
HCPC NEWSLETTER

Hancock County Planning Commission

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PLANNING NEWS

By Tom Martin

Trenton and Ellsworth are awarded grants

While funding this year for planning and implementation grants is very limited, two towns in Hancock County received grants from the State Planning Office this spring. Trenton will use the funds to update its 1992 comprehensive plan. The plan will likely focus on addressing the town's traffic congestion issues and its overall high rate of growth.

Ellsworth was the only municipality in the state to be awarded an implementation grant under the current (2005) grant competition. The city will use these funds to undertake major revisions to its land use ordinances per the recommendations of the comprehensive plan. The grant will complement other plan implementation activities currently underway in the city such as further improvements to the downtown, waterfront and major highway corridors. It will also enhance lake watershed protection measures.

What steps should a town take if it is interested in state comprehensive plan funding or related grant programs?

While we will not know until late fall or early winter how much (if any) money will be available, here are some general hints. First, the State Planning Office will give preference to towns that raise more than the required dollar per dollar match. You may want to ask your warrant or budget committee to set aside an appropriation for that purpose. The maximum state grant amount

for comprehensive plan updates is \$10,000. If you are contemplating a major update you would need to raise at least that amount as match and perhaps more. The HCPC can help you develop a budget and work program.

Second, it is helpful to have a clear identification of community issues and what has changed in the town since your last plan was prepared. The HCPC can help you develop a preliminary assessment that summarizes major town issues, challenges and opportunities that you face.

Third, you should attempt to evaluate the successes and failures of your last plan. The more successful a town has been in implementing its plan, the better the chances of receiving update funds. It is particularly important to be able to document what proportion of recent land development has occurred in the growth areas recommended in the comprehensive plan as opposed to the rural areas.

Fourth, you should show strong citizen support for the plan update. There are several ways this can be done. One is to hold a series of town-wide meetings. Another is to conduct a public opinion survey. Another is to conduct outreach to other groups in town such as chambers of commerce, land trusts, historical societies, harbor committees, snowmobile clubs and similar organizations. Such groups often offer good forums for discussing town issues. Here again, the HCPC can help with the process.

WHAT IS "LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT"?

by Jef Fitzgerald

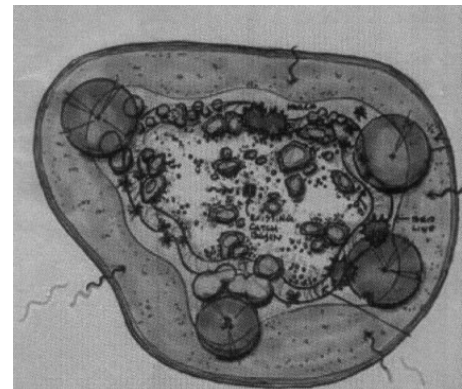
While Low-Impact Development (LID) may sound like another name for smart growth, it is in fact, a much more focused topic. LID is not concerned with walk ability or mixed land uses; it deals specifically with **stormwater**, its infrastructure and its impacts. The ideas put forth in LID are not entirely new ones, but have been given new emphasis in the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's provisionally adopted stormwater rules which can be found at:

<http://mainegov-images.informe.org/dep/blwq/docstand/stormwater/rule500and502/500prov.pdf>

Chapter 500, Stormwater Management describes stormwater standards for activities licensed under the Stormwater Management Law and the Site Location of Development Law. It also describes exemption standards for stormwater infiltration. The Department of Environmental Protection strongly encourages applicants to incorporate LID measures where practicable.

How are LID techniques different from the old stormwater BMP's?

- ◆ LID minimizes developed and impervious areas on a project, keeping the site's natural infiltration and soil storage characteristics.
- ◆ LID seeks to maintain natural drainage patterns and concentrations, treating stormwater runoff close to its source.
- ◆ LID reduces runoff volume through retention, evaporation and infiltration rather than exporting it as a waste down storm sewer systems.
- ◆ LID measures incorporate dispersed small storage areas with a slow runoff discharge rate rather than conventional end-of-pipe structures.



