LAMOINE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

Meetings with Town Committees and Groups

DATE	TIME	PLACE	GROUP
9/30/2015	7 p.m.	Town Hall	**Planning Board**
10/7/2015	7 p.m.	30 Berry Cove Road	**Lamoine Historical Society**
10/8/2015	7 p.m.	Town Hall	**Select Board**
10/14/2015	7 p.m.	Town Hall	**Conservation Commission**
10/15/2015	4 p.m.	School Library	**Lamoine's Little Children**
10/21/2015	6:45 pm	Fire Station	**Fire Department**
11/10/2015	6:30 p.m.	School	**School Committee**
12-15-15	6:30	~~Town~~ Office	**Friends of Lamoine**
11/30/2015	7:15 p.m.	Town Hall	**Budget Committee**
12/10/2015	7 p.m.	Town Hall	**Frenchman Bay Snowmobile Ass'n**
12/14/2015	6:30 p.m.	School-Ms. Duffy's room	**Lamoine Community Arts**
12/12/2015	9am	Town Office	Rec Committee

As of 11/11/15

Comprehensive Plan Committee

Agricultural and Forest Resources
Report from Valerie Sprague and Kathie Gaianguest
11/11/15

Information in Lamoine past plans, surveys, and reports

Both the 1996 Lamoine Comprehensive Plan (LCP) and the Open Space Report and Inventory (OSRI) stress the importance of determining the *potential* for various options of land use, considering the stated goals of maintaining a balance between continued housing and other development, and the preservation of land for agriculture, forest, and recreational use.

The guides for considering land use in Lamoine in the 1996 Lamoine Comprehensive Plan were three major studies which charted various approaches: 1) *Soil Potential Rating For Local Land Use Planning at a Local Level in Maine* (Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 747, 1977); 2) *Sand and Gravel Aquifer Study, Lamoine Maine* Robert G. Gerber, Inc. (a report for the Lamoine Planning Board in 1983); 3) GIS maps (provided by Frenchman Bay Conservancy, 1991).

Discussion of land usage in the 1996 LCP is divided between Residential and Non-residential. The specific data on non-residential land use is not published, but a summary of the surveys states agricultural and forestry oriented usages "had considerable support" (p. 27). It concludes the "Land Usage" section with: "The landbank concept should also be considered to encourage tree farming, forestry development, and blueberry land development, if applicable." (p. 30)

Final recommendations in the 1996 plan: "encourage landowners to develop and expand sustainable usage of suitable land for agriculture and forestry harvest." Recommendations include regulations of land usage to provide food sustainable agricultural and forestry practice, seeking assistance from the Maine forest Service for analysis of the town's forested area.

The 2005 survey conducted by the Long-Range Planning Committee summarized citizen support of maintaining the rural nature and open space of Lamoine.

The 2013 Open Space Report and Inventory addresses "The Forest Environment" specifically (p. 5), and makes reference to the rural nature of much of Lamoine, along with some mentions of agriculture (e.g., in the Large Habitat Blocks section: "Activity within those interior blocks can be extensive...is often periodic forestry-related activity, with some agricultural activity in limited areas." p. 9). Statistics on forests and forestry in Lamoine in the OSRI indicate

approximately 88% of Lamoine acres are in trees—evergreens, deciduous, mixed forests and forested wetland. Forest activity includes 200 acres/year harvested over the past decade, and 272.9 acres on 10 properties in Tree Growth tax status.

This 2013 report recommends that further economic development be guided by farmers needing to know that investment in future "farm enterprise" will not be jeopardized by other areas of growth. In addition, the Report emphasizes the importance of local food production for Lamoine as a small rural community as a "hedge against interruptions or contamination of the conventional food supply."

State Goal:
"To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources."

For this report, we are focusing on agricultural practice and development. We have interviewed 8 persons in Lamoine, using the analyses questions specified by the State comprehensive plan review criteria document. These persons include those: operating farms in the town, previously operating a farm in Lamoine, operating a small farm, residing in Lamoine but operating a farm in another community, owning land farmed by others, living on a farm which is no longer in active production, looking at agriculture in Lamoine historically.

There is consensus that there has been a trend of declining agricultural activities in Lamoine. At the same time, there is a strong emphasis on continuing support and development of agriculture as very important to the town. Cited especially is the tend of demand for locally grown food, not only for Lamoiners, but for towns in the surrounding area. In addition, Lamoine could be an attractive location for young persons/families wanting to pursue farming.

