

Lamoine Comprehensive Plan Committee

Meeting with Friends of Lamoine

Name of Group: Friends of Lamoine
Date of Meeting: 12/15/2015
Chair or contact person: Carol Korty, Kathleen Rybarz

Number of people attending:

LCPC: Fred, Bob, Kathie, Bob, Mike and Val
Friends of Lamoine: Carol Korty, Catherine de Tuede, Bruce Gillett, Kathleen Rybarz.

Focus or primary responsibility of group: Environmental protection, aquifer protection, limitation of industrial gravel pits in town, development and promotion of scenic and recreational resources.

Work of this group in actively planning for the future: Crafting and supporting a No New Pits referendum approved by the Town in 2014, and opposing a proposed gravel ordinance rejected by the Town in 2015. Put together a list of over 125 small or home-based businesses in Lamoine.

Expressed concerns of group relating to focus or primary responsibility:

Need for balance of natural resource protection and development of town businesses around Lamoine's beauty and recreational resources. Need for zoning which will serve to provide a areas for cluster housing and commercial development separate from rural residential and agricultural areas. Plan for reclamation and productive use of expended gravel pits.

Expressed concerns of individuals not directly related to group's primary focus:

The Town should sponsor a candidate's night with each candidate asked the same set of questions.

A list of in-town businesses should be on the web and kept updated, perhaps by a new Lamoine Chamber-of-Commerce-type organization.

The Town should continue to work towards wider roads to encourage bicycles and walking.

A general philanthropic fund should be established for civic improvements and charitable uses within the Town.

See also: Attached 5-page "Statement for Comprehensive Plan Committee."

Mission Statement:

Friends of Lamoine advocates the preservation and enhancement of our community and its resources through education and citizen involvement. We encourage balanced social and economic development that conserves our natural resources and promotes a healthy environment for residents, small-businesses, visitors, and future generations.

Issues FOL would like to see addressed in Lamoine's new comprehensive plan:

Wording that supports action to protect: 1) the geographical and geological integrity of the town; 2) the aesthetic beauty of this peninsula; 3) the balance of developed and natural places; 4) the quality of life for residents, small businesses, and visitors.

1. Protect Lamoine's geographical and geological integrity containing a mix of high ridges of glacial hills, fields, forests, ocean shoreline and abundant sources of freshwater which include a large sand and gravel aquifer and a Great Pond.

Lamoine's hills are part of a unique esker system deposited by glaciers eons ago. One hill has been almost completely removed by John Goodwin, Inc.'s permitted gravel extraction. The two highest remaining hills are owned by the Town and by Harold MacQuinn, Inc. The latter is a specifically identified point on the Ice Age Trail shown on the map of glacial deposits in northern New England and Canadian Maritime Provinces. As such it is a significant historical place, and in accordance with our 1996 Comprehensive Plan, must not be removed.

The fields along Mud Creek Road and the area surrounding Mud Creek have been identified by the State's Beginning with Habitat Program as Lamoine's unique wild life area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also rated Lamoine's shores as having significant value for 34 species of shorebirds and waterfowl, 15 of which have been sighted there. It is a priority to protect these areas through purchase or easement of them.

Forested areas in Lamoine are needed for wildlife habitat. It is important that areas large enough to support wildlife be maintained with wildlife corridors connecting them with each other and to the shore. Ways of doing this could be for the Town to:

- a) develop a data base identifying current wildlife habitat, including connecting corridors;
- b) consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine if further areas, such as connecting corridors, need to be added;
- c) develop policies to prevent encroachment of these open, natural spaces.

We recommend the Town develop an ordinance that supports and facilitates sound forestry practices. The health of forested areas, as well as wildlife living there, would benefit when lumbering activity on large tracts follow management practices recommended by State Forest Service and/or Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM).

As a peninsula, Lamoine is richly endowed with 28 miles of shoreline. It is one of the Town's greatest assets that attract residents, visitors, and marine harvesters. Presently there are three points of public access to the shore: Lamoine State Park, Lamoine Beach, and a small section of Marlboro Beach. We recommend the Town explore possibilities for increasing the footprint of these areas through purchase, obtaining easements, or seeking donations of adjacent land. And we recommend promoting greater use of our waterways and exploring additional points of public access for the benefit of marine harvesters, launching small boats (canoes, kayaks, row boats), and recreational other uses.

We are fortunate that there are several established groups working to maintain clean beaches: Lamoine State Park, Frenchman Bay Regional Shellfish Committee, Lamoine Conservation Committee, and Lamoine Parks Commission. Continuing support of and cooperation with these groups is important to assure neither refuse nor contamination pollute town shores.

