

## **Planning Board Meeting October 3, 2015 Draft Minutes**

The Planning Board held a meeting on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, at the Chebeague Island School beginning at 8:45 AM.

Members present: Chip Corson, Mabel Doughty, Donna Colbeth, Sandra Birkett, Nancy Hill, Jane Frizzell and Carol White

Also present: Orlando Delogu, David Hill and Gloria Brown

Orlando Delogu read and commented on his completed Part II condensation of pages 16-53, the goals portion of the Comprehensive Plan. See pages 5-10 attached.

Goals 1 through 7 are broader goals. Goals 8 through 14 expand on the first seven.

Page 5, goal #4: possibly add a mention of Casco Bay Lines under transportation. CBL is heavily used for freight deliveries. CBL could increase services for Chebeague.

#4 and #5 are the only two goals suggesting creation of new "authorities."

- Now, CTC and the Town seem to be operating in parallel, but if in the future their visions diverge, then creation of a Transportation Authority may become necessary.
- A Housing Authority would make more funding available to the town. Island Institute could help with how to set up a housing authority.

Page 6, #8 lists the order in which land use ordinances will be revised.

#9 concerns re: Town's lack of well-drilling regulations:

- Depth of geo-thermal wells
- Need to measure current level of usage of the aquifer
- Need for regulation against selling/bottling water

#12 Capital Planning is a Board of Selectmen responsibility, but Planning Board may make recommendations. For funding, look for federal and state sources first, then current budget and lastly, bond borrowing.

# 13 and #14 are both about access to the rest of the world; #13 physical access, #14 communications access.

Pages 6-7:

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- Allocation of Tasks section emphasizes the need for committed, involved year-round residents.
- The annual town report is to be used report on progress toward the town's goals as stated in the Comprehensive Plan.

Page 9 re: water issues for future comprehensive plans: add an item #6 effects of sea-level rise. Reference to Town of Saco.

Page 10, ¶ 1: discussion re: summer visitors

- David suggested: "Come for a night; stay for a lifetime." Some members agreed with the slogan; others did not.
- Some members see summer visitors as a necessary part of the island economy
- Other members see summer visitors as incidental, not a priority for planning goals
- Suggestion to remove roadblocks for B&Bs
- Not discourage vs. actively recruit tourists
- Discourage "gentrification" of Chebeague
- Encourage eco-tourism and recreational tourism

Jane asked Orlando to address recommendation #68 in the original Comp Plan about performance standards. Orlando said it's covered in goal #8.

Growth cap limitation on building might be counter-productive. Zoning ordinance will define limits for growth.

Relationship of the Planning Board with the CEO

- Mabel thinks the CEO doesn't want to attend Planning Board meetings / isn't interested in the Planning Board
- David said it's primarily a budget issue, not enough hours
- Ideal would be to have CEO at every PB meeting
- Fiber-optic cable: PB didn't know about it; CEO approved consent orders
- What is the status of Hope Island?
- Shoreland permits issued?
- Feeling that PB doesn't know what issues are being dealt with and might need to be dealt with in revising land use ordinances
- Gloria apologized for not always forwarding monthly CEO reports to PB members.
- Suggestion that BOS minutes be sent to PB and PB minutes sent to BOS
- Note: minutes are all posted on the town's website as soon as they become available
- Chip will check in with Nick and/or Marjorie before PB meetings.

Suggestion to add a goal about the Fire and Rescue Department

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Nancy would like to see the non-profits become departments of the town.

Low income housing: "affordable housing" isn't affordable

David mentioned the importance of the fishing industry and need for flexibility with that in mind. Orlando: it's in goal #6.

Town acquisition of property: Orlando suggested that the Chebeague Land Trust split off from Chebeague/Cumberland Land Trust.

David asked about combining land trust with housing authority. Orlando said it's not a good idea.

