

**Portage Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 11, 1995 7:00 pm
Town Hall**

Agenda:

1. Minutes of last meeting

2. Comprehensive Plan - Jay Kamm from the Northern Maine Development Commission will continue to work with the Board and citizens of Portage.

Sections to be discussed:

Natural Resources

Public Facilities and Services

Transportation

Fiscal Capacity

Demographics

Board members, please read these sections prior to our meeting, make notes on changes you would like to see so that we can discuss at our Wednesday meeting. (Note: Copies of these sections are available at the Town Office for the general public to review.)

The Comprehensive Plan describes Portage's past and present, and lays out a plan for Portage's future. The plan will describe what the citizen's of Portage feel is important and value, what kind of development and where we would like to see it occur, what future recreational activities and opportunities we would like in town, and whether Portage would like to actively promote new business. The plan can be used to sell our community and our desires when applying for grants to improve roads, improve or build new recreational facilities, protect water quality and other natural resources, and attract business. It is our description of ourselves and where we as a town want to be five years from now.

If you have an opinion, we need to hear from you now. We wish to incorporate your ideas and views into the Plan, after all this is OUR Plan.

**Portage Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 8, 1995
7:00 pm Town Hall**

Agenda:

1. Minutes from last meeting
2. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Essential Habitat identification for Endangered Species (nesting Bald Eagle site) in Portage Lake Township.
3. New Public Boat lunch site (up grade of existing and elimination of an old one).
4. Portage Tree Board - update on what they are proposing to do.
5. Steven's building - update
6. Comprehensive Planning
 Inventory Sections to be discussed:
 Natural Resources
 Fiscal Capacity
 Historic and Cultural Resources
7. Next meeting date (we may need to meet a second time in February)

Come find out what comprehensive planning is about
and let us know your vision of Portage's future.



**Portage Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 15, 1996
Portage Town Hall, 7:00 pm**

Agenda:

- 1. Meeting minutes**
- 2. Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use section**
- 3. Cable Contract**

FORTAGE LAKE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Feb 15, 1995

Members Present: Kathy Hobbe, Christy Dicker, Frank
Currier, Diana Michaud, Bob Nelson
Kathy Gagnon

Jay Kamm was present.

Motioned to accept minutes was read by Christy, seconded
by Bob.

Joe Chouinard will be starting a kennel - inquired if he
needed a home business permit. After some discussion it
was determined that this could not be considered a business
since he would be using his home for business less than
49 % of the time.

Work done on the Comprehensive Plan was reviewed and dis-
cussed, revisions were made. Sections reviewed were:
Natural Resources, Fiscal Capacity & Land use.

Jay reported on the revised Housing section.

Next meetings will be Mar. 12th and 26th, at 7:00 PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Frank, seconded by Kathy G. at
9:03 PM.

Minutes prepared by Diana Michaud.

~~17~~
19 1/2"
21 1/2"

23.6
19.2

**Portage Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, April 12, 1995
7:00 pm Town Hall**

Agenda:

1. Minutes from March Meeting
2. Permit application for Harold Cyr (Application is on file at town office)
3. Comprehensive Plan
Continued discussion on policies and strategies



Will we ever get the Comprehensive Plan completed?

**Special Planning Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 26, 1995
7:00 pm Town Hall**

Agenda:

Comprehensive Plan

PORTRAGE LAKE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Jun 14, 1995

Members Present: Kathy Hoppe, Christy Dicker,
Diana Michaud, Bob Nelson

Townsperson present: Judy Moro

Jay Kamm was present.

Motioned to accept minutes was read by Bob, seconded
by Christy.

We reviewed the completed Comprehensive Plan. Jay will
send corrected draft on the few corrections that was
found, mostly on the maps.

Motion to adjourn was made at 7:28 PM by Bob and seconded by
Christy.

Next meeting will be July 12th, at 7:00 PM.

Minutes prepared by Diana Michaud.