The Lamoine peninsula contains an abundance of excellent freshwater. The large aquifer under the mid-section of the town extends into Hancock and Ellsworth. Lamoine has committed with these other municipalities to protect the aquifer from any possible contamination. The aquifer, in and of itself and because its overburden feeds the surrounding bedrock sources of freshwater, constitutes our most critical natural resource. Therefore we recommend a regular review of our ordinances that govern activities which might compromise either the quality or the quantity of this vital resource and re-write those ordinances whenever new, relevant information becomes available.

Lamoine's freshwater pond, Blunts Pond, technically categorized as a Great Pond, is also a unique source of freshwater. Now it is a favorite swimming spot for many in the summer and a place for winter recreation. Because it has become a destination that has attracted higher use than formerly, we recommend the Parks Commission create guidelines for its use. A plan could also include regular water quality analysis, analysis of the thick aquatic plant, and its source of recharge.

2. Protect the aesthetic beauty of the Lamoine peninsula by preserving our current scenic views, by containing the gravel industry in town, and by full restoration of expended pits.

Lamoine has many officially registered scenic views in Designated Sites of the State of Maine Downeast Coastal Scenic Inventory. They are:

- * Marlboro Beach with views of Frenchman Bay and Raccoon Cove,
- * Lamoine Beach with views of Mount Desert Island and Eastern Bay,
- * Bloomfield Park with views of Blunts Pond,
- * Mud Creek/Pinkham Flats with views of Mud Creek, a tidal estuary, and
Pinkham Flats,
- * Lamoine State Park & Lamoine Town Harbor with views of Lamoine
Harbor and Mount Desert Island,
- * Intersection of Rt.184 & Asa's Lane with views of Mount Desert Narrows,
- * Rt.204 entering North Lamoine with views of Jordan River, a tidal estuary,
- * Marlboro Beach Road with views of Frenchman Bay, Cadillac & Dorr Mts.,
- * Views of Lamoine from the water on Skillings River, Jordan River, and
Eastern Bay.

These views of surrounding natural landscape are important to many

Lamoiners, as documented in responses to the Long Range Planning Committee 2005 survey. This reinforces the need to protect them. Some of these views can be accessed from Town or State owned property. Most, however, must be viewed from public roads.

To protect listed view sites not already owned by the town or State, we propose the Town:

- a) Approach land owners and propose conservation easements and/or outright donations of private lands which are themselves scenic or on which development could block the designated scenic views,
- b) Actively solicit donations to Lamoine Conservation Fund to be used for purchase of land,
- c) Form partnerships with State and private organizations, such as Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Frenchman Bay Conservancy, to acquire or establish easements on scenic areas or land on which development could block the designated scenic views.

Since 2013, three important votes on gravel related issues have strongly indicated that residents want this industry restricted. A more restrictive Gravel Ordinance was passed in 2013, amended in 2014, and defended in 2015. An amendment to the Building and Land Use Ordinance in 2014 prohibited new pits in the Rural & Agricultural Zone, (with the exception of those having received a Site Plan Review prior to 2013).

Reclamation of expended gravel pits, including those that have been abandoned, is a general public concern. We recommend the Town utilize a professional Land Use Consultant to analyze empty pits and offer solutions and suggestions for reclamation options.

We recommend the Town develop stricter policies for enforcing full implementation of reclamation plans, including severe fines for non-conformance.

3. Protect and maintain a balance of developed and natural places:
 - a) Identify areas within our current zones best suited for forestry, for agriculture, for residences, and for small businesses. Initial work on this was done by LCC with COA mapping in 2004. It needs to be re-visited and fine-tuned.

- b) Show these areas on up-to-date maps and publicize the maps widely to help people contemplating land purchases for any project and to charge the Planning Board to consult these maps when considering proposals for permits.
 - c) Strictly prohibit industry and large commercial businesses from the Rural & Agricultural Zone.
 - d) Assure the preservation of open spaces (wildlife blocks, forests, and farm lands) when residential subdivisions are proposed, encouraging all development to locate along existing roads, rather than cutting into natural areas, as urged in the LCC Open Space Report of 2013.
 - e) Work to acquire parts of Lamoine shoreline with corridors for public access to some of these natural areas. This could be accomplished by establishing a committee to explore purchases, easements, and/or collaboration with organizations like Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Frenchman Bay Conservancy.
4. Protect the quality of life for Lamoine residents, small businesses, visitors and future generations.
- a) Expand Town Hall facilities for meetings, informal gatherings, and parking to support our growing population and attract new residents and visitors.
 - b) Widen shoulders on roads to safely accommodate walking and bicycle riding.
 - c) Provide activities for senior residents, teenagers, and young children.
 - d) Change Building and Land Use regulations to permit Cluster Housing where families can live in close proximity but with access to a large common area, such as woods, fields or shore for recreation.
 - e) Create a Philanthropic Fund to which people could make donations to support philanthropic organizations in town, scholarships, school programs, etc.
 - f) Encourage and support small business development to augment and complement the over 100 business practices already in existence.