Your Regional Plan

Municipal Meetings

Orford, NH
Town Office, Rotue 25A
October 1, 2013

Attending:
Ernest Hartley – Town of Piermont (SB, PB)
Colin Stubbings – Town of Piermont (SB, PB)
John Adams – Town of Orford (SB)
Harry Osmer – Town of Orford (PB)
Carl Schmidt – Town of Orford (CC)
Anne Duncan Cooley – Town of Orford (SB)
Tom Steketee – Town of Orford (CC)
Ann Green – Town of Orford (PB)
Dan Brand – Town of Lyme (ZBA)
Harry Pease – Town of Orford (CC)

UVLSRPC Staff:
Christine Frost
Mike McCrory

The meeting began promptly at 6:00

Christine Frost gave an intoduction of the agenda for the evening and provided an overview of the work that the Commission has completed to date on behalf of the communities in the region to complete the regional plan. Public feedback and research included:

 ➢ Online Feedback received through the Regional Forum on the Future
 ➢ Analysis completed on all 27 Master Plans within the region
 ➢ Public feedback received from 14 communities events around the region
 ➢ Independent phone survey results
 ➢ Existing conditions and current trends within the region

The Commission then asked for input from the attendees about what was happening within their communities. The following list was compiled:

 ✓ Orford is restoring washed out bridges, Archer Town Rd, Indian Pond Rd (fixed)
 ✓ Concern about the next big water event, Just under 300 structures over water in Orford
 ✓ Interest in land use tax (current use) finding a balance or equitable taxation – many large lots are going into current use that are not producing – limited business/employees
 ✓ Looking to improve old Academy building, have completed studies

- ✓ Lyme – River Road ($600K spent) more signs of erosion along other segments – more costs to town, believed that it is likely Wilder Dam fluctuation could be the cause
- ✓ Lyme is watching the FERC relicensing process
- ✓ Route 10 'armoring' against erosion
- ✓ School improvements in Lyme, increase in school enrollment
- ✓ Internet/Broadband Access – focus on higher densities, how to serve more sparse populations, how to reach more remote locations?/
- ✓ Town staffing/ finding the expertise in small towns is an issue
- ✓ Town volunteers, many folks work far away and cannot commit to time at home
- ✓ Town discussions to share services among a 'co-op' staffing for this?
- ✓ Shared resources - what about between states? Across the review Fairlee/Oford

After a short break the group reconvened and discussed what they valued about the region.
- ✓ Citizen participation
- ✓ Sense of community/work
- ✓ Low population densities
- ✓ Children are cared for by schools
- ✓ Open space
- ✓ Mix of ppl
- ✓ Conservation and schools
- ✓ More relaxed in rural areas
- ✓ Open space
- ✓ Not one person in town that I dislike! It is a great town.

After some great discussion the group was asked to participate in leading their own conversation about what projects and initiatives they felt were important to be represented in the Regional Plan. The group determined two topics that they selected that needed more conversation.

- Emergency Services

Grange system was for purchasing networking for farmers – looking to the past for ideas – regional purchasing, fuels etc. – Emergency services, ways to share/reduce costs, how to optimize services for the region? – local services EMT/volunteers – sometimes difficult to maintain training – strong local support for services in towns, especially fire and police – town offices, consolidate and coordination, town sharing – need regional coordination – town function and/or emergency services – record keeping is essential but doesn't need to happen in each town – administration, fund raising and grant writing, reporting to state offices on issues, training and specific skills are becoming more difficult and it is difficult to find employees that know rules and regulations

- Economic Development, jobs and employment, increasing tax base

Need to travel longer distances to get basic needs – people travel for larger quantities and bulk deals on food and other household items – not affordable to shop local – local food is desired by unaffordable – Private hydro could be a good source of revenue for people – Piermont has hydro sites, operating at a loss, use to get paid 7¢ kwh not get paid 3¢. Gov support for hydro as a small business would be very helpful– local business ctr., occupy vacant buildings, offices/mtg rooms incubator with internet would be great to have in town to promote small new businesses – idea support / collaboration for opportunities for new one person businesses – facilitate interactions among entrepreneurs -

- Multi-town collaboration

Elder services – bus service/ transportation – river erosion could be collaborated on - water supply – disasters and response – public facilities/CIP – master planning

- State owned highways in town/need repair/town roads are better than state roads

The quality of state road is worse than town maintained roads – mgCl is used in Piermont and has saved a lot of money – good surface treatment and last a long time – converting paved roads to dirt and treat – vendor sells chemicals and leases the equipment for next to nothing – Piermont and Orford feel they have done a good job maintaining their roads

- Increase town participation in Government

No participation

The groups reconvened and shared their ideas about what they want to see happen in their communities and the larger region. Discussion followed regarding the importance of discussions with other towns about how they get things down. The group was very interested in continued conversation such as this in order to further some of the ideas generated at this meetings, specifically inter-town coordination, how that could save money. It seemed to be generally agreed that these are long term discussions that needed to take place consistently but that leaders should be patient as these changes take many conversation over a long period of time as change is difficult for people and relinquishing control could inhibit potential financial savings. There was a lot of sharing of ideas from town to town.