

Machias Revitalization Committee

Friday, June 8, 2018 7:00

Bluebird Restaurant

Present: Bob Berta, Ashby Bladen, Sandi Bryand, Charlene Cates, Angela Fochesato, Kebhen Grier, Katherine Holmes, Jim Jackson, Bill Kitchen, Sandi Malagara, Charlie Martin Berry, Patricia Oh, Gail Peters, Joshua Rolfe, Lisa Schaefer and Jim Whalen.

Angela announced she must leave at 8:00. If the meeting is not completed by that time, Christina Therrien will conduct the rest of the meeting.

Public Comments: Bob Berta asked Angela Fochesato where she voted. Christina commented that where Angela votes has nothing to do with the agenda and to move on with the agenda as presented.

Minutes: Angela asked for a motion to approve the April and May minutes. Some concerns were raised regarding the availability of the minutes. Angela addressed the concern; minutes are emailed out to committee members and committee members are asked to vote on the minutes. Public can view minutes on the Machias website. Sandi Malagara made a motion to approve the minutes for April and May as presented. Joshua Rolfe second. All in favor.

At the start of the meeting, Lisa Schaefer asked Bob Berta not to take or publish her photo. Bob informed her he was within his rights as it is a public meeting.

Age Friendly Communities: (See handouts) Guest speaker, Patricia Oh a representative of AARP introduced a program sponsored by the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities called Livable Communities. She came to our meeting to encourage Machias to participate in AARP's Livable Communities as part of the AARP Network.

Discussion ensued about the definition of an age friendly community. Those present reflected on the need to make communities age friendly from young to old. A quick definition of this program Livable Communities is promoting the creation of a town free from social or physical barriers.

Patricia emphasized that changes could be simple and would be generated locally. The Network of Age Friendly Communities provides a process for towns to review and revise how they make their communities more livable. Question raised regarding fines for buildings not in compliance with accessibility laws. Patricia presented two approaches one more heavy handed and the second an understanding of the features of historical buildings. Patricia provided several examples of compliance efforts.

Data was provided regarding the influx of "boomers" moving into Washington County. Patricia emphasized seeing these new folks as a resource. She emphasized the need to keep people involved. Accessibility to places and activities promotes participation. Patricia posed the question what do older folks need to thrive in their community. Our responses were consistent with the Eight Domains of Livability presented in the hand outs. Patricia also cautioned us about the belief that in coastal areas everyone is affluent. Reality does not bear this out.

What does it mean to be an age friendly community? Patricia referred us to her handouts for a more detailed explanation. She emphasized there is no cost to the town to become a member of the network. There is an application process with five simple questions. The network can provide mini grants to towns for initial planning purposes. It is important to get all town's people and institutions involved in the process if possible.

Questions raised about the source of the funding for the Livable Communities. The Network is the non-profit arm of AARP.

Charlie Martin Berry from the Caring Community Collaborative highlighted a current program which is in sync with the goals of Livable Communities. The CCC program is in its second year of a three-year term. She suggested that the CCC program and the town efforts be a collaboration.

Question raised about better safety with angle parking. Patricia gave an example of a mini grant awarded to Wayne, ME to improve a very dangerous parking lot arrangement. Age Friendly Communities can also be an advocate for the towns participating in the program. Josh Rolfe emphasized that the goals of this program presented to us are the same as Machias holds whether or not the town is a member of the network.

Meeting Guidelines/Ground Rules being passed around needed to continue around the table. Angela will e-mail the rules of the meeting out to participants.

Riverwalk and the Westside Trail: Betsy Fitzgerald is the knowledgeable person regarding regulations for working on the trail. Lindsey McMahon will work on clearing the trail with Betsy's guidance.

The first history recording has been completed. The second is in process. Those responsible for this project will be meeting with Tora Johnson next week to work on the maps of the area. A considerable amount of work was done by a UMM student that could be used for this project.

Waterfront Resilience Judy East is currently working on the history of the river. The goal of the committee at this time is to consider flood protection and a river walk. Tora Johnson is providing maps of the area highlighting the changes that have taken place over time. Barker Designs has hired Andrew Mulholland to do an impact study on the buildings in the area at high water.

A public meeting will be held possibly at the end of June to discuss the current plans. The next step is addressing the need for flood protection and a possible wall. Christina reminded us that Machias Savings Bank matched the original grant received for the current phase of the project.

Signage Bad Little Falls: The town has the signs. They need to be made graffiti proof. Hope expressed that they be up by Margaretta Day and the Shriner's visit.

Sewer Project: The current location is on the west side of the river. Unfortunately, several large trees had to be removed to complete the project. Tentative plans to replace the trees in the future. There may be a need to do some blasting in the area to install the proper drainage system. The stairs will be rebuilt to the Westside Trail. The Beehive Collective is donating the hemlock for the stairs. The contractor is responsible for having the stairs returned to their proper location. They are not responsible for improvements.

The Beehive Collective will have 20 America Corp Service members in town on June 12th. They will be painting the wood as needed around the Bad Little Falls park. If possible, they will clean the headstones at the O'Brien cemetery.

Regarding the Bad Little Falls, the Rotary Club may assist in revitalizing the old flower beds in the park. Christina has asked the proper agency to replace the salmon sign as it is difficult to read due to age. There has also been a request for benches in the gazebo. Christina will take a walk in the park with Border Electric to determine the feasibility of electric lines being installed when the water project occurs.

Concerns expressed regarding protection of elvers fishing on the river. It has high economic impact in the area. Christina said this would be a question to ask at the public meeting with Baker Designs the end of June.

Green Space Committee: Sandi Malagara gave a report on the final plantings of the project. Question raised about hydrangea bushes planted in front of Bluebird. Sandi has been in contact with New Land to determine whether their placement near Route One and the snow removal might have had an impact on the bushes.

Airport Grant: Work is moving forward on the runway. The construction and lighting will be done in August. The building is done. Road paving has been delayed protecting the surface during other construction. Local land owner concerned about the dust generated by the unpaved road. Would the committee please address that concern? Christina will check on this. An Open House will be held during the Sea and Sky Festival.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Gail Peters. Second by Joshua Rolfe. All agreed.

Respectfully,

Gail J. Peters