

Section I.

Introduction

A. Purpose

Islesboro's 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update is the Town's fourth comprehensive plan. The first plan was prepared by Jim Haskell in 1986, prior to state revision and clarification of its statute guiding preparation of comprehensive plans (known as the Planning and Land Use Regulation or Growth Management Act, 1988). The second plan was adopted in 1994 to reflect the new statute. The 1994 plan was reviewed by the State Planning Office (SPO) and found to be in keeping with the provisions of the statute and review rules. The Town's 2002 plan was never submitted to SPO for review for consistency with its goals and guidelines. Five years later, in 2007, the Town decided to update its comprehensive plan and, in early 2008, hired Friends of Midcoast Maine (FMM) to assist the community in preparing the update.

The abolishment of the Maine State Planning Office on July 1, 2012, created confusion for the Town of Islesboro as to the necessity of filing its Comprehensive Plan with most of the work completed by Friends of Midcoast Maine. The Town's Board of Selectmen decided to shelve the plan until the State Planning Office responsibilities were shifted to another department, or community comprehensive plans were no longer required by the State of Maine. Planning Office duties were later shifted to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.

The Town has assembled considerable inventory information in its three previous comprehensive plans. The inventory data collected provided good information about the community and this update builds on that information.

Islesboro faces many of the same issues and challenges that other midcoast Maine communities are facing, as well as unique challenges it faces as an island community. The 2002 comprehensive plan identified the following issues: "Land use control and growth management, maintaining a strong economy, affordable housing, sustaining or perhaps improving and expanding fishing opportunities, preserving island heritage, reclaiming neighborliness, eliminating toxics and avoiding becoming exclusively a resort

community were all issues.” These issues are as important today, if not more so, than they were in 2002.

Growth and development issues face all midcoast communities as they struggle with balancing growth and development with conservation and protection. Maine has come to realize that its economic prosperity is dependent upon maintaining our quality places. Islesboro, like other communities, recognizes that it must guide development to areas that are suited best for it and have the capacity to support it, without depleting or contaminating precious groundwater supplies or the marine environment.

Housing choices for young people, local teachers, volunteer fire fighters and public safety officials is another issue facing Islesboro. The Town continues to work to ensure that some housing remains affordable so the community can retain a sustainable year round population that will support local schools, committees, and public service organizations. The Town has also focused on providing economic development and job opportunities so that most residents can live and work on-island year round, rather than being forced to commute to and from the island each day.

Natural resource protection continues to be an important focus so the Town can preserve its water supplies, road capacity, solid waste capacity, and our other public systems that support and improve daily life. On an island, these systems are more finite than on the mainland where sewer and water can be extended to and from other neighboring communities.

Working waterfront access continues to decline throughout the midcoast and there are numerous efforts to counteract this. The Island Institute and others are working on this issue but Islesboro recognizes that the Town must continue to support this effort to be effective.

A. Public Participation Strategy

Since early 2008, the Islesboro Comprehensive Plan Committee has endeavored to involve the public throughout the Comprehensive Planning Process. With help from the Friends of Midcoast Maine Comprehensive Plan consultants, the Committee prepared a

strategy to engage a broad cross section of the community. This was done through a variety of methods, including the following:

-  The Committee established a Comprehensive Plan web site to provide information about the process to the general public access, including reports and maps produced throughout the effort. The web postings also provided a mechanism to allow members of the public to ask questions and provide feedback on posted materials and the planning process. Committee members were encouraged to prepare brief articles about related topics and the progress of the planning effort from July 2008 to the end of the process.
-  The Committee maintained regular records of its meetings. The consultants prepared summaries of community workshops.
-  Members of the Committee contacted community groups/committees and organizations to encourage their participation at forums and solicit their ideas and comments.
-  Members of the Committee had one-on-one discussions with key community members and opinion leaders throughout the process to solicit their ideas and comments.
-  The Committee and consultants conducted three community workshops to share updated inventory information and encourage discussion of the issues and implications they raise for the community.
-  The Committee and consultants conducted a ½ day workshop to prepare an image of Islesboro in 2025, followed up with a draft and final statement to guide development of the Future Land Use Plan, goals, policies, strategies, and other elements of the updated comprehensive plan.
-  The Committee and consultants conducted a future land use plan workshop, using an analysis of constraints identified in the inventory process, to guide future development and protection of the community.
-  The Committee and consultants conducted a workshop to review draft goals, policies and strategies.

- ☐ The Committee and consultants met twice with Select Board to prepare Capital Investment, Regional Coordination, and Implementation plans.
- ☐ The Committee and consultants compiled the draft updated comprehensive plan.
- ☐ The Committee and consultants conducted the required formal public hearing on the updated comprehensive plan.
- ☐ Following the hearing, the Committee and consultants revised the updated comprehensive plan and presented to and accepted by the Board of Selectmen at their June 8, 2011, meeting.
- ☐ At the same meeting the Islesboro Board of Selectmen decided to task a member of the Board with creating an abridged version of the accepted Comprehensive Plan.
- ☐ The abridged version of the Comprehensive Plan, Islesboro Looking Ahead (accompanied by a 100 page addendum of data and findings), was presented to the Board on January 3, 2012, and approved as Islesboro's blueprint for moving forward in Town planning due to the uncertainty surround the continued existence of the State Planning Office.
- ☐ Islesboro Looking Ahead has been reaffirmed, and at times amended, at the Board's first meeting of each calendar year.
- ☐ The updated comprehensive plan was presented to community for vote at a Special Town Meeting **Month, date, 201?**.

All information, findings, and conclusions prepared as part of the updated comprehensive plan were publicly developed and driven and vetted numerous times and in various formats, including on paper, on-line, in public, community-wide workshops and in committee meetings.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee and consultants welcomed public participation and input and attempted to reach those people and interests who traditionally have not been participants in the public process, including the elderly, students, seasonal residents, and other groups.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee identified key individuals in the community who should be part of community workshops. The Committee took considerable responsibility for implementing the public participation strategy, including engaging the community, local officials, and individuals through direct conversation, sharing of information gained through the planning process, bringing feedback to the Committee and consultants, and personally soliciting participation at community workshops and hearings.

Summary of Community Workshops and Public Hearing

- ☐ 3 community workshops on bundled *inventories and analyses*.
- ☐ ½ day community workshop to prepare an *Islesboro 2025 Guiding Statement*.
- ☐ 1 community workshop to review and discuss constraints analysis and draft *Future Land Use Plan*.
- ☐ 1 community workshop to review and discuss draft *Goals, Policies, and Strategies*.
- ☐ 2 joint meetings between the Comprehensive Plan Committee and the Board of Selectmen to prepare the *Capital Investments Plan, Regional Coordination Plan, and Implementation Schedule*.
- ☐ 1 public hearing to review and discuss the draft *updated comp plan* as a whole and needed ordinance changes to implement the draft updated plan.

In 2017 the Islesboro Board of Selectmen decided to reactivate the plan that resulted from two years of planning beginning in 2008 and completed in 2010. The Draft Comprehensive Plan was never taken to the voters for approval at that time. This Comprehensive Plan is an update of that original plan with data updates and minor structural changes. Basic opportunities and challenges addressed in the plan have not changed since the original Draft Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2010. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan includes minor changes to narrative and all data has been updated taking into consideration the results of the 2010 U.S. Census of population and demographics, Town budgets, and school enrollments.