Bioretention Cells or "Rain Gardens" are an LID technique.

For more information on Low Impact Development, see:

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/urban.html> and <http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org>

Subdivision Development and Personal Property Rights:

Striking a Balance in Hancock County

by Sherry Churchill

Please mark your calendars for the third forum of the Striking a Balance series, scheduled to be held on Thursday evening, June 30 from 6:00 until 9:00 p.m. at the VFW Hall on the Washington Junction Road in Ellsworth.

Ordinance development and site plan review are the topics slated for the next forum of the highly popular series. When writing land use ordinances, municipalities too often rely on using “recycled” language or that adopted from another town’s ordinance. Ordinances should reflect a town’s unique characteristics. While it is beneficial to avoid reinventing the wheel, town planning boards may find themselves in a quandary when they are faced with certain development scenarios they did not anticipate, and for which their decisions could have legal significance. Has your town considered adopting procedures for site plan review? Why or why not? Find out why higher populated towns are not the only ones that should consider site plan review procedures.

Tom Martin of the Hancock County Planning Commission and Becky Seel of the Maine Municipal Association are two panelists scheduled to speak on these important issues (the HCPC anticipates 3 panelists minimum). The HCPC welcomes questions in advance of the workshop to be addressed, provided time allows.

Doors open at 5:15 for registration. A registration fee of \$17.00 includes materials and light refreshments. Please note that pre-registration is required. As this newsletter is going to the printers, the workshop still is being organized; therefore, please contact the HCPC at 667-7131 or schurchill@hpcme.org to confirm the meeting time/location/panelist details. Partners in this ambitious endeavor include the Hancock County Planning Commission, Downeast Resource Conservation and Development Council,

Gouldsboro Planning Board, and Union River Watershed Coalition.

CDBG NEWS

by Tom Martin

Funding Presently Appears Secure

As this newsletter goes to print, it appears that the proposals to reduce the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) program have failed. The HCPC expects to continue to help area towns seek and administer grants. Feel free to direct any questions you may have on the program to Tom Martin or Jef Fitzgerald.

Upcoming CDBG Grant Deadlines

The grant deadlines for CDBG) applications for the FY 04-05 year are now largely past. There are two exceptions. The first is the Community Planning Grants, which are due on August 5, 2005. The second is the Economic Development Programs (due August 12, 2005).

Community Planning Grants are used to fund municipalities that have a clearly identified local community or economic development problem and lack the resources to develop a strategy for solving that problem. Recent examples of successful grant applications include a downtown revitalization study for Winter Harbor and a housing needs assessment for the unorganized territories of Hancock County.

Please note that all municipalities in Hancock County are eligible to apply even if town-wide income figures are too high for the town to qualify for a public facility grant. However, the project must be either of primary benefit to low to moderate income households or to eliminate concentrations of slum and blight. Contact Tom Martin at the HCPC for details.

The Economic Development Programs are used to fund economic development activities that create or retain jobs for low to moderate income households. Their purpose is to provide gap financing. These funds have been used for a

variety of business assistance activities. Here again, all towns in Hancock County are eligible to apply if the project is of primary benefit to low and moderate income people.

Looking Ahead to the Next Grant Round

The next major round of grant applications will be due this fall and winter. If your town is contemplating a project, we urge you to contact us now. We can help you identify sources of matching funds, develop citizen outreach strategies and determine what program best meets your needs. If you have sought CDBG funds and were not successful, we would be happy to review your application and offer suggestions on how it might be strengthened.

CDBG Historic Preservation Projects Completed

by Jef Fitzgerald

Two important historic buildings in Hancock County have been restored to structural soundness while maintaining their historical integrity using Community Development Block Grant Funds. The HCPC assisted on both projects from start to finish.

