

**Presumpscot River Watershed Coalition  
Board Meeting Minutes  
April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005  
4:00- 6:00 p.m.  
@ MDEP, Canco Road, Portland**

**Next Meetings: 4:00 – 6:00 (note: new start time)**

<b>Thursday</b>	<b>June 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>August 25<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>October 27<sup>th</sup></b>

**In attendance:** Forrest Bell-PRW, Jeff Varricchione-DEP, Don Kale-DEP, Betty Williams-CCSWCD, Diane Gould-EPA, Matt Craig- CBEP, Lois Winter, USFWS, Heather McLennan, FOCB, Merrie Cartwright, USM (DES), Alan Caron, GrowSmart Maine

**Intro Comments:**

Forrest noted that Will was absent due to a family death, and that he and Betty had to leave early. He asked Diane to take over running the meeting when he left. As a result, Item III (discussion of Role of the Committees) was postponed to the next meeting.

**Presentation and Discussion – Alan Caron, GrowSmart Maine**

Alan noted that GrowSmart Maine is approaching its third anniversary, with 8 staff and a half million dollar budget. They are meeting a need in the marketplace, focusing on how the state is growing and what is endangered by growth, both at the macro and the project level, state policy and local policy level.

He noted that big changes are needed on the state level. In late October they will be announcing a major study conducted with the Brookings Institute, involving a collaboration of many groups. The study is looking at land use and sprawl, costs to government and economic competitiveness. GrowSmart Maine also has a legislative program, hoping to create a new paradigm to help win the battle against sprawl. At a recent hearing before the Natural Resources Committee, they proposed a program to give towns more support. They would create a \$5 – 8 million Community Preservation Trust Fund (funding to come from a \$20 fee on every real estate transaction, similar to the program in Massachusetts). While building regional structures is necessary, today the towns are making critical decisions on a daily basis. We need to give them the resources, technical assistance and money to address Smart Growth. Another proposed bill would assist the creation of multi-town compacts. Alan said he hopes we'll see these in place over the next two years.

He also discussed the law suit against Scarborough. The law says that towns with comprehensive plans must have zoning bylaws that reflect those plans. Most towns stop with the plan and don't go the next step with ordinances.

At the regional level, where the PRWC is, there is a debate about building caps. Most towns enact caps, which are technically illegal. GrowSmart Maine is now saying that caps can be a good idea, e.g., differential caps which focus a percentage of growth in a designated growth area. Most towns are uneasy about dense zoning or down zoning in

rural areas. Caps done correctly don't take away the right to develop; they just stretch it out in time. Alan also discussed the emergence of regional comprehensive plans. He noted the Sanford model. Sanford is a center with good facilities for growth, surrounded by rural towns. The rural towns have caps, so growth is forced back into Sanford (they have 750 building permits). This model could be used intentionally to cap the level of development in rural areas and force growth into the developed area.

Alan noted that there was a GrowSmart Summit last December and that they next one will be October 20<sup>th</sup>. They are planning to bring multi-disciplinary folks together.

Another subject Alan addressed was Conservation Subdivisions (e.g., Freeport, which has an Open Space Subdivision Law). Freeport makes Open Space Subdivisions mandatory. The idea is that you need 2 ½ acres per unit but you cluster the houses on 1 acre, on one side of the property and have 50% of the buildable land protected. Freeport has several of these now and has 209 acres of permanently protected land at no cost to the taxpayers. These are attractive to buyers and have cost advantages for builders, including shorter roads and infrastructure savings. Having multiple developers coordinate can lead to even larger pieces of protected land. Towns can experiment with this model.

He noted that we need to balance protection of large pieces of land in the northern part of the state with smaller pieces in the suburbs, e.g., the Presumpscot Corridor. Lois noted the importance of some pieces around Scarborough Marsh (100s of acres).

Jeff noted we could have Smart Growth as a theme at our annual meeting. Alan mentioned that his group plans to have regional breakout discussions at the October GrowSmart Maine Summit. He directed people to look at their website: [GrowSmartMaine.org](http://GrowSmartMaine.org) and to request their newsletter.

Jeff noted the importance of promoting low impact development in areas of concentrated growth. Don noted the importance of coordinating all the various programs that offer technical assistance and money to towns.

### **Committee Meeting Dates**

It was agreed that committee meeting dates will be set up by e-mail and the dates will be sent out to everyone. Jeff will coordinate setting up the Open Space committee meeting, Betty will coordinate the Cumulative impacts committee meeting and Dusti will be asked to coordinate setting up the Fisheries meeting (Heather will contact her). The goal is for each committee to meet before the June PRWC meeting.

### **PRWC Business Items**

#### **Cumulative Impacts Committee Sign Proposal**

Betty displayed the two draft signs that Erin had developed. They would be 15" x 18." Lois noted that there would be advantages to waiting to develop the signs until we have a PRWC logo. Suggested changes included removing the words "in the", reversing the colors, doing the background in brown (more typical of natural resources signs) and removing the watershed outline. Since the group agreed in February to have the signs in place by the August meeting, Betty agreed to work with Erin on suggested revisions to the signs and to have multiple samples to pick from ready at the June meeting.

### **PRWC Funds/Funding Proposals**

Matt noted that we have \$17,000 remaining unspent and expect another \$2,500 from the CBEP if the proposed budget passes. Discussion of requests for funding was deferred to the June meeting.

### **Reprinting PRW Guides and Printing the Plan for the Presumpscot River**

The Executive Committee discussed the need to update and reprint the PRW *Guide to the Presumpscot River*. Further discussion was postponed until the next meeting when a representative of PRW is present. Matt noted that he is looking into prices to print 30 copies of the full *Plan for the Presumpscot River*, including the Appendices, to be provided to the Board in a ring binder. He noted that it should only cost a few hundred dollars.

### **Presumpscot Riverfest, September 2005**

The group agreed that planning another Riverfest will require either an Americorps person or other volunteer. Heather will ask Peter Milholland at FOCB if he knows of a volunteer who might be interested in taking this on.

### **Annual Meeting**

The Executive Committee suggested that the Annual Meeting take place at the October 27<sup>th</sup> PRWC meeting, in a longer timeframe (e.g., 4 -7 PM), with dinner served. The group suggested possible speakers and topics including the following:

Heather suggested someone from Vortechinics discussing their concrete box approach to stormwater treatment.

Jeff suggested a focus on low impact development. LaMarr Cannon (NEMO) might be an ideal speaker.

Lois suggested an update on the Highland Lake Fish Passage project, which will be completed in the fall.

### **Targeted Watershed Initiative Grants (TWIG)**

Diane (note-taker) recused herself from this discussion. DEP has accepted the preproposal submitted to the TWIG program. As noted at the February meeting, the full proposal is due to DEP May 9<sup>th</sup> and to EPA May 18<sup>th</sup>. CBEP will request \$750,000 this year rather than the \$950,000 asked for last year. CBEP should learn in the summer whether the project will be funded. If funded, work would start in October, 2005 and continue for two years.

Forrest and Matt are taking the lead on writing the proposal.

### **Wrap-Up/June Agenda**

**\*\*Note: The group concurred with Jeff's suggestion that we should not have presentations at PRWC regular meetings. It does not leave us time to complete our business.**

The June agenda should include:

- Update on projects requesting funding
- Role of PRWC Committees and Reports from the Committee Meetings
- Sign Project

- Reprinting PRW Guides update
- Distribution of copies of the *Plan for the Presumpscot River*
- Targeted Watershed Initiative Grant Update
- Update on Volunteer to Plan the September Riverfest