**Portage Planning Board
Regular Meeting
Wednesday July 12, 1995
7:00 PM Town Hall**

Agenda:

1. Minutes from previous meeting
 2. New Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules - Holding Tanks. Ralph Stolze, Portage LPI & CEO will present some information for the Board to consider.
 3. Ashland Planning Board. Members of the Ashland Board would like to talk to Portage on the Comprehensive Planning Process.
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PORTAGE LAKE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Nov 08, 1995

Members Present: Kathy Hoppe, Christy Dicker, Kathy Gagnon, Diana Michaud, Bob Nelson
Frank Currier

Jay Kamm and Eric Carson was present.

Meeting brought to order at 7:03 PM.

Motioned to accept minutes by Bob, seconded by Frank.

Discussions on the Comprehensive Plan and whether we should add a " Future Land Use Plan", and whether it was necessary. This was tabled till a later meeting for a decision.

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:55 PM by Christy, seconded by Kathy Gagnon.

Next meeting will be Dec 13, at 7:00 PM.

Minutes prepared by Diana Michaud.

Note: Dec 13th meeting was cancelled by Chairperson.



**Northern
Maine
Development
Commission**

January 2, 1996

To: Portage Lake Planning Board
From: Jay Kamm *JK*

RE: Proposed Land Use

Enclosed is the DRAFT Proposed Land Use section for the Comprehensive Plan. It will most likely need a "little tweaking" to satisfy you. One point that I would like you to think about is "How are you going to make the Growth area different from the Rural area?" The State Planning Office will not accept lax land use control.

In order for your comprehensive plan to be consistent with the state guidelines, you need to exercise some form of land use control in Portage. I have tried to marry minimum lot sizes with allowing most land uses throughout the township. This is, quite honestly, about as "hands off" as you can realistically get by with. I have also tried to put the control back to the landowner with guidance from the Planning Board.

See you on the 10th.

PORTAGE LAKE PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN

The major goal that the town is trying to accomplish is to allow for affordable residential and commercial growth while preserving Portage Lake's rural character -- particularly its open land, scenic beauty and reasonable tax rate. Guiding growth to make efficient use of land is a primary component of this effort.

In reaching consensus on the plan, the Planning Board labored over the necessarily conflicting aspects of preserving rural character, promoting affordable housing, minimizing regulation and costs to local taxpayers, retaining individual property rights and keeping property values equitable throughout town. The plan is the product of a series of compromises in a number of areas that together represent a balanced approach to meeting these varied objectives.

To afford choices to Portage Lake's townspeople, the Planning Board has worked to strike a balance between these competing interests by delineating areas in town that will allow for different priorities to be met. Over the ten-year planning period (1995-2005), the plan anticipates few new housing units and no appreciable commercial or industrial growth. It is anticipated that any new housing units will be primarily single-family houses and mobile homes. It is also expected that, absent town policy to the contrary, these new homes would develop primarily on single lots along existing roads that do not come under subdivision review.

The degree to which lot-by-lot development can be guided is limited; it is by nature an inefficient way to design the use of land. The plan calls for the town to require all significant land development (defined as two or more units per existing parcel over a ten-year period) to occur in a planned manner. By looking toward the eventual likely development of each parcel of land, it is hoped that the best possible design of the land can be achieved in the common interest of the landowner and the town. Without taking the responsibility and authority for site design from the developer or landowner, the town will establish guidelines to encourage efficient and ecologically sound use of land.

The rationale for a number of the Planning Board's land use decisions is explained below:

PRESERVING OPEN SPACE

There is a tension between the publicly and privately borne costs of any development or any protection plan. For instance, if the town wants to preserve open space, it can purchase the land (or its development rights) or restrict development on privately-owned land. Alternatively, in this plan, it is proposed that open space be set aside incrementally as land is developed. The cost of additional land, that would not necessarily have been needed for the development, will most likely be borne by the purchaser. This can increase the cost of housing (or commercial development). With this in mind, the amount selected to be set aside was kept to the lowest level that would achieve some measurable results -- a minimum of one acre of developable land set aside for each acre developed.

MINIMIZING ROAD ACCESS POINTS AND PREVENTING DEVELOPMENT SPRAWL

The same issue of "Who will pay?" is true of roads. For both aesthetic and safety reasons, it is best to minimize the number of driveways entering roadways. While a short driveway, straight from the road to a home, may be the least expensive route for many home builders/buyers, longer or combined driveways are probably better for the town. This plan recommends that if more than a single lot is developed on a parcel of land, the other units be situated off the road. The mechanics and options for accomplishing this need to be further refined during the implementation phase of the planning process. Options such as a maximum number of curb cuts

per thousand feet, number of units served per access point, etc. will be examined by the Planning Board.

