collectors is lower than arterials, and often the funding available for their maintenance

depends on greater participation of the host communities.

### **Working Together**

As Schoodic are towns recently demonstrated, collector roads can move up in priority. Several important ingredients contributed to their success in garnering state funds for road repairs and improvements. A long range strategy was to pursue designation of Route 1 and Route 186 as the Schoodic National Scenic Byway. Not only has this designation allowed the communities to attract significant federal investment, but the corridor management plan also gives these towns a greater voice in how roads are to be improved. More recently, the formation of the Schoodic Area League of Towns (SALT) has provided the towns with a process for speaking as a group. The combined voice of many towns is more easily distinguished in Augusta.

Our challenge is to think bigger, all of Hancock County, while not losing sight of the particular needs of towns. To this end the Hancock County Planning Commission is pursuing state support for a pilot project in County-Wide Regional Collaboration for Transportation planning. The pace for writing a county-wide transportation plan will depend on internal support from towns, area businesses, organizations and residents. We will be calling on towns throughout the county to work with their neighbors, as is currently practiced in many of our towns through groups like the MDI League of Towns and Schoodic Area League of Towns. HCPC staff will prepare information on area transportation, land use and economic change to present to multi-town assemblies. We will work with communities to define their priorities for transportation and help towns to form a consensus around what is most important for our entire region. The final report will provide MaineDOT and other infrastructure planning organizations with a clear vision of where we hope to be in 20 years and efficient ways to get there.

We hope that you will contact us if you are interested in participating in writing a County-



wide transportation plan. Call or write our office and let us know how you would like to participate.

## **Island Explorer and Byways Win State and National Support**

Several significant grants have been awarded for transportation improvements in Hancock County.

- ◆ Acadia National Park has been awarded a \$1.4 million grant from the Transportation in the Parks program for purchase of replacement propane-powered buses for the Island Explorer.
- ◆ Schoodic National Byway and Blackwoods State Scenic Byway each receive \$30,000 grants to continue implementation of the Corridor Management Plans. An additional \$18,000 has been awarded to create enhanced Geographic Information Systems, maps and “way-finding” programs. We will be working with the Maine Department of Conservation and Acadia National Park to devise fun ways to visit our parks and public lands such as virtual treasure hunts and thematic tours.
- ◆ HCPC has combined support from the National Park Service, MaineDOT, the Acadia All American Road, Friends of Acadia and the Town of Trenton to assist with corridor management planning along Route 3 in Trenton. The corridor plan is an essential part of an application to extend designation of the Acadia All American Road through Trenton. A webpage has been created to highlight planning for the Acadia All American Road at: [www.acadiabyway.org](http://www.acadiabyway.org).

## **Acadia Gateway Center**

DMJM Harris, a transportation and environmental planning consulting firm, has completed a substantial environmental assessment of the impacts of the proposed Acadia Gateway Center for Trenton. A public meeting to discuss these findings and a more detailed look at the proposed facility was scheduled to be held on September 7<sup>th</sup> at the Trenton Elementary School. The environmental assessment is available at the Trenton Town Office, the HCPC library and online at: [www.acadiagatewaycenter.com](http://www.acadiagatewaycenter.com) under

“Work Completed.” Newsletters with updates on the Acadia Gateway Center are available at HCPC and online at

[www.hpcme.org/landuse/trenton/trentonplan.htm](http://www.hpcme.org/landuse/trenton/trentonplan.htm)

Next steps in the process will include identifying additional funding for construction of the center, working with the town of Trenton to match design and use of this facility with Trenton land use regulations, and identifying highway improvements along Route 3 to improve traffic management.

## **Ellsworth Cross Roads**

HCPC will be assisting the City of Ellsworth and the Maine Department of Transportation to identify improvements to enhance Ellsworth as a transportation crossroads. The crossroads initiative will help to identify ways to improve existing highway corridors, including Route 3, Route 1 and Route 1A, and to foster alternative modes of transportation.

The future for Ellsworth is sure to include better transit connections with Bangor and Bar Harbor. Plans are underway to make Ellsworth the trailhead for an 82-mile multi-use trail heading downeast and an excursion rail service carrying passengers to Green Lake. In order to coordinate existing and new transportation systems, a number of alternatives will be considered for bus stations, trail heads, rail stations and park-and-ride facilities.

The crossroads initiative will engage the public in discussions about what kinds of services people want and how these can be added most effectively. For more information, contact Jim Fisher.

## **GRANT NEWS**

### **Trails Grant Request for Proposals**

The Maine Department of Conservation has issued a request for Proposals under their Recreation Trail Program.

Eligible projects may include:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails.
- Development and rehabilitation of trail side and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails.
- Construction of new recreational trails.
- Acquisition of easements or fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.
- Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as those objectives relate to use of recreational trails.

The state will provide funds as grants-in-aid to municipalities, other qualified sub-divisions of state government and to qualified non-profit organizations under guidelines established by the Bureau of Parks and Lands in conjunction with the Maine Trails Advisory Committee.