The Sedgwick Town House on Route 172 near the Old County Road intersection has been in continuous use since 1794 for a variety of functions. The National Register of Historic Places listed the building as a contributing member of the Sedgwick Historic District in 1994. Most recent uses include town meetings and elections as well as lectures and programs by the Sedgwick Brooklin Historical Society and programs by and for children when they visit the Sedgwick Historic District.

Public Facility Grant funds were used to restore the assembly room to its original functional, attractiveness by removing modern interior additions, repairing damaged interior surfaces, repairing windows & installing secondary glazing, upgrading the electrical wiring & lighting, repairing and repainting the wooden floor, repairing the foundation, exterior walls and chimney and regrading the parking area. Thanks

to Michael Hewes and Company of Blue Hill for a job well done.

The **Brick School House in Aurora** was built with local red bricks in 1827. It served as a town grammar school until 1917 and remains as Hancock County's oldest known brick building. The Maine Historic Resources Inventory recognizes the antiquity and uniqueness of the brick schoolhouse. The building is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. According to the nomination, it "is a fine example of a simple neighborhood school of the late Federal period. The building clearly deserves recognition as a remarkably preserved school house in an extremely remote section, which reflects the determination of early settlers to provide an educational opportunity of quality."

Aside from its considerable historic value, the old schoolhouse has also served the community as a meeting place, a library, a tourist attraction, an elderly center, and a place where local summer programs could be offered. Unfortunately, because of the severe deterioration of the building, it has remained unused recently and its condition continued to decline until grant funds were obtained for its restoration.

CDBG and other funds were used to rebuild and restore deteriorated parts of the 25 square foot building in accordance with consultation supplied by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. Areas needing considerable attention included the stone foundation, the brick walls, exterior wood trim, the shingled roof, the wooden floor and the plaster ceiling. Severe deterioration necessitated the complete tear down and rebuilding of parts of the exterior brick walls. Thanks to Paul Cirard Masonry of Lamoine for another job well done.

TRANSPORTATION NEWS

by Jim Fisher

Regional Transportation Assessment Meets the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Transportation planning has undergone significant change over the last 12 months. The changes

mean towns and organizations have new opportunities to voice their needs, but only when paying attention and remaining engaged with the planning process.

Hancock County was profoundly affected last year when MaineDOT streamlined the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) services eliminating a division office in Ellsworth. A much larger multi-county region was created, incorporating Hancock, Washington, Penobscot, Piscataquis and parts of Waldo and Knox Counties. This regionalization of services moved some decision out of the county, reducing ease of access to engineers responsible for significant decision making. The creation of larger regional centers offers the potential for building greater capacity to plan and execute transportation improvement projects “in-house.”

The O&M consolidation was quickly followed by restructuring of transportation planning, particularly the public involvement process. Regional Transportation Advisory Committees were replaced by a coordinated process of Regional Transportation Assessment (RTA) and a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS program is a federal requirement to insure public input in setting development priorities. The RTA corresponds to similar state and federal requirements for public involvement in transportation prioritization.

Staffers from Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) and the HCPC have worked with volunteers from across the region serving on a CEDS Transportation Committee to assess transportation, land use and economic factors affecting eleven major corridors in eastern Maine. Public input through mail surveys, public meetings and an internet survey provided additional guidance for a series of objectives that will guide investments in the future. Coordination meetings were held throughout the year to seek common ground between regional transportation and economic plans.

Setting Goals for Transportation and Economic Development

Four goals were set for economic development in the six-county eastern Maine Economic Development District (EDD). Transportation objectives and priorities set for specific corridors were re-arranged to fit within the CEDS. The information below is a short list of ideas. The complete reports are available online at www.hcpcme.org/transportation/needs.

Summary of the CEDS Goals and RTA Recommendations

Workforce Development: Provide a lifelong, seamless educational and training network, emphasizing technical training and apprenticeships, along with increased attendance by Eastern Maine students at post secondary education.

Transportation objectives include improving passenger transportation infrastructure such as park-and-ride lots, train and bus stations, and support for service centers like Bucksport, Ellsworth, Bar Harbor and Blue Hill in order to take advantage of existing transportation infrastructure.