The Planning Board felt reluctant to mandate combined driveways among private parties. Instead they decided to make a public commitment to recommend acceptance of new roads built to town standards in the growth area. While new roads are an expense to maintain, it was deemed worthwhile in order to prevent strip development along existing roads. This policy may increase the cost of public road maintenance in the future, but as only roads already built to town standards will be accepted, there will be no additional capital expense during the five-year capital investment plan period.

PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF MORE THAN ONE UNIT PER PARCEL EVERY 10 YEARS

Regardless of a parcel's location, the Planning Board believes that it is in the best interest of the town and each landowner to plan ahead as much as possible for the use of land. Since single-lot roadside development has been found to present the greatest threat to Portage Lake's rural character, this continued practice will be heavily discouraged. It is not a desired effect to slow preserving open space and preventing roadside development sprawl to be realized, however, individual landowners must cooperate by thoughtfully designing efficient use of their land.

Effective when the ordinance is developed and adopted, no more than one new unit of development will be allowed on each recorded parcel during any ten-year period until a rough sketch plan has been filed and approved by the planning board. (As with state subdivision law, gifts to family members and transfers to abutters would not be considered creating new units, although voluntary compliance with the spirit of the planning concept would be appreciated). Landowners would conceive of the development likely to occur over a ten-year period and draw up a sketch of how it would be designed. At a minimum, the general location of structures, open space to be set aside, and any eventual roads would need to be delineated.

The planning board will review the plan for compliance with the comprehensive plan and land use ordinances. Unless and until the development meets the definition of a subdivision under state law, no formal plan will need to be filed, and the planned lots will not be treated as development lots for tax purposes. If the landowner's plans change over the ten-year period, he or she can return to the planning board with an amended plan.

LAND USE DISTRICTS

The land use plan map displays the two proposed land use districts, as well as indicating the locations of the ten priority scenic areas and three known unique natural areas in town. Not shown are the state and town mandated shoreland zones (to be added during the implementation phase of the plan) or the locational preference for a future business/industrial park in town.

It should be noted that the proposed land use plan would only apply to new development in town, so that existing uses would be "grandfathered" where they do not agree with the new proposals. The issue of allowing expansion of existing activities will be discussed in the development of implementing ordinances during 1996.

Growth Area: Land that is accessed for development from the state-maintained Route 11 and East and West Cottage Roads would be considered to be in this zone. The rationale is that these three roads are (a) heavily-traveled collector roads that will bear the brunt of new traffic regardless of its ultimate destination in town; (b) in the case of Rt. 11, maintained with state dollars, and (c) already showing signs of development pressure. It is therefore more cost-effective for the town to encourage the wear-and-tear of additional growth to be placed on these

roads and away from more rural town-maintained roads. It is proposed that development in these areas have a maximum density of approximately one unit per acre.

This area will be expanded from the current built-up village area, with the precise boundaries to be determined during the implementation phase of the plan. It is envisioned that buildings will be more congested here than in the rest of town, with safe placement of wells and septic systems being the major limit to growth. At this time it is felt that the State Plumbing Code, strictly applied, should be adequate to protect the ground water resource.

As with the rest of town, developments of more than one unit per existing land parcel (over a ten-year period) will be required to provide for an equivalent amount of open space to be preserved as the amount of land developed. The open space may or may not be located on the same parcel of land or even in the growth area, and a fee may be paid instead for the town to purchase land or easements. All new development in town, however, will be contributing toward open space preservation and/or public access.

House lots at this density should not be appreciably more expensive than under the current minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet (which is rarely utilized; most parcels in town are larger), and this would allow for one-acre lots qualifying for Rural Economic and Community Development and Maine State Housing Authority financing to be located in a reasonable portion of town with the open space requirement, a small 4-unit subdivision at this density will set aside at least a 2-acre piece of open space (half of the 4-acre minimum land required for the whole development, either on-site, elsewhere in town or with equivalent dollars).

