Town of Kennebunkport
Growth Planning Committee
March 10, 2020 | 7:00pm – 9:00pm
Fire Department Meeting Room, Kennebunkport, ME

Agenda

1. Introduction of members and guests

Attendees: Dan Saunders, Jim Fitzgerald, Barbara Barwise, Paul Hogan, Mike Corsie, Janet Powell, and Werner Gilliam

Absent: James McMann

Guests: Liz Durfee and Tom Morgan

2. Review of Minutes of February 25, 2020
Mr. Hogan made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 25, 2020 Growth Planning Committee meeting. Ms. Powell seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.
Paul motion to accept. Janet seconded vote unanimous.

3. Review of Draft 1 of Natural Resources Chapter
Chairman Dan Saunders arrived.

Ms. Liz Durfee began her presentation on the draft of the Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Durfee went into detail on each of the topics covered in the Table of Contents for the chapter as listed below:

- Introduction
- Topography
- Watersheds
- Geology & Aquifers
- Soils
- Habitats & Species of Concern
- Undeveloped Blocks
- Natural Resources Co-Occurrence
- Resilient Lands
- Conservation Land
- Town Forest
- Areas & Vistas of Natural Beauty
- Shade Trees
- Summary of Threats.

Ms. Durfee reminded the Committee members that this chapter requires a lot of public input to determine what is important to the community.

In the Introduction section Ms. Durfee outlined the 4 types of ecosystem services which are: Provisioning, Regulating, Supporting, and Cultural and provided a couple of examples of each type of service as a way to illustrate why preserving a community's natural resources are important even if you don't love to go walk around in the forest.

For the topography section, Ms. Durfee noted some of the information is also in the land use chapter and they will make sure all of the data is consistent throughout the document.

In discussing Watersheds, Ms. Durfee provided a definition as the area of land that drains into a stream, lake, or river and provided a map identifying the watershed areas in town noting that Kennebunkport has an impervious cover of 6.5% which is great that the land in town is well under the state threshold of <10%. Ms. Durfee further explained that the general assumption is water quality declines in a habitat with greater levels of impervious surface cover.

Mr. Hogan asked if the calculation of impervious cover includes every structure, dwelling, hotel, parking lot, etc.? Ms. Durfee replied it does match up with the general areas of building and is a fairly good approximation based on the data they've obtained from the state.

In response to Mr. Hogan's inquiry on the changes in the town's regulations for calculating impervious surface coverage for driveways, Mr. Gilliam gave a detailed explanation on the history of the change in the state's program to provide incentives to property as alternatives for their driveways with vegetative driveway coverings.

Ms. Durfee clarified the 6.5% is based off the GIS data which may not capture everything perfectly because it is based on aerial imagery not building footprint, so it is an estimate.

On the Geology & Aquifers section, Ms. Durfee pointed out on the map how the aquifers were identified and included a brief history of the geology in this section.

On another map indicating the different soil types in town noting there is less than 1 acre of prime farmland and less than 1% of forestry soils. The predominate soil is lyme and rock and is considered to be a fairly well drained soil, Ms. Durfee added.

On page 9 of this section, Ms. Durfee asked how many commercial farms are located in Kennebunkport. Ms. Barwise listed Black Rock Farm, Hathaway Sheep Farm, and Wolfe's farm. Mr. Gilliam added there are a number of farms in town that don't reach the acreage for a farmland classification. Ms. Durfee added she will check the assessing GIS data.

Mr. Gilliam questioned the amount of bedrock indicated on the map in the geology section based on his knowledge of the number of blasting permits issued in town. Ms. Durfee stated she'd double check on the methodology of the data.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if there is any impact on soils due to the great fire as a reason why the trees aren't growing. Mr. Durfee replied a lot of the soils are really shallow so that may be a factor.

The next section shows the different data layers the state has provided that shows different habitat and species of concern, Ms. Durfee stated, adding the white circles on the map are areas where species of conservation interest are located.

On the next map shown, Ms. Durfee explained the focus areas are identified beginning with the habitat report that the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife produced and identified 140 different focus areas in the state of which 2 of those areas are withing Kennebunkport. Ms. Durfee also explained the Beginning Width Habitat Focus areas are defined as landscaped scale areas that contain exceptionally rich concentrations of at-risk species and natural communities and high quality natural communities, significant wildlife habitats and their intersection with large blocks of undeveloped habitat included in a separate layer. Ms. Durfee emphasized that all of these are going to be important when looking at what habitats and species are of greatest interest and conservational protection value to the community and where the town may be promoting/discouraging growth in the area.