Future meeting schedule:

- Thursday, October 15, 7 PM regular PB meeting is tentative. Chip will be in touch.
- Saturday, November 14, 8:45 AM at the school, meeting with Orlando re: Part III.
- Thursday, November 19, 7 PM regular PB meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Brown  
Deputy Clerk

**A Vision For Chebeague:**

The Town of Chebeague Island became independent in 2007, but it is only now beginning to focus on how it can sustain this unique island community. This revised comprehensive plan, a focus on essential goals, and the adoption of uniquely Chebeague Island land use control ordinances will enable us to preserve our past and build a sustainable future.

That future must include preservation of the quality of life that Islander's have valued for nearly 200 years, the protection of the Island's fresh water aquifer, the retention and growth of the Island school which is essential to maintaining a year-round community, the retention of critical transportation linkages to the mainland, and measures that protect historical activities on the

Island, i.e., fishing, agriculture, and forestry and simultaneously encourage new appropriately scaled business activities.

Beyond the needs of year-round residents, future town planning must value, and meet the needs of summer residents. From day trippers to those who each year spend several months on the island these visitors have been an integral part of island life almost from the beginning of the Town's existence. Of course, these visitors also benefit from protecting the Town's water supply and transportation linkages, but they are particularly concerned with quality of life issues—access to the foreshore, beach and boating facilities, the expansion and safety of trail and bicycling facilities, access to tennis, golf, Inn, and dining facilities, the protection of their seasonal homes during periods of the year these structures are not occupied.

More importantly, summer visitors want to retain the feeling of inclusion that has existed between them and year round residents of the island—it is a part of the charm of Chebeague that should not be lost. As much as anything, it is what brings visitors back year after year—generation after generation.

Achieving these goals will require growth in all types of appropriately located seasonal and year-round housing—housing that meets the needs of all income groups, i.e., young families, the elderly, traditional year-round residents/workers, those who work on the mainland, but choose to live on the Island, and those who would spend a night or a few days or weeks on the island.

### **Why we need a Revised Comprehensive Plan:**

Though there are many factors that play a role in the maintenance of a viable year-round/summer Island community, there are three that are critical—protection of the island's fresh water aquifer, maintaining transportation linkages to the mainland, and providing sufficient affordable housing for a critical, a self-sustaining, mass of year-round residents.

Bearing in mind that 80% of the Town consists of coastal waters (over which we have only limited control) and that 15 of the 17 islands in the Town have no year-round residents, a RCP is an essential first step leading to the adoption of detailed regulatory measures, and Town spending policies, that will enable the Town to achieve its vision for the future.

These planning and regulatory steps may be initiated by the town's Planning Board, but little of long term value can be achieved without a close working relationship (a partnering) with the Selectmen, the Code Enforcement Officer, Town administrators, and the myriad of public and private groups (and organizations) that have long existed on the island. Ultimately it is the Town Meeting that must put regulatory and spending policies in place, but this step is made easier when a broad consensus is fashioned—when year-round and summer voices have been heard.

### **Capacity to Implement the Plan:**

Chebeague Island's first comprehensive plan (adopted in 2011) certainly recognized and valued the symbiotic relationship between the year-round and summer communities on the island. But that plan also recognized (as we must) that of the two groups it is the year-round community that ultimately bears the burden of sustaining the future of the Town of Chebeague Island. The 2011 plan frankly conjectured that: "The year-round working community as it exists now may not be sustainable."

At that time the year-round community consisted of approximately 330 people; summer visitors numbered around 1500. These numbers are little changed today. The question remains—is the

year-round community large enough to sustain Chebeague Island's vision of the future? No clear answer is possible—what is possible is a conscious effort to increase the size of the year-round community. That is why the RCP's focus on affordable year-round housing is critically important.

We are not alone in recognizing this fact. Other island communities in Maine have recognized that affordable housing is the key to raising their year-round population to a level capable of sustaining their vision for the future, their quality of life, their year-round and summer communities.

In short, Chebeague Island's year-round population can/must be increased; to this end, the Town's focus on affordable year-round housing is a correct step. Achieving a critical mass, a population base capable of sustaining the Town's vision for the future benefits both year-round residents and summer visitors to the island.

