

MINUTES OF CASTINE  
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

July 12, 2006

The July 12, 2006 meeting of the Castine Comprehensive Planning Committee was Called to order at 4:30 p.m., by Scott Vogell, Chairman. Members present at the meeting Were: Dale Abernethy, Jeanie Cass, Sheila Corbett, Dan Gregorie, Jeff Loustanau, Tom Martin, Liz Parish, Scott Vegell, and Lee Wylie.

A motion was made by Sheila and seconded by Lee to approve the Minutes of the June Meeting. The Minutes were then approved unanimously.

There was a discussion of the Preliminary Survey and of suggested changes to our agenda. It was determined that we would hereafter refer to our group as the Castine Comprehensive Planning Committee.

Tom Martin indicated that he has received no input as yet from any of the members of the Committee on the first 4 chapters of his proposed draft report. Liz pointed out that we are not ready to make changes. We are still working on “visioning,” On the preliminary survey, etc. Scott said that number crunching can go on while the Committee works on “visioning.”

There was a lively discussion on the written/oral responses to Scott’s “visioning” questions, and the problems confronting Castine. Dan indicated that his concerns were for infrastructure, the financial well-being of the town, and the social forces threatening the community.

Robin pointed out that there are many different people now living in Castine, and that We need to have affordable taxes in order to have a viable community.

Sheila gave detailed observations and suggestions as to the water infrastructure in the Town, the financing of waterworks improvements, etc. She pointed out that without\water there can be no growth in Castine. She posed the question of whether or not we need to be more conservative in our use of water in Castine. She also observed that real estate forces take a toll on the water supply.

Lee pointed out the increasing “Maine Coast Condo-it is,” and suggested that we consider quality over quantity. He also mentioned the need for rear-round merchants, managed growth, and concerns about the symbiotic relationship between MMA and the town. In addition he floated the idea of turning Adams School into a revenue-generating source. He indicated that, for him, Castine’s preservation of character and its historic preservation would require tighter zoning of views, architecture, “footprints,” and affordable housing.

Jeff addressed the symbiotic relationship of “town and gown,” and suggested that better communication between MMA and Castine, and acceptance of their co-dependent relationship was essential.

Jeanie indicated that her vision of Castine involved intergenerational affordable housing (subsidized by town, state and federal grant monies on which we have already paid taxes) as one of the pressing issues that the town must deal with.

Liz wanted an economically sustainable, safe community with light industry and community consensus.

Scott indicated that he felt the downtown area was being lost to residential purposes. He said there was a lack of business opportunities, and suggested that land be set aside for commercial endeavors, which the town could subsidize.

Lee mentioned that the “town and gown” issue is a classic and complex one; and that perhaps we need to have a separate visioning effort on that topic.

Dan stated that we have to have concepts before details. First we have to decide what we want Castine to look like, then draft a vision statement for us to dissect and finally we could identify the pressing issues and deal with them.

Jeff concurred, suggesting that we use a SWAT analysis: strengths, weaknesses, advantages and threats to the community.

Dan suggested that having a town that was “healthy environmentally, economically, and infra-structurally while preserving historical character” might be a good draft vision statement.

Robin asked what the residents would be willing to pay for; and Scott stated that such an approach would eliminate many of the issues.

Lee suggested that our vision statement be a draft for our final survey.

It was agreed that cultural and historical preservation was essential; and that we need a community that is healthy socially, economically, environmentally, and structurally.

Then Tom Martin presented the procedure necessary to accomplish our short-term goals: He will draft a statement encompassing our ideas. He will also draft an outreach statement and gather data for us.

Lee and Sheila volunteered to create an e-mail address list of people who only live in Castine part of the year, but might want to be kept apprised of the Committee’s progress.

Lee will create a post-card to send to non-year-round residents, asking if they wish to Be included on this e-mail list.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanie Cass