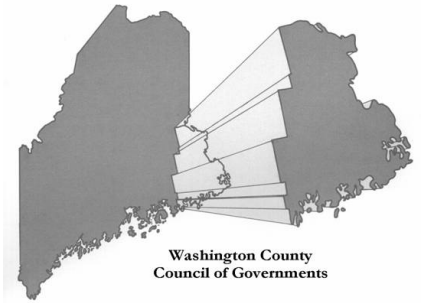




WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY GUIDED PLANNING and ZONING PROCESS

Planning Committee Meeting Minutes and
Follow Up "to dos"
January 20, 2016



Room 228 Torrey Hall, University of Maine at Machias

Attendees:

Judy East, Washington County Council of Governments
Sarah Strickland, Strategic Wisdom Partners
Susan Hatton, Sunrise County Economic Council
John Hough, Edmunds Twp
Stacie Beyer, Land Use Planning Commission
Hugh Coxe, Land Use Planning Commission
Crystal Hitchings, Washington County Council of Governments, Downeast&Acadia Regional Tourism
David Bell, Cherryfield Foods, ME Wild Blueberries
John Bryant, American Forest Management
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Charles Rudelitch, Sunrise County Economic Council
Jacob vandeSande, Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Dwayne Shaw, Downeast Salmon Federation
Heather Almeda, St Croix International Waterway Commission
Travis Howard, land manager for Wagner Forestry
Tora Johnson, University of Maine GIS Service Center and Laboratory

Introductions, agenda review – no changes

Project status relative to timeline: Timeline is described on the Frequently Asked Questions page
(<http://www.wccog.net/cgpz-frequently-asked-questions.htm>)

Two minor changes:

- 2nd round of Public Meetings likely in June-July (not May-June) to allow time to complete draft prospective zoning and to ensure we include more seasonal residents
- Add an "issues forum" with speakers on major issues affecting the UTs as they did in Aroostook

Comment (John Bryant): important to be clear about the scope of issues

Next Meeting Agenda Item: discussion of scope and scale of issues forum; date etc,

Proposed Report Outline: *Collaboration – Celebration – Contemplation - Decision*

Review of draft outline yielded several comments during the group discussion and in later comments when we reviewed the maps; rather than describe them here an updated outline is [attached at the end of this document](#).

Note: post meeting ruminations while walking the dog: changed final section from *Decision* to *Consensus*;) and added yet further alliteration: *Context* at the beginning

Collaboration: Community Outreach

- Web site – Judy asked all on the Planning Committee to read/review the FAQs with a “beginner’s mind” – **are they sufficient, clear, confusing?**
- On-line Survey & Outreach meetings, early takeaways:
 - Reviewed initial summary; suggestions: to reach a younger demographic:
 - Facebook page (created; needs content and linking; **Crystal is good at this**)
 - Send notices home with school newsletter (electronic and paper); **Travis to provide Judy with Alexander e-news contact**
 - Use basketball events?
 - Targeting UT residents: **Heron suggested “follow the money”**: ask Dept of Education (pay tuition for UT residents) to send notice to UT residents who attend area schools (Lee Academy, Washington Academy)
 - Could also send a notice to all UT residents with their April tax bills
- Inclusion of and Mailing to Plantations – **this will take place in the coming weeks**

Celebration & Contemplation: GIS Mapping

Judy described maps from County to Sub-regions to individual UT format; style guidance
Also described Resource Mapping conducted to date (in one sub-region – “Lakes”)

- Forestry (Tree Growth Tax Enrollment, Conserved lands; Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) lands; Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified Lands)
- Watersheds; Fisheries:
 - Atlantic Salmon, Eastern Brook Trout, Anadromous Fish;
 - Blue Back Herring, Alewife,
 - In Coastal Region: Sea Scallop, Softshell clam

Tora Johnson then describe the method for assembling layers of spatial data for 2 Suitability Analyses:

- Conservation Suitability (Preliminary done for northern UT)
- Development Suitability (To be completed Jan-March)
- Merged suitability analyses inform choices around prospective zoning and make thinking visible;
- Choices around priority and emphasis of the criteria used in each analysis will be made by the Planning Committee – likely with a survey instrument
 - Maps and data still to come/finalize: Agriculture; Recreation

Comments during review of Suitability Analyses:

- Beginning with Habitat data is important and if we are going online with this information and analyses we need permission to use it online
- Add land-locked salmon and other sports fisheries to the fisheries maps
- Add commercial harvest locations for elver (their distribution is ubiquitous but their harvest points are discrete)
- In discussion of alewives indicate their significance to the ground fishery
- The Conserved lands layer on the fisheries maps is different than the one on the forestry maps (remove it from fisheries or make them match)

Entire group then reviewed the maps posted on the wall and offered response to the questions: What jumps out? What is missing? Can you read them? Do they inform/confuse? What questions do they prompt? Comments from entire Committee around the table:

Dwayne:

- lots of data accuracy issues (Judy to follow up with region-wide and specific data problems)
- suggest a focus on one township that sets the standard for the remaining townships; to rectify data issues in one place and in the areas where we will conduct prospective zoning

David Bell:

- the development side is not represented in the maps presented (Judy: it will be in the Development Suitability analysis)
- if you cannot look at the information online and turn layers on and off it is information overload
- package the 3 forestry information layers together
- wait for conclusions around choice of where to do prospective zoning to decide where to put more energy into the details

John Bryant:

- paper overload with the maps
- combine conservation easement and Tree Growth enrollment in one map
- be clearer in legends of the difference between publicly owned lands that are in a conservation status and private lands with conservation easement provisions
- clarify the labels
- remove the Public State Lots (legacy lots) that are shown within some jurisdictions; those lots merged long ago and do not exist (Tora: we cannot edit the state data layers but we can document those issues)
- de-emphasize the organized towns so the UTs are more distinct visually

Hugh Coxe:

- data development will be iterative and has 2 purposes
- 1: a decision support tool so that where we focus will determine how much to correct or fix the data problems
- 2 – a tremendous information resource for this project and others (perhaps as yet unknown) going forward.