A larger year-round population base provides children for the island school, personnel to staff essential full and part-time paid administrative positions on the island, personnel to staff the array of citizen boards and committees that are part of a viable (a sustainable) municipal government. Finally, it strengthens the tax base of the Town—year-round residents and summer (often land-owning) visitors are more willing to pay for a government that works.

### **Past Planning and the work in progress:**

In 2000, Great Chebeague Island (then an offshore neighborhood in the Town of Cumberland) undertook a first effort to articulate/examine its own needs, values, goals. The Town of Cumberland was amenable to these GCI overtures and some useful steps were carried out, i.e., the Cousins Island Wharf was improved, Chandlers Cove Beach was secured, junk cars were removed from GCI. But real long range thinking about GCI had not yet begun.

In 2007 when the Town of Chebeague Island became an independent municipal entity, the next step was undertaken by a transition group that focused on building codes, plans, and ordinances in effect in the Town of Cumberland. At the Town of Chebeague Island's organizational

meeting, a series of transitional ordinances were put in place. These tracked (often verbatim) Town of Cumberland ordinances. It was anticipated that these ordinances would be flexibly applied to meet Town of Chebeague needs. But it soon became apparent that the shoe did not always fit.

In 2008-2010 the Town of Chebeague Island undertook to prepare its own comprehensive plan. It was a long, a thoughtful, a careful process that led to the adoption of a Chebeague Island Comprehensive Plan in 2011. Unfortunately, that plan did not lead to a uniquely (a first generation) Town of Chebeague Island zoning ordinance, subdivision, and (non-housing) development ordinances.

In late 2014, as development pressures (primarily on GCI) began to mount, the lack of these ordinances was ever more apparent. That prompted the present effort to revise the 2011 comprehensive plan—giving it more focus; to clarify the powers and duties of the planning board; and to put on the table within the next year or two (ultimately for Town Meeting enactment) uniquely Town of Chebeague Island zoning, subdivision, and development ordinances. Relying on the hand me down ordinances of the Town of Cumberland will not achieve Chebeague's vision for the future.

### **Goals—Long Range and More Immediate:**

The 136 Goals outlined and sought to be prioritized in the 2011 Comprehensive Plan by the original Comprehensive Planning Committee, the Selectmen, and members of the public are reduced in this Revised Plan to a more workable 14 goals. The original time frame for implementing Town goals is shortened from 10 years to 5 years. That does not mean that all of the actions embodied in any one goal will (or must be) completed in 5 years. It does mean that a clear recognition of, and initial steps looking towards fulfilling/completing any/all of these goals should be in place within the next 5 years.

Some of the goals stated here have already been recognized and steps toward achieving these goals have already begun to be taken; it also seems clear that within this reduced number of goals some should be addressed more immediately than others. Finally, some of the outlined goals are never actually completed—they are ongoing—they are long-term fundamental goals that reflect the needs and character of the Town of Chebeague Island. Other goals feed into and facilitate efforts to achieve these more fundamental goals.

It follows that all of the Town of Chebeague Island's elected and appointed officials, and a healthy majority of year-round and summer residents of the town must understand, buy into, and support these stated goals. Employees of the Town must see their work as facilitating these goals. Broader support for these goals will take many forms: running for office, serving on boards and committees, seeing the need for and adhering to carefully drawn Island regulations and land use controls, bearing necessary fee and property tax burdens. In short, the long-run survival of the Town as a unique place to live and recreate lies in the hands of Chebeague Island's people.

1. Preservation of Great Chebeague as a viable age- and income-diverse year-round community.
2. Maintenance of an economically viable and educationally sound K-5 school on Great Chebeague.
3. Protection of Great Chebeague's groundwater aquifer, the sole source of fresh, safe drinking water.
4. Maintenance of critical transportation linkages between Great Chebeague and the mainland which may entail creation of a Chebeague Island Transportation Authority, and/or Town acquisition of the CTC.
5. Expanding the stock of new, affordable, year round housing on Great Chebeague with particular emphasis on low/middle-income younger families and elderly families; this may entail creation of a Chebeague Island Housing Authority.
6. Maintenance of traditional Chebeague Island fishing, farming, and forestry employment opportunities by use of zoning and economic development tools and infrastructure improvements.
7. Maintenance of the historic character of all islands in the Town (including historic structures and natural areas) coupled with the maintenance and expansion on Great Chebeague of trails, bike paths, open space, wooded areas, beach areas, and points of access to the foreshore.
8. Preparation of uniquely Chebeague Island zoning, subdivision, and commercial development ordinances and maps.
9. Preparation of well-drilling regulations covering existing and new wells on Great Chebeague.
10. Preparation of regulations covering existing and new septic (and other) waste water disposal systems on Great Chebeague.