Ms. Durfee explained the next slide shows the map of Undeveloped Blocks of land that are important to wildlife that require interior habitats and the connected areas which are areas that may be viable for providing connectivity between some of those large habitat areas to see how the conservation land coincides with those land blocks. Mr. Hogan asked if the conservation land includes all the trust lands. Ms. Durfee replied she assumes it includes all if not most of the trust lands, but she hasn't been able to verify that with the state.

Mr. Durfee continued her presentation noting about 22% of the towns area are wetlands which is good for keeping the land undeveloped and provides good habitat, water filtration and water storage benefits which is crucial to the community. Mr.

Gilliam asked if there was a note providing how much land is conservation land as a percentage of the total acreage. Ms. Durfee responded there are 3,166.6 acres and it is in the land chapter but will also be put in this chapter.

Ms. Durfee continued stating the next map is the Co-Occurrence map by the Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife showing the areas and some buffer zones that have a higher prevalence of natural communities and plant and animal species listed as threatened or endangered and areas of undeveloped lands. The higher Co-Occurrence of these are the darkest color and more valuable to protect, Ms. Durfee added. Mr. Gilliam asked if the designations of 7+ on the map means there are over 7 different species that are interacting in the same area. Ms. Durfee replied no it is just a value but not necessarily a number of species or habitats as things are weighed differently based on the rarity of the species warrants a higher value. Mr. Gilliam suggested making a note of that on the map for clarification.

The next map section shown is data the Nature Conservancy compiled nationally looking at resilient lands and specifically looking for climate change, Ms. Durfee explained. Ms. Durfee noted this information can be useful in identifying how to help species & habitats respond to changes associated with climate change whether its sea level rise or changes in temperature and this can help to facilitate that migration or adaptation.

Ms. Durfee continued to the next map that highlights town forest land based on the GIS data comprising of 19 parcels and nearly 1,000 acres. Ms. Durfee asked for input on the towns land management plans and the name of the town forester. Mr. Gilliam clarified the town has a Tree Warden who works specifically with the Shade Tree Committee dealing with trees along roads and not in forested areas. Mr. Gilliam also noted to contact Mike Claus of the Public Works Department to ask him to provide some comments on the current status of the management plan.

Mr. Hogan highlighted the need for a management plan for the beach area to determine what happens after a storm and how do you protect the land and dune grasses. Mr. Durfee said she would add a section on beach management.

Drawing from the 2012 plan, Ms. Durfee highlighted the following areas to be listed in the Areas & Vistas of Natural Beauty section:

- Ocean Avenue, from Parson's Way around to Walker's Point.
- Cape Porpoise, including the pier, the harbor and the islands.
- Goose Rocks Beach
- The view across the mouth of the Batson River from Goosefare Farm on Route 9.
- The Kennebunk Riverfront, including the Monastery grounds across the river.
- The Colony Beach
- Turbat's Creek

Mr. Hogan suggested to include the night sky because we are losing it rapidly due to light pollution. Ms. Durfee agreed with Mr. Hogan's suggestion.

Mr. Fitzgerald suggested adding Cleaves Cove to the list as well.

Ms. Durfee commented because the town does have an active shade tree committee she included a section on the shade trees and light to recognize the value of shade trees.

The last section Ms. Durfee discussed is a summary of the some of the threats to the natural resources and asked about the impact of tourism in town on habitats. Mr. Hogan and Ms. Barwise commented tourism is a huge concern as people are our biggest threat to our natural resources.

Mr. Hogan suggested Ms. Durfee contact the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust to learn about their programs with children's education and the beach conservation efforts as well as the Plover Protection Program educator.

Referring to the map on page 20, Mr. Corsie asked what a high value plant polygon is. Ms. Durfee replied that is one of the instances where there is a high value habitat, but it doesn't say specifically what type of plant it is.

4. The Nature Conservancy's coastal resilience tools

Mr. Morgan gave a brief demonstration on the Nature Conservancy's website that shows the different features of their future habitat explorer program. Focusing on a section of the coast in Kennebunkport using the future habitat explorer program, Mr. Morgan showed what may happen to the marsh area when the sea level rises in various increments. Mr. Morgan noted one of the useful tools on the website is the Road-Stream Crossing Barriers that identifies where culverts may need to be enlarged to allow the salt marsh to migrate.

Mr. Morgan encouraged the Committee to go to the Nature Conservancy's website and see the many tools they offer.

5. Next steps – Energy Chapter on March 24

Mr. Gilliam asked if there is any GIS data available to help folks identify solar locations. Mr. Morgan agreed that would be a good topic to look at. Mr. Durfee offered to include some of the basic information or guidelines solar installers ask when looking at site suitability.

6. Other

There were no other topics raised for discussion.

The next GPC meeting is scheduled for March 24th, 2020.

7. Adjourn