Strengthen Traditional Industries: Rejuvenate traditional industries by recognizing their importance and focusing attention on their needs for technology transfer, value added, a better business climate, and enhanced infrastructure to preserve existing jobs, and create new opportunities, while promoting complimentary economic development strategies.

Transportation objectives include increasing weight limits on interstate Route 95 to State Highway limits, and improving efficiency of rail freight systems.

Business Development: Eastern Maine will be a region of diverse and healthy firms and industries, providing for the needs of existing businesses, as well as creating an economic climate that supports the growth, attraction, and retention of high growth, entrepreneurial firms that create and commercialize new products and services.

Transportation objectives include improving the safety and efficiency of our highway network by reducing congestion delays, constructing smoother travel lanes, paving shoulders, passing lanes and access management.

Community Development: Eastern Maine should seek to attain balanced growth throughout the region, while protecting local values and landscapes, and making the area a more welcoming place for new ideas and culture.

Transportation objectives include enhancing infrastructure for walking and bicycling, improving access to the water, scenic vistas and heritage sites, as well as improving the collector road network.

Moving Forward

HCPC staff is currently developing plans with the MaineDOT to offer a series of public meetings in Hancock County service centers to be held in August and September. These meetings will be an opportunity to learn more about transportation priorities and to respond with your ideas. Stay tuned for information on the precise times and dates for these meetings.

State Scenic Byways Conference Seeks to Balance Promotion and Preservation

HCPC staff recently organized the third annual Maine Scenic Byways Conference, held at the new Acadia National Park Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) on May 12th and 13th. This conference brought together representatives from Maine's four national scenic byways and five state scenic byways with representatives from state and national agencies to review progress to date and plan for the future. A lot has been accomplished statewide, with new transportation infrastructure, interpretive information and conservation initiatives. In fact, Maine's Scenic Byways has risen to become the Office of Tourism's second most requested item from persons interested in visiting the state.

Success requires responsibility. Our discussion centered on how to continue promoting our scenic byways for tourism while protecting and enhancing the natural, scenic, recreational and historic assets that make these byways unique. John Kelly of Acadia National Park shared research conducted at Schoodic Point on the impacts of crowding on visitor quality of experience. Clearly there comes a point when crowding can ruin our experience. That point is reached quickly when automobiles are jammed up on the scenic roads and are unable to park. Our tolerance for people appears to be much higher when we don't have to deal with their cars. John Titus of the Bureau of Parks and Lands discussed strategies the state is using to plan and manage use of public reserve lands, including the large Donnell Pond and Tunk Lake Units in Hancock County. Anne Ball presented strategies for historic preservation, emphasizing the important of finding the fit between the community and tourism.

Participants from this conference will work together over the coming year to communicate better with our legislators and towns, identify ways to sustain our byways as federal support wanes, and seek to maintain and improve the total experience of visiting Maine Byways. For more information, visit www.schoodicbyway.org to learn about the Schoodic National Scenic Byway and link scenic byways across the country.

Penobscot Narrows Passenger Transportation Plan Launched

The HCPC has recently launched a new project with the Maine Department of Transportation assisting the Towns of Bucksport, Orland, Verona Island and Prospect to prepare a passenger transportation plan. This plan will provide the MaineDOT and area towns with information and public input needed to identify and prioritize projects that will help to accommodate evolving needs along this scenic, historic and productive section of Route 1. Please contact Jim Fisher at HCPC if you would be interested in participating. You can learn more at www.hpcme.org/transportation/penobscotnarrows.