Stacie Beyer:

- the boundary between each region could be clearer

John Hough:

- not knowing the issues we are to focus on, it is hard to know what to look for; will be easier to respond after those issues are identified
- we are looking at the “extensive” view in these maps; development mapping will be for more “intensive” places and will use/require point data and tighter clusters of information eg. waste sites
- We must determine how we deal with 20th century infrastructure/connections (roads) between the development and 21st century infrastructure (fiber)

Charles Rudelitch:

- Show public ownership that is not in conservation eg Tribal lands

- Show current land use, particularly agricultural lands in the western region

Heron Weston:

- Provide greater breakdowns in the depiction of the roads layer: State, State-Aid, County – as this determines who pays the bills for maintenance etc.

Crystal Hitchings

- show significant habitat (Judy: will be part of conservation suitability analysis)

Betsy Fitzgerald:

- in Trescott/Edmunds – show clam flats and closure areas and reasons for closure

Travis Howard:

- much has already been said; decide where to focus and then deal with data issues
- make a clearer distinction between organized and unorganized areas with the color pallet
- individual township maps a good size

Heather Almeda:

- add recreation information

Susan Hatton:

- color combinations: not easy to distinguish org from unorg; layering online will help

Other comments:

- we know there is and will continue to be inaccuracies in the data – provide a way to understand the limits of the data, eg click to get metadata or to tell you where it came from
- when there is poor data the “trump” source is the person who works with the information on the ground eg Dwayne with fisheries; there are also data standards that can be referenced

Postponed until next meeting: Map App: editable online tool to draw prospective zones on layers of mapped information (resources, suitability analyses, alternative base maps)

Contemplation: Data Assembly

Census: Population; Housing, Income

LUPC: Permit trends

TIF expenditures

Contemplation → → → Decision: Criteria for Prospective Zoning Focus (separate handout)

Ran out of time to go over this in detail; quick overview of spreadsheet;

More data issues: Population in the UT is available in 2 large census tracts, not by individual township; in answering the criterion “Populations exceeds 50?” First question: is 50 the number? Should it be 25? 100?

Heron estimated the population figures/township; we know there are errors eg. Day Block is more than 2, Lambert Lake Twp is probably less than 100.

Judy to work with Heron on other ways to determine population/township: get total structures from NG911 layer and subtract the homestead exemption data from ME Rev Services to determine the year-round and seasonal population. Not perfect as the NG911 layer is ~85-90% complete in Washington County UT. Could also ask the USPS for a delivery list to count structures per township.

We will pick up the discussion of criteria for where to conduct prospective zoning at the next meeting; Judy will send out a survey instrument to the Planning Committee to suggest additional criteria (with data allowances/limitations) and to establish/start the conversation about criteria thresholds in advance of the meeting.

Agenda Items for next time:

- Issues Forum: scope, potential speakers, purpose, timing
- Refine/finalize Criteria tool for choosing which UTs to prospectively zone
- Decide on which UTs to prospectively zone
- Review Map app tool
- Report on data improvements/workarounds
- Report on Plantation and younger generation survey outreach

Date and location of next meetings: - Judy will send out 3 meeting doodles to find dates in Feb, March and April; meeting time will be 5-7PM; most are closest to Machias; will go with Machias in February and Calais in March.

Thanks everyone – great input!!

Please read the FAQs (<http://www.wccog.net/cgpz-frequently-asked-questions.htm>)

I will also attach PDFs of the comments provided to the 4 open ended survey questions incase you did not pick up the handout – please read it before the next meeting.

Will be in touch with a survey to refine the criteria.

Respectfully Submitted
Judy East

Washington County Unorganized Territories – Community Guided Planning and Zoning

Document Outline - January 21, 2016 Revised Draft after 1-20-2016 Planning Committee input

Context - Collaboration – Celebration – Contemplation - Consensus

Vision for the Planning Initiative: To create a proactive planning and zoning framework for development and conservation within the Unorganized Territories of Washington County – guided by, customized for, and supported by landowners, businesses and community leaders in the UT and Washington County.

Context: as described/discussed verbally in the meeting; add first section to establish

- Relationship of CGP&Z to the Comprehensive Plan Use Plan for the entire UT
- Reference to Process Document (inclusive, deliberative process to support proposals for prospective zoning, policy recommendations, capital investment plan)
- Describe the key issues within which our decisions are operating and being made:
 - 3 from Process Document
 - Additional ones from Issues Forum
 - Others that emerge from discussion eg harmonization of regulations

Collaboration

Stakeholders (100+) – Process Committee (15+) – Planning Committee (12+)

- Constant Contact e-mail network
- Facebook page
- Web site
- Online Survey

UMM-GIS Service Center student support to project

Public Meetings

- Round 1; gathering input on concerns, priorities
- Round 2: review draft prospective zoning

Celebration

Asset mapping/inventory

The 4 Fs: Farming, Forestry, Fishing, Fun

Abundant resources (GIS Mapping): forestlands, lakes, coast, recreation, fisheries, blueberry lands and small farms

Contemplation

Analysis of:

- Census data: population, housing, income
- development trends (structures, permits)
- development investment (TIF grants/loans; services and infrastructure)
- vulnerability (extreme weather, culverts, roads)
- resource and use (compatibility)

Suitability analyses: conservation, development

Consensus

- Areas of focus (criteria for where to conduct prospective zoning)
- Prospective zoning recommendations
- Capital investment Plan to support prospective zoning and economic development
- Policy summary