11. Preparation of regulations covering all forms of household and commercial solid waste disposal on Great Chebeague.
12. Preparation of a rolling, an ongoing, 5 year “capital improvement” budget to address infrastructure needs on Great Chebeague.
13. Maintenance of, and/or building of new, public and private wharf facilities on Great Chebeague in suitable foreshore areas on the Island, including the provision of onshore parking, storage and support structures, and offshore mooring facilities.
14. Maintenance and expansion on Great Chebeague of all forms of electronic communication with the mainland, i.e., telephone and cell phone service, cable and/or dish TV service, high speed internet service, etc.

### **The Allocation of Tasks:**

The majority of the work necessary to implement the above goals cannot be delegated to outside consultants—they do not know the woof and warp of the Town. Moreover, this approach is not economically feasible. Nor can it be delegated to summer visitors and an array of ad hoc committees—these people may have a better feel for the Island, but convening them to tackle ongoing, year round tasks will not provide the concerted effort needed to achieve goals in a timely manner. Consultants, summer visitors, ad hoc committees will be used to some degree (when and as needed) but the bulk of the work can/must be done by:

1. The Selectmen of the Town of Chebeague Island.
2. The School Committee of the Town of Chebeague Island.
3. The Town Administrator, the Code Enforcement Officer, the Harbor Master and such other paid employees (or volunteer appointees) of the Town as directed by the Selectmen and/or the Administrator.
4. The Planning Board of the Town of Chebeague Island.
5. The Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of Chebeague Island.
6. The citizenry (residents) of the Town of Chebeague Island acting in special and/or annual town meetings.

Representatives of longstanding private organizations within the Town, i.e., the Chebeague Island Community Association, the Chebeague Island Library, the Chebeague Island Historical Society, the Chebeague Recreation Center, the Historical Society, the Island Commons, the Chebeague/Cumberland Land Trust, the Island Trails Association, can/should be called upon by any of the six bodies (noted above) to comment on, provide input to, discussions with respect to any of the stated goals that affect their respective areas of interest and concern with Island life.

### **Progress Towards Meeting Town Goals—An Annual Town Report:**

Each of the 14 Town goals laid out above lends itself, indeed requires, periodic assessment as to progress being made towards achieving each individual goal. To this end, the Revised Comprehensive Plan calls upon the Selectmen of the Town (acting pursuant to the Recurring Annual Milestones Policy Statement, or the Town Administrator Ordinance) to require the Town Administrator to prepare an Annual Town Report laying out progress made in the previous year towards achieving each of the 14 Town Goals. This Annual Town Report should be available for general distribution to residents and property owners at least 14 days before the Annual June Town Meeting. The Report may contain such other general information for the edification of residents, property owners, and the general public as the Selectmen may direct.

In preparing this Annual Town Report, the Town Administrator may call upon, and/or work with, any Town employee/appointee. The Administrator may also request any Town employee/appointee, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, the Chairman of the School Board, the Chairman of the Planning Board, and the Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals to provide any data or information these individuals may have that would be helpful in assessing progress made in achieving particular goals.

These annual updates of progress made toward achieving the 14 Town goals outlined can/should be open for discussion at the annual Town Meeting; they should be a factor in making critical budget decisions in each year's annual Town Meeting; and they should be a factor in setting the Board of Selectmen's action agenda in each year that follows an annual Town Meeting.

In sum, Town Goals (as articulated in the Revised Comprehensive Plan), if they are to be anything more than words on paper, must trigger Town budgetary decisions and Town action plans.

