

Vision 2025 Meeting Flip Chart NOTES

**September 29, 2011
5-7 p.m. Freeport Public Library**

Facilitator: Mary Herman

Introduction, background, meeting purpose, wrap-up: Kate Arno, Peter Troast

Purpose of meeting: A focus group comprised of Freeport business owners was asked to brainstorm about what areas, topics, issues should be included in an RFP for a consultant hired to help our community develop Vision 2025. The main question under discussion: "What is going to make us a vital place to live, work and play in the future?" The following is a record of the topics and ideas identified by participants at that meeting. These ideas were not prioritized and there was no effort by the group to reach consensus on them. This list is a record of preliminary brainstorming as the Vision 2025 effort is launched. Public input will be obtained at another event on October 27, 2011.

Suggested areas of consideration for the project

Route One South

- Develop goals
- Consider type of development
- Diversity of businesses
- Add more retail/restaurants
- This is the southern entrance – GATEWAY – of the town
- Arts & culture

Destination Strategies

- More night life
- Connect to the harbor/coast
- Bike routes
- Museum, galleries, art, cultural offerings
- Art training
- Cultural tourism
- Play off of existing strengths as a destination for outdoor activities
- Broaden the public's vision of Freeport
- Make whole town more pedestrian based
- More parking structures
- Improve ease of arrival and movement around town
- Add a full-service spa (suggestion submitted after the meeting)

Business incubation

- Intown business start-up support and location

Increase waterfront activities

Assessment of existing infrastructure

- Desert Road
- Water/sewer/electrical/gas
- Internet
- Cell phone access in S. Freeport
- Free wi-fi throughout town – red zone rocket model (Wiscasset)
- Dredge the harbor
- Road access
- Desert Rd bottleneck

Services

- Residents and visitors
- Focus on what makes Freeport a great place to live

Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad looking for a home

Agri-tourism

- Teaching farms
- Mapped route of products
- Demonstrations
- Farm B&Bs

Outdoor recreation

- How can we tie open spaces together
- Survey of existing assets
- Are areas underused by the community and visitors

Signage

- Reason to get off at each exit
- Better signage especially from the south

Downtown Visitor's Center

- Better signage
- Exit 17 Visitor's Center doesn't focus on Freeport

Communication w/local, regional, state governments

Make the best use of rail

- Be prepared for the train arrival – marketing

Transportation

- Intra-Freeport
- “Green” bus – Bar Harbor model
- Review 2004 Transportation Study
- Parking lots at trail heads
- Bike loan program
- Create bicycle trails, install bike racks, add bike routes to maps
- New ideas to get people into Freeport with escalating gas prices
- Concord Coach stop

Education

- High School, Morse St locations
- Coordinate with RSU strategic planning

Open space connection

- Pedestrian bridge over I 295 to connect open spaces
- Wolfe’s Neck Park and Farm, Winslow Park, Pettengill Farm, Recompense underused
- Connect bike paths to Brunswick, Yarmouth
- Fishing, sailing trips from the harbor

Conference center

- Attract shoulder season activity
- Do we currently have adequate space

Process - 2010

- 2010 Recommendations
 - What was done because of town help
 - What was market driven
- Identify who takes the lead on ideas – public/private
- If something is wanted, how can Town be the catalyst

External - What are trends that can be expected

- Census
- Education
- Business
- Population demographics

Internal – zoning/development process

- Provide good business environment
- Community openness

Route One North

- Develop strategies for bringing utilities along road

Zoning to reflect changing needs and demands

- Zip line
- Rock climbing walls
- Mini golf

Market targeting

- Business park
- Cluster – define target
- Include Pownal and Durham?
- Consider existing business districts – new zoning needed?

Re-define Freeport

- Market beyond retail and L.L.Bean
- Market “greater Freeport”
- Are we to “mall-like”?

Creating jobs

- Target more independent, locally-owned businesses
- Highlight local businesses
- Festival to support local non-profits
- Develop/support more small businesses to make Freeport unique

Health & Wellness

- Community assessment needed

Manufacturing

- What is the future of retail?

Tourism

- Offer packages
- Focus on exploring Freeport
- Use train and alternative transportation

Affordable housing

- Where do Freeport workers live

Choose a top notch consultant – take the time to do the project correctly

Time line as outlined too aggressive