HEALTH NEWS

by Jim Fisher

Common Health went live on 89.9 WERU/FM in January with the collaboration of WERU, HCPC and University Cooperative Extension. This year will be devoted to live-radio discussion of public health in Maine. Public Health reaches into every aspect of the work that we do at the HCPC. Our broadcasts this season have included “What is Public Health”, “Safe Drinking Water”, “Protecting our Food Supply” and most recently “Home Town Heroes: Celebrating Local Health Initiatives.” Jim Fisher participates in program development, research and program hosting and is always looking for radio guests. Common Health receives significant support from Sound Partners for Community Health, a program of the Benton Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Common Health airs from 10:00 – 11:00 AM on the third Wednesday of each month. If you missed any of our programs, you can hear them on our online audio archive at www.commonhealth.org. We are building the website to provide visitors with information about public health issues, links to resources and opportunities to send in questions and comments. Tune in for live and lively programs.

Working with the Healthy Maine Partnerships

Women and Tobacco is an initiative of the Coastal Hancock Healthy Communities (CHHC), a Healthy Maine Partnership. This year Jim Fisher is working with CHHC and area volunteers to design more effective programs to help women who smoke or are living with smokers to rid their homes of America’s most lethal indoor pollutant. HCPC is providing research and analysis support, working with interview data and secondary sources to identify best practices and design local programs.

Community Health Outreach The HCPC will be working with Healthy Acadia, a Healthy Maine Partnership, and the MDI Hospital to test the effectiveness of expanding community health in

Southwest Harbor, Tremont and the outer islands. The goals of this initiative are to

- 1) provide strategic access to comprehensive primary care for rural, medically underserved populations
- 2) To provide seamless coordination and integration of population-based prevention and primary medical care services.
- 3) To increase self-care behavior, readiness to change, and belief in ability to change among at-risk persons.
- 4) To establish structural changes in community settings in support of self-care behavior.

The HCPC will be providing evaluation support for this initiative. We will work with health care practitioners and community based organizations to identify efficient, effective and sustainable ways to bring people into the health care system, provide referrals for needed services and follow up to evaluate program effectiveness.

SOLID WASTE

By Sherry Churchill

2005 HHW/UW Collection Events

As mentioned in the HCPC’s previous newsletter, we are in the process of organizing two household hazardous waste and universal waste collections for 2005. The Greater Ellsworth Regional Collection is tentatively scheduled for August 27 at the Ellsworth High School from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Residents of sponsoring communities will be able to participate at no cost. Participating sponsors of the Greater Ellsworth Household Hazardous Waste Collection as of 5/05 include:

- Blue Hill-Surry Transfer Station*
- Castine
- Dedham
- Ellsworth
- Gouldsboro
- Hancock
- Mariaville
- Sorrento
- Stonington
- Trenton
- Winter Harbor
- Union River Solid Waste**

* Includes 5 member towns: *Blue Hill, Surry, Sedgwick, Brooklin & Brooksville*

** Includes 5 member towns: *Aurora, Waltham, Osborn, Great Pond & Amherst*

The Greater Mount Desert Island Collection (MDI) is tentatively scheduled to be held on Saturday, October 1 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The MDI League of Towns, in collaboration with the Acadia Disposal District and HCPC, is sponsoring the collection. Residents of the following municipalities can participate at no cost:

- Bar Harbor
- Cranberry Isles
- Lamoine
- Mt. Desert
- Tremont
- Trenton
- Southwest Harbor

If your community is ***not*** on the list above and is interested in participating, it is not too late to get involved, but the HCPC needs to hear from you as soon as possible. Please note that grants are available from the State Planning Office to help cover costs of the overall collection. Contact our office at 667-7131 or schurchill@hpcme.org for more information.

Wanted: Used Athletic Shoes for Nike Recycling Initiative

The Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRA and St. George School have teamed up to sponsor Reuse-A-Shoe, a national program that has enabled Nike to recycle approximately 16 million pairs of shoes since 1993. This program takes athletic shoes of every brand, size and color, turning them into material used to resurface athletic fields, courts, tracks and playgrounds.

