

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY

### COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, January 7, 2025 AT 6:30PM**

#### **Kendall Room**

**Present:** Jean DeBellefeuille (Chair), John Scribner (Vice Chair), Ian McConnell (Secretary), Lee Parker, Yvette Meunier, Robin Riendeau (Banana Banners)

- I. Meeting called to order with requirements for a Quorum met
- II. Agenda accepted as presented
- III. Public Meeting on CORA interpretive signage grant
  - a. Introductions
    - i. Community members in attendance – Frank Connors, Wendy Rose, Dave Asmussen, Joanne Joy, Jason Lamoreau, Deb Smith
  - b. Overview of CORA grant project
    - i. Town received a grant from Maine Department of Tourism to install interpretive and wayfinding signage at the new waterfront park. Banana Banners was selected for the design contract. There will be a subsequent contract to manufacture the signs. Goal will be for signs to be installed this summer.
  - c. What is Interpretive Signage and why we need it - Robin Riendeau of Banana Banners
    - i. Interpretive signage creates a connection between people and their surroundings. It aims to enhance outdoor spaces while increasing awareness and educational opportunities. Site-specific interpretation is vital to learning, understanding and finding value in an area's past and present, while also generating future action.
  - d. Community Conversation/Brainstorming Session
    - i. Maps & Directions
      1. Clarified that maps currently at Mailly will be replaced.
      2. Trail distances need to be updated.
      3. Parts of yellow trail are impassable. Question of what the ultimate plan is for that in terms of accessibility and signage. Importance of clarifying access issues e.g. wet conditions at Cathance Meadows
      4. New map of Merrymeeting Bay could:
        - a. Show distance to the Bay and Head of Tide
        - b. Could clarify tidal changes and speed of water without incurring liability for the town
        - c. Consider having a QR code for tide chart
      5. Provide directions to gazebo, boat launches, trails
      6. Need new signs for Mailly and new waterfront park
    - ii. Flora/Fauna & Environmental
      1. Suggestion that Ed Friedman be consulted on natural history of the area.
      2. Identify native vs invasive species
      3. Relevance of small pond at intersection of orange and blue trails?

4. Incredible facts about Merrymeeting Bay
5. Discuss change of forest into meadows with climate change
6. Things of potential interest
  - a. Wild rice in the bay
  - b. Tidal water marshes
  - c. Waterfowl habitat
  - d. Fish, smelt, sturgeon, etc

iii. Stories/Historical Events

1. Interest expressed in capturing the history of what has happened at the park location in regards to industry and commerce including shipbuilding. Suggestion that one way to do this may be through making a sign with a historical photo capturing historical activities.
2. Per Frank Connors there was a saw mill in addition to shipbuilding, with pictures available of both. There was also the Kendall Brothers fertilizer plant as well as the Longbranch Sheep Farm. Maine Central Railroad had a depot there as well. There was a tide mill at the location of the bridge.
3. At one time the Cathance River was the 6<sup>th</sup> largest producer of ice in the world.
4. Kindling Wood Factory took a lot of the waste from sawmill and sold in bags for starting coal fires.
5. Longbranch Sheep Farm on the trail side.
6. Idea of using QR codes for people to get more information – would require back-end information perhaps hosted on the Town of Bowdoinham website.
7. Historical name of creek by the store is Samson's Creek which had wharves on both sides.
8. Idea of discussing/acknowledging history of native peoples in the area. Duckwater Place – Quabacook. History of why it is named Merrymeeting Bay.

iv. Natural/Manmade Structures

1. Question of history of cement pad noted by Dave Asmussen
2. Amazing facts about Merrymeeting Bay
3. Perhaps have series of signs like at Height of Land to highlight different aspects of the bay
4. Cathance info at end of yellow trail.
5. Info on pests and hazards like ticks, browntail, etc
6. Rail road history
7. Archaeological history

e. Next Steps

- i. CDAC will review analysis & recommendations by Banana Banners at their next February meeting
- ii. Design concepts will be shared for public comment in April
- iii. Final concepts to be reviewed in May and RFP will put out to fabricate the signs for installation by the end of August

- IV. Old business
  - a. Mural update and next steps
    - i. Call for Artists still in process – Ian to have done for next meeting.
    - ii. May be \$7,000 grant for another mural through the state
  - b. Next steps on VPI
    - i. There will be another public input meeting this month.
  
- V. Next CDAC meeting is scheduled for February 4th at 6:30pm
  
- VI. Meeting Adjourned