## **Some Background Discussion of Town Goals:**

### **1. Water Related Goals:**

The Town of Chebeague Island (actually 17 islands of varying size set in Casco Bay), more so than almost any other Maine town, must of necessity be concerned with on island fresh water and the sea water surrounding each island. The quality and quantity of these waters affects livelihoods, the quality of Town life, indeed the very survivability of the Town. The long-term viability of the Town as a year round community will be made infinitely more difficult if we fail

to protect Great Chebeague's ground water aquifer; this aquifer is the major source of the Town's fresh drinking water. Not surprisingly then, goals 3, 6, 9, 10, and 13 are all water related.

There is a bit of science related to water that must be understood. All waters are seamlessly interconnected—people who study water (hydrologists) tell us that this phenomenon (the hydrologic cycle) has been in place for millions of years. This cycle facilitates life on earth; it shapes the realities facing Chebeague Island—it's not going to end any time soon.

In a nutshell, the cycle recognizes that surface waters (on land or in the ocean) are constantly evaporating. These water molecules (cleansed of pollutants) are held in the atmosphere until global atmospheric conditions cause them to condense and eventually to precipitate back to earth in the form of rain or snow. The global water supply is constantly purified and replenished.

Precipitation that falls on ocean waters eventually mixes with these waters, takes on the character of these waters, and is again evaporated to the atmosphere. Precipitation that falls on land is either absorbed by the soil and held as groundwater, often in small or quite large underground aquifers, or it runs off the land into land based waterbodies, e.g., lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, wetlands, etc. where it too mixes with these waters, takes on the character of these waters, and is again evaporated to the atmosphere. The hydrologic cycle goes on and on.

Problem arise when clean precipitated water falling on land or on land based waters (whether absorbed more or less quickly, or in the process of running off, comes in contact with/mixes with, smaller or larger amounts of more or less harmful pollutant materials, e.g., human and animal wastes, pesticides, fertilizers, etc. Groundwater and aquifer waters can become contaminated—sometimes to the point where they can no longer be used as a safe supply of drinking water. The utility for fishing, recreation, etc. of coastal/ocean waters that are contaminated by marine (or other) wastes and/or that receive contaminated runoff waters can also be compromised.

The relevance of these very real possibilities to the development and future of the Town of Chebeague Island is obvious. It explains the need for a new zoning ordinance that will reasonably protect (prevent contamination of) the fresh water aquifer on Great Chebeague, by limiting/regulating future development on land overlying the aquifer, and on aquifer recharge land areas. It also explains the need for septic system regulation—limits on pesticide/fertilizer use—and most important, well-drilling regulations. Beyond minimizing contamination from land based activities, the latter prevents the drawdown of aquifer water from exceeding the recharge rate of the aquifer, and thus prevents/minimizes the risks posed by salt water intrusion into the fresh water aquifer. All of these measures are interrelated and mutually reinforcing—they protect the unique aquifer resource that makes year round island life possible.

If the water related goals noted above are to be fully met, a second corollary set of regulatory measures and affirmative actions must also be put in place, e.g., setback provisions from the mean high water line will protect near shore ocean water quality. Additionally, we must preserve and protect wetland areas—limit irrigation (agricultural) use of scarce water resources—capture/reduce/reuse storm water runoff—require boats (larger than a specified size) to have holding tanks and public and private wharf facilities to have onshore waste holding and package treatment capabilities. These too are all cumulative and mutually reinforcing measures that will protect both the aquifer and ocean water quality.

Finally, in a Town such as Chebeague Island (a Town of islands) a component of future comprehensive plans must examine (more carefully than we have to date) a range of ocean water related issues. These issues include, but are not limited to:

- 1.) determining what role the Town can/should play in State and Federal decision making with respect to ocean waters within and immediately adjacent to the Town;
- 2.) determining where in Town ocean waters, and how many, mooring facilities are needed (tolerable without overcrowding), and how the costs of managing and maintaining these moorings can/should be distributed;
- 3.) determining where and how many public and private wharf facilities are needed (tolerable without overcrowding), including onshore supporting structures, and what regulations to control use of these facilities are needed;
- 4.) delineating in Town ocean waters the location of, and outlining protections for, high value marine resources, e.g., lobsters, scallops, shellfish, etc.;
- 5.) delineating the unique character of each unpopulated island in the Town—developing protections for each of these islands—determining what (if any) day or overnight visitation to each of these islands is possible.