Upon collection of 5,000 athletic shoes (or 24 containers), Nike will provide no-cost interstate transportation from central collection points in each state to Nike's recycling facility in Oregon. Therefore MRRA and the St. George School are asking Maine transfer stations, schools or sports programs to supply *any* quantity of shoes they are able to provide to help

them reach their minimum goal of 5,000 pairs. Reuse a shoe accepts all brands, sizes and all colors of athletic shoe as long as they are free of mud and metal (eyelets, zippers, cleats and spikes should first be removed), but please, no sandals, thongs, pumps, dress shoes or work boots. No wet or muddy shoes. Shoe pairs also should not be individually bagged or tied together.

If possible, shoes should be delivered to the St. George Transfer Station (near the intersection of Route 1 and Route 131 South in midcoast Maine). If you have a full truckload of 24 containers, a Nike truck will be sent directly to your loading dock. Nike requires a 48" x 48" pallet dimension. Because of its automated equipment in Oregon, containers must be no smaller than 43" x 43" x 37" and no larger than 46" x 46" x 45".

Please contact Victor Horton at MRRA, 207-942-6772 mr.ra.victor@verizon.net or Scootch Pankonin, St. George Transfer Station, 372-6451 scootchdc@aol.com for more information.

One More Way to Give New Life to Old Things

The Freecycle network is a two year old grassroots movement that started in Tucson, Arizona to help diminish the amount of material entering the waste stream. Freecycle is now available in most areas across the nation, including Hancock County, Maine. Members of the on-line Freecycle community are able to post items they are interested in getting rid of for free or offer to accept posted items.

Among items available during a recent visit to the Freecycle website were miscellaneous baby items, dishwasher, Sony color television, and an Iomega zip drive – all available at no cost and still in working order. As this newsletter heads to the printers, there are 232 members of the Hancock County network and 1068 of the Bangor network. Membership is free – moderators simply ask that Freecycle etiquette be followed (a link to "etiquette" instructions can be found on the website). Please help spread the word about this

great opportunity to further reduce the amount of waste entering the Hancock County waste stream.

For more information, please visit the Freecycle website at www.freecycle.org.

Acadia Disposal District Members Benefit From New Ban on Cardboard Disposal

The ADD is a quasi municipal organization that is considering ways to lower the cost of waste disposal on behalf of member municipalities, which include Mt. Desert, Cranberry Isles, Southwest Harbor, Trenton and Tremont. Following Bar Harbor's lead, the Acadia Disposal District (ADD) recently enacted a ban on cardboard disposal that went into effect on January 3, 2005. Since cardboard is no longer included in the waste stream, it is being collected at Eastern Maine Recycling (EMR) in Southwest Harbor where it is then sold and shipped out to be recycled.

EMR records indicate that the combined tonnage of cardboard collected during the first four months following the ban was just slightly more than 102 tons (it should be noted that the town of Mt. Desert also collects cardboard at its public works garage and that material is not included in this figure). With Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) tipping fees hovering around \$61.00/ton, towns avoided approximately \$6,200 in waste disposal fees alone. Towns do not currently receive any revenue from the sale of cardboard because there are no provisions for this in their contracts with EMR. Member towns are likely to take this into consideration if future contracts are negotiated, since over the past two years, mills have been purchasing cardboard for an average price of \$70/ton. A quick calculation

shows that ADD towns could have earned approximately \$7,140 on top of the avoided cost, which would amount to a total savings of \$13,340 in just four months if cardboard revenue was received by member towns.

The Hancock County Planning Commission is supportive of the ADD's efforts to lower costs associated with solid waste disposal and encourages other towns to consider a cardboard disposal ban in their region. For more information, contact Tony Smith, chairman of the

ADD at 276-3232 or Sherry Churchill, HCPC Planner at 667-7131.

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

by Jim Fisher

Technology Update

HCPC is the latest hot spot in town. That is, we have added wireless internet capability to our office with broadband connections to the internet. Visitors using our library, map and document archives now have the ability to use their WI-FI enabled laptop computers anywhere in our building to check their email, seek additional information on the internet and share documents with our office computers. This significant step up in technology came at no cost and enhances ways that we can work with you. Note: for security purposes the WI-FI capability is only available upon request during our regular office hours.

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.

SUMMER NEWSLETTER