

The Maine Quality of Place Council

Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2009
State Planning Office, 184 State Street, Augusta

Next Meetings of the Council:

TENTATIVELY: Thursday, February 12, 2009, 1:30pm to 5:00pm

PUC Conference room, 242 State Street, Augusta

Present: Council Members: Richard Barringer (chair), Edward Barrett, Martha Freeman, Eleanor Kinney, Donna McNeil, Robert Thompson, Jennifer DeChant for John Richardson, Theresa Savoy, for David Cole, DOT, Robin Zinchuk and Matt Polstein via phone. **Council Staff:** Kate Reilly, Sue Inches, Jody Harris, Tim Glidden, Linda LaPlante. **Others:** John Knox, Score Business Counselors; Colleen Tucker, Bruce Kidman, The Nature Conservancy; Kathy Eickenberg, DOC – BPL; Michael LeVert, Tom Merrill, Amanda Rector, SPO; Maggie Drummond, GrowSmart Maine; Roxanne Elfin, Maine Downtown Center; Earle Shettleworth, Historic Preservation; Hugh Cowperthwaite, Coastal Enterprises Inc; David Vail, MECEP.

Introductions and Greetings: Richard Barringer opened the meeting at 9:30am with the introduction of council members, staff, and guests. He reviewed the minutes of the Council's 11.20.08 meeting, today's agenda, and expectations for the meeting.

1. Q of P Legislation. Martha Freeman gave a review of the Quality of Place legislation. She stated that this legislation is being designed to support regional efforts and to help EDDs develop their own Quality of Place investment strategies. The State Planning Office will provide technical assistance. The legislation has been shown to and accepted by the Governor and is now in the Reviser's office. Will be released around or in the Governor's State of the State Address (which may be pushed back to February), or the Governor may want a press conference in the Cabinet Room. Will probably go to the BRED committee, but members may want to talk to both the BRED and the State and Local Government committees. When Martha finds out when the legislation is going to be released she will let the Council and interested parties know.

Next Steps:

- Legislation
- Coordination
- FairPoint's asset-based effort
- Private funding
- A Quality of Place Bond package

Bob Thompson noted the consistencies between the QOP legislation and the Economic Development Working Group.

2. Q of P-related Bond Issues. Eleanor Kinney and Sue Inches talked about bond efforts related to Quality of Place. Eleanor stated that crafting the bond package will be an on-going process over the next two months. The goal is to promote a number of efforts that are interrelated to protect both the natural and the built environments. The Council should look at the bond packages that are out there already and related to Quality of Place, and make the connection.

Discussion:

- What is actually feasible?
- What do we want to get behind and recommend?

- What is the relationship between requests from LMF, DOT, etc and the existing \$50 million placeholder for investing in Maine's Q of P? (Note: The QOP legislation submitted by SPO on behalf of the Council contains a proposed \$8 million bond for endangered community buildings and a placeholder of \$50 million for the other agencies' bond proposals that support QOP.)
- There is usually an economic development bond category on the ballot; the QOP bond should be part of that. QOP crosses both natural resources and economic development
- How might the Council advocate for these bonds. There are three opportunities, 1) to let the Governor know what proposals support QOP; 2) testify before the Legislature; and 3) education of the general public

Eleanor wanted to make the point that the different advocacy components are part of a single strategy. Theresa Savoy stated that DOT would welcome support for marketing trails, etc. as part of the Quality of Place package.

Martha Freeman stated that the Governor would welcome advice from the QOP Council that would help him decide on bond packages. Ed Barrett: the Council doesn't need to present its own proposal, but to work with Governor's office to help achieve state QOP goals. Present package, go to the legislature, and work with various groups to build support, show support, build on what is already out there, review, evaluate, assess and brand as Quality of Place.

Dick Barringer suggested (and subsequently moved) that:

1. We inform the Governor of the requests from Downtown Coalition, Historic Preservation, New Century, LMF, State Parks, and DOT Trails, each of which advances the Q of P agenda and has the Council's strong support.
2. We inform the Governor of our intention to inform the relevant legislative committees of jurisdiction of the Quality of Place job growth strategy and the importance of these requests to it.
3. We request that the various constituencies behind these bond requests advocate them within the Q of P job-creation framework.

Second: Ed Barrett

Vote: Council members unanimous in the affirmative

3. Economic Development Working Group. Bob Thompson and Jennifer reported on the Working Group to Increase the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the State Economic Development Delivery System. The draft report has gone out to a sub-committee and will soon go to the full committee. Report should be done by next Friday. Jennifer will get a copy to Linda to distribute to the Q of P council as soon as available. It offers

- A strong endorsement of the Q of P effort
- Strategic planning for economic development across the State
- Look at EDDs to identify a point of delivery for local and regional economic development
- Group will investigate protocols to become client-friendly

Governor wants ease of delivery, single point of delivery. Will phase in some things over a period of time.

4. EFN Effort in Support of Q of P. Eleanor Kinney reported on Philanthropic Funding for Q of P. The Environmental Funders Network is moving forward with their plan. Their concept is to pool funds from various sources for two quality of place purposes:

1. Inform and invest in statewide public education about Q of P
2. Invest in regional projects and collaboration

Time frame – first meeting (of Environmental Funders Network?) in February with RFP in late spring or early summer.

5. Fairpoint's Asset-based Development Effort. Kate Reilly reported that part of Fairpoint's strategy in moving into the Northern New England market is a major investment in an Asset-based Economic Development Initiative across the region. They see this as a way to secure region's long-term economic prosperity and maximize return on their investment. The Governor is aware and excited at the prospect.

Initially Fairpoint had proposed a pilot project in one Maine region. Now have agreed to work simultaneously with all six EDDs as "master teacher" for a pilot project to run from April 2009 to March 2010. Fairpoint is asking each EDD to contribute \$30,000. EDDs have not yet officially signed off but will meet next week to discuss.

There are four phases:

1. Foundation: Establish EDD leadership teams, survey of existing reports, communicate knowledge, set goals
2. Discovery: Indigenous resource mapping and one industry cluster mapping project, enlist larger volunteer group
3. Connect : Look at results of mapping process - what are the gaps and opportunities
4. Report: Large public event to talk about indigenous mapping – what will come next

How it develops from there:

1. partnerships formed
2. funding
3. goals

Fairpoint's agent in this effort, Vital Economy, Inc., should be made aware of anyone else who needs to be at the table (community colleges and universities, other state agencies, non-profits, key industries, etc.) and make the connection early on. The concept is to imbed Quality of Place principles into the process. Dick Barringer's sole concern is that in some way the focus on Quality of Place not be lost when regions begin to focus on specific, chosen industries.

6. Next Meeting of the Council:

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Meeting adjourned at 11:45 am