While the growth area as a whole appears to be linear along the map, the resulting land use pattern is expected to be one of scattered subdivisions off of these roads where there are landowners desiring to sell land for development. There are a few active farms included along these roads, and it is hoped that they will remain active, perhaps selling portions for house lots as necessary; the open space requirement could be handled through development rights to preserve farming. The town will encourage more landowners to register under the farm and open space law, qualifying them for the protections of the farmland adjacency law, but cannot force this to happen. It is hoped that the requirement to plan for land development will make it easier for large landowners to classify the bulk of their land in farm and open space and set aside the portion that might be developed without fear of penalties.

All types of uses will be allowed in the growth area. Mobile home parks that take advantage of the state limits to local regulation will be allowed in the growth area as an exception to the density requirements.

The Planning Board has no accurate means of forecasting the real estate market, but hopes that the amount of land designated for this density of growth will be sufficient to provide for the need. As Portage Lake has no public water or sewer system, there is no efficiency reason to centralize the growth area any further. This growth area is efficient regarding traffic generation and wear-and-tear along existing roads, although a few new short town roads are likely to be created to avoid development sprawl. Each development of more than one unit per parcel over a ten-year period will be designed in a planned, compact fashion with guaranteed open space preservation. This should be sufficient to satisfy both the requirements of the state's Comprehensive Planning and Land use Regulation Act and Portage Lake's growth management goals.

Rural Area: The balance of Portage Lake would be considered rural. Growth would not be more restricted in this portion of town, it would be relatively discouraged due to (a) the cost of additional land requirements, and (b) the lower likelihood of the town accepting new roads. While a low density is desired, the Planning Board felt that it was essential to keep house lots

within a reasonably affordable range for the benefit of buyers, sellers, and the town as a whole, so that rural living would not become exclusive for the rich. These considerations kept the density from being required to be lower than one unit for every three acres (although it is hoped that in some cases developers will go beyond the minimum requirements). Here a 5-unit subdivision would net a minimum of 7-1/2 acres of open space.

Small-scale commercial and industrial activity will generally be not allowed in the rural area, but will be subject to a site review ordinance which may limit some uses based on performance standards such as traffic generation. Large-scale operations will be discouraged from the rural area. These distinctions and performance standards will be carefully developed during the implementation phase of the planning process.

Multi-family dwellings and mobile home parks also will not be allowed in the rural area.

Resource Protection Area: State law dictates some restrictions in and along wetland and shoreland areas. Wetlands and a zone to be determined (100-200') on either side of the town's year-round streams are proposed to be designated Resource Protection Districts, meaning that no new development would be allowed (exceptions to this could be considered as the ordinance is developed). Further delineation of these areas and options for shoreland zoning designations will work to obtain public access so that Portage Lake's surface water resources can be enjoyed by all residents.

Priority Scenic Areas: The scenic areas listed in the Historic and Cultural Resources section will be marked on the land use map. It is the policy of the town that these views be preserved on a voluntary basis. Any development in these areas will go before the planning board for an advisory review of minimizing any negative impact of development on the public's view. This strategy will be reviewed in 1998 as to it's effectiveness.

Unique Natural Areas: The general locations in which the floodplain, Bald Eagle nesting area, Loon nesting areas, Portage Lake Ordovician Graptolite Locality, Portage Lake Rare Plant Station, and floating island are expected to be found will be delineated on the map. They will be zoned resource protection to prevent damage from development.

Future Business/Industrial Park: While no specific area of land is proposed to be set aside, the town's policy would be to encourage the siting of any sizable business or industry in a single "park" outside the village and along the West Cottage Road. Three-phase power is currently available as is a rail line along the West Cottage Road. A site review ordinance will be written to specify standards regarding traffic and noise impact, visual screening, etc..

Conclusion

It is the intent of the plan to allow flexibility on each piece of land to design affordable housing, protect surface and ground water resources, and set aside open space in the most efficient way possible. A creative ordinance needs to be developed to avoid the pitfalls of uniform dimensional requirements that may impede the town's objectives; maximize opportunities for landowners, developers, and buyers; and give the planning board adequate standards for equitable application.