## **2. Sustainability Goals:**

There are facets of the Town of Chebeague Island noted in this Revised Comprehensive Plan's opening vision statement and in the 14 Town goals outlined above that go back nearly 200 years. They are a fact; they bespeak a quality of life we want to keep—a mixing of summer people and year round residents spanning a wide income and age range—a resident workforce engaged in traditional farm, forest, fishing activities that combines easily with those who live on the island but work in a wide variety of mainland occupations. Maintaining these balances, the historic character of Chebeague, will be greatly facilitated by maintaining the Town's school and by broadening the stock of on-island housing units—housing that meets the needs of all income groups, retirees, and young families. In short, meeting the interrelated goals 2, 5, and 7 is essential if goal 1, the central goal, i.e., preserving the Town of Chebeague Island as a sustainable/viable year round community, is to be achieved.

Two steps that can/should be taken (sooner rather than later) that will enable a broader range of housing initiatives to be undertaken on Great Chebeague are: 1.) repeal, or significantly amend, the Town's Growth Control Ordinance—it is too limiting; it chills the very thing we need—more housing starts; it deprives island builders of needed work opportunities; 2.) create a Chebeague Island Housing Authority—this body should focus on workforce, low-middle-income housing and elderly housing; it can/should acquire suitable properties for this type of housing, and avail itself of federal/state housing subsidies aimed at these segments of the housing market.

The Selectmen, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Code Enforcement Officer should be open to broadening the range of short term (summer) on-island accommodations. Not all summer visitors own housing on Great Chebeague. This broadening of summer Inn and/or rental housing opportunities should include everything from allowing expansion of the Chebeague Inn, being open to building new Inn-type facilities, expanding the number of B & B's on the island, allowing individual homeowners through airbnb or VRBO, to more fully meet the needs of short-term visitors and/or seasonal on-island workers. This approach to an expanded range of seasonal housing options should be embodied in a Town of Chebeague Island Policy Statement.

It seems clear that sustaining a viable year round community on Great Chebeague is made more likely by the the proximity of the island to the work opportunities afforded in greater Portland. People who presently live and work on the island (primarily in fishing, farming, forestry, boat related and construction jobs) without more, will not sustain the Town. We need to take advantage of mainland jobs to sustain the Town in the long run. This requires that we provide mainland job holders with on-island family housing (in adequate numbers and at varying economic levels). These families, along with more traditional island families will in turn provide young people for the school, a more secure tax base, and a more viable population base—people to serve on committees and Town boards.

The importance of goal 7, i.e., maintaining the charm, the historic character of the Town, cannot be over-stated. Those who for generations have lived on or visited Great Chebeague stay, and return, year after year because the island is a unique place. Those who visit for the first time, and leave planning their next visit, value this uniqueness. Those who have come to live on the island more recently (in retirement) or who are prepared to work on the mainland (with all the difficulties that entails) choose to do so because of that uniqueness. The trails and paths, the old structures, wetlands, wooded areas, open spaces, access to the beaches—it all must be preserved (expanded where possible) if the long term viability of the Town is to be preserved.

Finally, the Town would do well to settle on a town center. Communities that survive in the long run almost always have a core—an area where community, civic, business activities, and often village housing opportunities are all in close proximity to one another. They feed off, and strengthen one another. In France it's called the "centre ville"; there are only a few possible sites on Great Chebeague, and it won't arise overnight—but a new zoning ordinance and focused capital investment expenditures over the next several years can facilitate its growth once a locational choice is made. The Selectmen, the Planning Board, those who care about the island should weigh in—Great Chebeague needs a "centre ville".

### **Spending, Transportation, and Communication Goals:**