



CUTTYHUNK ISLAND A PLAN TO PLAN

prepared for
**The Long Range
Planning Committee**

prepared by
The Cecil Group, Inc.

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The Cecil Group

■ Planning and Design

1 INTRODUCTION

Public Policy and Individual Freedom

As many know, the New Hampshire vehicle license plate has the slogan “Live Free Or Die.” There was a resident who decided that morally he could not agree with the slogan, so he covered it. It was without an outward attempt at irony that the state suggested he was not free to cover the slogan. He was given multiple violation notices by the police for defacing his license plate, went to court several times and even spent time in jail. It took the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn the convictions based on First Amendment rights (*Wooley v. Maynard*, 1977).

When speaking of a ‘free’ lifestyle, we know we must also consider reasonableness and civility.

Cuttyhunk Island is a unique and special New England resource. There are few communities with a smaller population, higher property value, lower tax rate and smaller municipal budget within the Commonwealth. However, these are not the only determinant characteristics of uniqueness. There are other rural communities with small populations and limited resources, and there are other island communities in Massachusetts with the same financial and legal demands imposed by the Commonwealth. What makes Cuttyhunk unique are the special conditions created by geography and ownership, the people that populate the island, and how they enjoy a particular quality of life experience on the island. While Cuttyhunk’s population and their quality of life are significantly impacted by the other islands in the Gosnold chain, the Island stands out as the center of population, housing density, transportation, and economic and civic activity.

The special opportunity identified by people on the Island is the experience of relative freedom. Terms such as ‘rustic charm,’ ‘free-for-all,’ and ‘wild frontier’ were heard in our conversations with people describing a generalized attitude about life on the island. The belief is that a person can relax and enjoy the island experience in a low demand, somewhat uncontrolled environment.

Yet, changes are desired on the island to improve the quality of life and experience for year-rounders, part-timers and visitors. This means raising funds that are significant for the small community and constructing new facilities that will raise revenues but also could modernize and change the island experience.

The metrics of growth for the island are also not typical. Since about half of the town’s income comes from management of the harbor facilities, growth cannot be determined by the number of new buildings (which may occur by decades and not years), but it is more directly determined by the level of activity in Cuttyhunk Pond such as the number of visits to the harbor.

In planning for the future, decisions must be made about meeting legal, civic and moral obligations while preserving the unique quality of life that resists full modernization and its associated costs. We suggest that the Island has already created a structure for this complex civic assignment, and with the proper work plans, the Island can address the issues before the island.

In the long-term, as sea-level rises and climate instability impacts coastal communities, sustainability of the existing conditions and desirable attributes of the island will require substantial public commitments, probably beyond the financial and legal capacities of the community. It is with this in mind that risk and cost-benefit assessments are suggested with each step. However, it is also with the knowledge of human resilience and independence that actions can be implemented to address those future conditions

2 PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING EFFORT

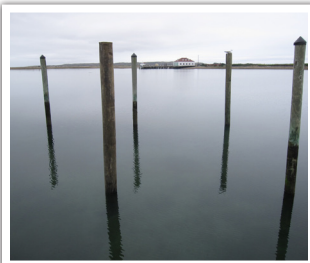


The purpose of this planning study was to determine the most effective methodology for planning the future of Cuttyhunk Island. The scope was to complete a workshop charrette to determine the shared goals, and from this, develop a list of key actions, responsibilities, level of effort and schedule for proceeding with municipal actions to implement the vision through the drafting of a master plan, strategic plans or master plan elements that advance the common goals.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts uses state law to specify the powers of communities, including the powers to plan. In 1966, the state passed legislation that provided standards for “home rule” under which there is some flexibility in planning and local decision-making. However, local governments must still act within the parameters provided by those laws.

How Do the Requirements for Local Planning Match with the Needs?



Master planning is not required but is permitted under state law. Under MGL c.41, section 81D, the state law describes a community ‘master plan.’ This section makes the town Planning Board (in the case of Gosnold, this is the Board of Selectmen) responsible for the drafting of the master plan, but it does not make the master plan itself mandatory. The referenced section of the state law lists nine elements of a comprehensive plan, including a separate option for an economic development element. The elements typically included in town master plans are:

- Goals and Policies
- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Cultural and Historical Resources
- Natural Environment
- Circulation and Transportation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Open Space and Recreation
- Implementation



Because master plans are not a current requirement for communities (although there are bills filed recently to change that status to a future mandatory plan), the form and process for planning may be customized for Gosnold and specifically for Cuttyhunk

What Makes Planning and Governance of Cuttyhunk Different?

Massachusetts communities control property and its development or redevelopment through public ownership, land use regulations and public infrastructure. In turn, the community obtains revenues from taxes and fees from the improved property and uses. The primary reasons that planning is a unique public process on Cuttyhunk are the size of the community and the level of impact felt from even moderate action and change.