Agriculture is seen as a very important part of a diversity of livelihood and experience in a small town such as Lamoine. Because acreage in Lamoine doesn't exist for larger-scale farming due to poorer soils and geography, small-scale farming is the primary agricultural type. In addition to food production, producing support crops for livestock is seen as important for sustaining diversified agriculture, for sustainable use of soils not fit for more intense agriculture, and for maintaining open spaces in the Town.

Many cite the change in the nature of agriculture, with a trend toward smaller food production farms. Several talked about a possibility of new ways of distributing farm products: farm stands, a Lamoine farmers' market, attracting residents in the surrounding areas (Ellsworth, Mt. Desert Island, Blue Hill, etc.) to come to Lamoine to buy farm goods. Lamoiners have been supportive of the one community-supported farm, and of other local agricultural products.

Some farmers have used state and local assistance programs for developing particular aspects of their farming (e.g., planning best areas for production, getting certified for certain activities, consultation on managing water and soil issues).

Interviewees would like to see more tax incentives for livestock and land conversion to agricultural products, and tax supports for small agricultural business development. Crop diversification is dependent on consultation and financial assistance in soil analysis and development, especially for fruit and vegetable production.

Often mentioned was the possibility of encouraging more community gardens, with the added asset of bringing the community together around local food security and sustainable food production closer to home. Suggestions in addition to those mentioned above included: land owners renting out plots, or assigning a certain amount of their land to a community-run garden; periodic centrally-located gathering of home gardeners for swapping or selling their overflow of products (flowers, fruit, vegetables, herbs, etc.); small livestock raising for local consumption--chickens--including eggs, pigs, cattle, sheep, goats.

The following are seen as necessary community support for there to be development of small-scale agricultural diversity in Lamoine:

--Investment in promotion of locally grown products;
--Public space for a farmers' market, or for community sharing of garden products;
--Resources for soil control and improvement;
--Up-front technical and financial assistance for business development;
--Agricultural-friendly ordinances and zoning, especially for small backyard livestock farming;
--Support (financial and program-related) for part-time assistants and paid apprentice programs for peak seasonal work times.

Further data needs:

1. Number of parcels and acres in agriculture in Lamoine, comparison with past years if possible.
2. Number of parcels and acres enrolled in the state's farm taxation program, and changes in enrollment over the past 10 years.
3. Update of COA map(s)

Lamoine Comp Plan Questions

Questions:

1. How much land in Lamoine is under conservation easement?
   By how many landowners?
   And how many lots? (if different from landowners)

2. How many persons participate in the Tree Growth program?
   How much land is under this program?
   How many lots? (if different from persons)

3. How many acres in Lamoine are considered farmland?
   How many farmers?

4. Any other pertinent information you can think of....

It would be great if we could talk about question 3, and how to identify a "farm." For example, we've interviewed Chuck Weber, goat farm owners, Iron Slipper farm owner, owner of land Simond's Farm Stand is using, etc. One of the questions will be: Do we consider "backyard" animal/chicken/large garden food production as part of the new agriculture?

#1 Conservation easements

A: Douglas Coleman	Map 5 Lot 17	47 acres
B: Old Point, Inc.	Map 1 Lot 33-A	73 acres
C: Hartline	Map 1 Lot 33	21 acres
D: Gerald & Iris Simon	Map 8 Lot 1	68 acres

#2 Tree Growth

A: Richard & Sheryl Davis	Map 1 Lot 32A	20.7 acres
B: Old Point Inc.	Map 1 Lot 33A	73 acres
C: William Haass	Map 4 Lot 54	15.6 acres
D: SWOAM	Map 5 Lot 16	49 acres
E: Alice Atkins	Map 5 Lot 19	24 acres
F: Merrill & Mildred Davis	Map 5 Lot 28	31 acres
G: Merrill & Mildred Davis	Map 17 Lot 14	17 acres
H: Gerald & Iris Simon	Map 8 Lot 1	62.8 acres
I: Dennis & Nancy Ford	Map 8 Lot 19-1-A & 19-2	14.3 acres

#3 Farmland

A: Erva Pinkham	Map 7 Lot 28	184 acres
B: Erva Pinkham	Map 7 Lot 29	218.3 acres
C: Erva Pinkham	Map 7 Lot 33	18 acres
D: Dana & Terry Hilt	Map 17 Lot 16A	16.3 acres