You can learn more about this grant program and download grant application forms at: [www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/trailsfund.html](http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/programs/community/trailsfund.html). Proposals must be postmarked by November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

## **HEALTH NEWS**

*by Jim Fisher*

### **Public Health**

#### **Working to Prevent Drug and Alcohol Abuse in Hancock County**

Maine Office of Substance Abuse has awarded \$80,000 to the nascent Hancock County Substance Abuse Network under the leadership of the Hancock County Planning Commission. We are working with Union River Healthy Communities, Healthy Peninsula, Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities, Healthy Acadia and the Hancock County Sheriff's Office to undertake a ten-month, two-phase program to prevent substance abuse in Hancock County.

Phase 1 of the Strategic Planning and Environmental Programming (SPEP) initiative

will involve many cooperating organizations throughout the county in preparing a Substance Abuse Prevention Plan. We will work together to identify what we already know about this serious problem in Hancock County, who are the important leaders in preventing substance abuse and what steps we need to take to better contain youth and adult abuse of drugs and alcohol. Phase 2, also kicking off this month will engage our partners in current interventions to reduce youth access to alcohol.

We will be working to change:

- Enforcement and the perception of enforcement
- Ease of access to alcohol and the perception of ease of access to alcohol
- Adult attitudes in the community, and the perception of adult attitudes in community

You can learn more about the Hancock County Substance Abuse Prevention project at [www.hcpcme.org/pubadmin/health/SPEP/](http://www.hcpcme.org/pubadmin/health/SPEP/) or by contacting Jim Fisher.

### **Planning for Pandemics**

A pandemic is the extreme form of an epidemic, in which a virulent and harmful disease spreads world wide. Modern transportation systems have greatly accelerated the speed with which a disease can travel, making almost any epidemic potentially catastrophic.

A coalition of health, emergency response and community organizations has been meeting this summer under the guidance of the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency (HCEMA) to develop contingency plans in the event of an outbreak of a pandemic, and particularly the H5N1 virus better known as the "Bird Flu".

The Hancock County Planning Commission participated in planning and will be a resource in the event of a pandemic with our experience in working with local governments, epidemiology, computer-aided mapping and transportation

planning. For more information, you can visit [www.maineflu.gov](http://www.maineflu.gov). You can also listen to an audio archive program on pandemics from "Common Health" hosted by Jim Fisher at [www.commonhealth.org](http://www.commonhealth.org). The Hancock County Pandemic Plan will be posted to the HCEMA website at: [www.co.hancock.me.us/ema.html](http://www.co.hancock.me.us/ema.html).

## **SOLID WASTE**

*By Tom Martin*

### **2006 ELLSWORTH AREA HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE & UNIVERSAL WASTE COLLECTION A SUCCESS**

About 15 volunteers dedicated a summer Saturday under ideal weather conditions to help coordinate the HCPC's household hazardous waste and universal waste collection for the Ellsworth area. About 344 units (a unit being 5 gallons or 20 pounds) of household hazardous waste were collected from sixteen towns and the unorganized territories. Household hazardous waste includes battery acids, certain solvents, oil-based paints, oven and drain cleaners, pesticides and transmission and brake fluids.

There were 569 units of universal waste collected from 187 households. Universal Waste are items such as computer monitors, televisions, fluorescent light bulbs, rechargeable batteries and ballasts. This collection allowed towns without a state-approved universal waste disposal site to direct their citizens to a safe disposal operation. In addition, former HCPC staffer Jef Fitzgerald organized a recycling operation for latex paint. We are grateful to the volunteers and the public for helping us make this event run smoothly.

### **MOUNT DESERT ISLAND COLLECTION SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 28.**

Those of you in the towns of Bar Harbor, Cranberry Isles, Lamoine, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont and Trenton will be able to participate in the October 28, 2006

collection from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Details will be made available at your town offices.

## **STAFF NEWS**

After nearly ten years of full-time service and an additional five years of part-time work, Jef Fitzgerald has resigned from the HCPC to work as a deputy planner for the City of Ellsworth. While we are very sorry to see him leave, we are pleased that Hancock County will continue to benefit from his many talents. Ellsworth has gained a truly first-rate person. Jef will for a few months continue to do some part-time, after-hours work for the HCPC. We are currently advertising for his position.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

### **Brownfields in Hancock County:**

#### **An Introduction**

Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup>  
Ellsworth City Hall, Meeting Room  
2:30 PM – 4:00 PM

for more information see pages 4-5 of this newsletter

#### **STRIKING A BALANCE WORKSHOP**

Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>  
VFW Hall, Washington Junction Road  
Ellsworth 5:00-8:30 PM  
for details see page 3 of this newsletter  
Registration Deadline: September 22<sup>nd</sup>

#### **MDI HHW Collection**

Saturday, October 28th  
MDI High School  
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

#### **SPO 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Code Officials Multi- Use Workshop**

Thursday/Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Black Bear Inn, Orono  
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

for details contact Sue Baker

([suebaker@maine.gov](mailto:suebaker@maine.gov)) or Lana Clough  
([lana.clough@maine.gov](mailto:lana.clough@maine.gov)) or 1-800-662-4545  
Registration Deadline: October 13, 2006

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**Hancock County Planning Commission is a partner with local and county government to: protect our heritage and resources, plan for the future and promote a sound economy for the people of Hancock County.**

**Fall 2006 Newsletter**

**Change Service Requested**