There are other aspects of the island chain that distinguish this community.

Difference in Land Management

The town owns relatively little real estate. What is in public ownership are properties that include the Town buildings and property on the harbor. Other public lands such as the U.S. Coast Guard properties and buildings are controlled by entities other than the Town. New property acquisitions for expansion are potentially costly because of the value of land on the Island, leaving the Town with tough decisions on how to improve services when land is unavailable to support those improvements. The community wastewater system being planned has such an impact where land for treatment and disposal of collected wastewater is very limited, and the system may need to be located within the public rights of way.

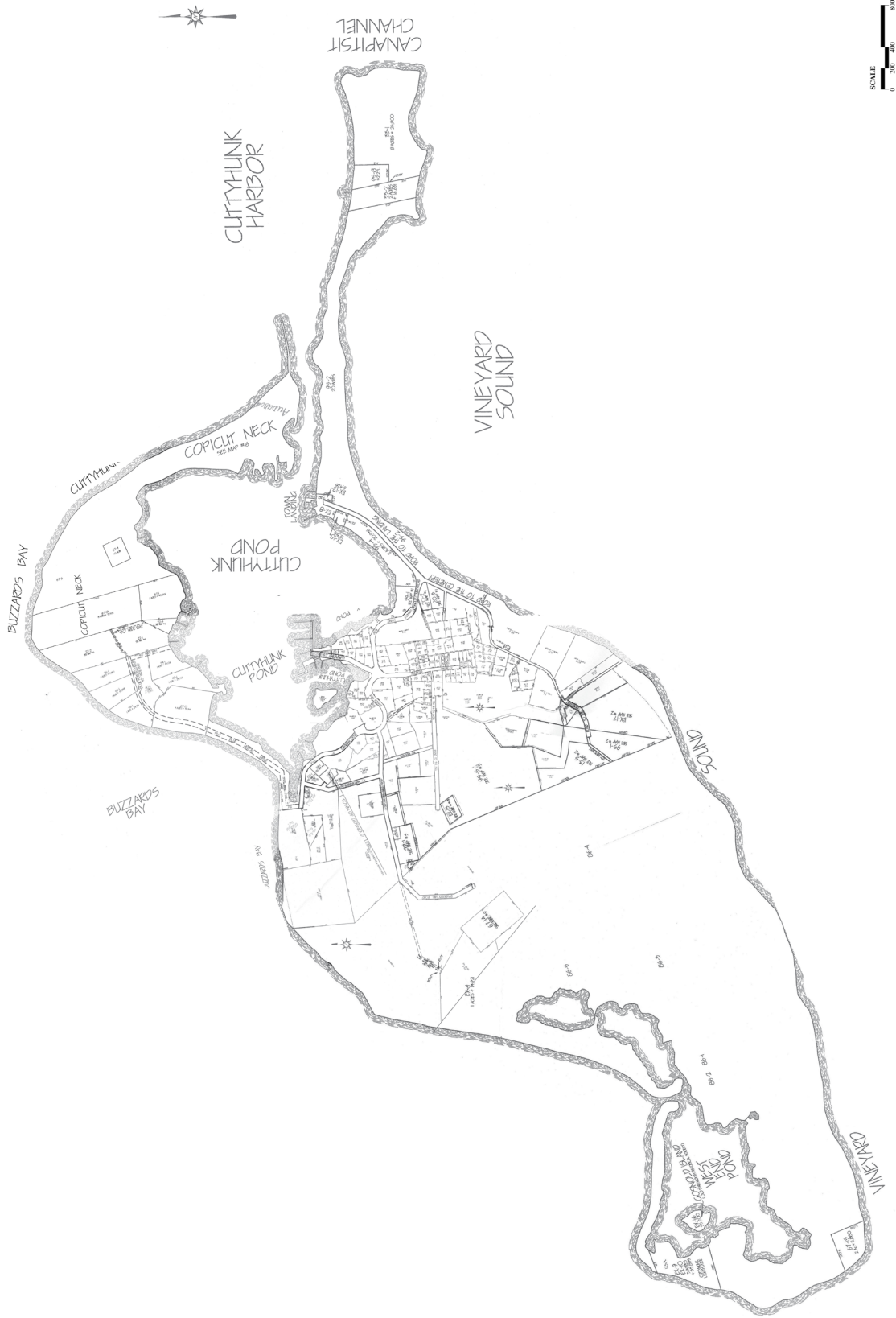
Zoning provides control of land development through restrictions on land use, lot sizes and other dimensional standards. However, there is a substantial body of case law surrounding zoning. Used together with the State law - the Zoning Enabling Act found in MGL Chap.40A - zoning is tightly defined as to what it can and cannot do.

The Town has adopted a Zoning Bylaw in accordance with state laws. The Zoning Bylaw has two zoning districts that control the subdivision of land by the definition of lot size and use. While the Bylaw does not provide the complexity of land use regulations typically found in some other communities, it serves some needed basic functions.

Public infrastructure could also control the use of private land if public utilities are required to develop the land. This is a controlling factor when public policy restricts improvements to public infrastructure required for the development such as extension of public water lines. Important infrastructure that the Town controls includes a portion of the roads, the electric utility, the water supply and harbor facilities.

In addition, except for Cuttyhunk, the community's other islands are held in trusts or by the State of Massachusetts. While providing special open spaces and in some cases residences, this status limits the Town's management control over much of the land within the Elizabeth Island chain.

Figure A.
Assessors Map of Cuttyhunk Island



Value and Affordability of Land in Gosnold

Total Assessed Value (\$273.66 million in FY11) increased from 2006 to 2011 at an average rate \$6.05 million/year. Within the 134 properties, the average single family property had an assessed value of \$1,079,265.

The total Tax Levy (98% from residential properties) has been increasing at an average of \$29,389/year. Between FY10 and FY11, there was \$24,786 or a 4.8 percent increase.

In FY11, the average single-family tax bill was \$2,115. The average for the state was \$4,537.

The per capita income rose from \$15,265 in 1999 to \$19,121 in 2010 or 2.3 percent/year. Average household income in 2010 was \$28,957.

Larger Impact of Financial Decisions

The combination of local factors creates a significantly different impact when making financial plans for the town. The Gosnold property tax rate is one of the lowest in Massachusetts, but the assessed value of real estate is relatively high. For those living on the island, the relative cost of transportation, energy, goods and services has a higher impact on household budget allocations, while the average household income is lower than the state average. Consequently, increases in the Town budget are particularly significant to island residents and more significantly impact their ability to afford living on the island.

Beyond local policies and programs, the state also controls the ability to obtain certain funds; in many cases, the state requires the Town's conformance with certain performance standards. The Town was confronted with such requirements when applying for state funds to improve the Town library. The size of the facility necessary to meet the state standards and to obtain state funds resulted in a design that a majority of voters felt was out of character with the historic town center complex of town hall, library and school buildings. Similar standards apply to the use of state grant funds and loans for infrastructure and other projects. Criteria for receipt of the funds is often dependent on housing production and job creation as opposed to considering other public policy values that may be more specific to conditions on Cuttyhunk.

Note for Self-Sufficiency

As noted, infrastructure, transportation and energy costs are higher on the island, but the cost of providing some of this same infrastructure from the mainland would be prohibitive. By remaining self-sufficient, there are options for living on the island. This means the harbor channel must be kept clear, the town landing must be maintained, local energy sources must be provided, and other public utilities must be supported to support living on the island. The infrastructure also includes communications supported by off island phone and wireless companies and by the U.S. Post Office.

Historic Basis for the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC)

The LRPC is a type of entity with a pedigree in community governance. In America during the 1920's, the movement for change in local government was to add more professionalism and accountability. The town manager and council form of government was becoming more prevalent. Land use controls through zoning were being implemented. At the same time, the "blue ribbon panel" was becoming more common. This entity would review conditions in the community as a whole and make recommendations outside the normal process of governance. These functions are recommended for Cuttyhunk's LRPC.

Consolidated Decision-Making

A need for more dispersed decision-making was expressed as an issue during the interviews. The creation of a Conservation Commission as an entity separate from the Board of Selectmen that had been providing this function was identified as a positive step. The Board of Selectmen incorporates other important Town functions. These include the Planning Board and Board of Health. The Board of Health functions are assisted with a professional agent. Separate official commissions, other than Conservation Commission, are Harbor Management and Electric Light.

The Long Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) was created by official action of the Board of Selectmen. The LRPC has been given a list of tasks by the Selectmen, and the LRPC created a list of their own from the results of the community meeting.

Note that many communities opt to create a steering committee for master planning rather than direct the Planning Board to perform this function, typically for reasons of politics and process. The functions of planning boards include master planning, but in most communities, the boards' agendas are filled with permitting and development reviews, leaving little time for in-depth planning.

3 PREVIOUS PROCESS AND RESULTS



Cuttyhunk Island has been the subject of previous planning efforts. The Martha's Vineyard Commission completed an opinion survey in 2005 and the Long Range Planning Committee followed that with a survey in 2009 to determine changes in attitudes and opinions. It was determined in the report for the follow-up survey that opinions had indeed changed. Where preservation of habitat, the quantity of open space, energy conservation and recycling were high priorities in 2005, three respondents in 2009 also listed other top priorities, including controlling construction, the public water supply, Barges Beach stabilization, and the number and safety of vehicles (particularly golf carts) as the top issues.



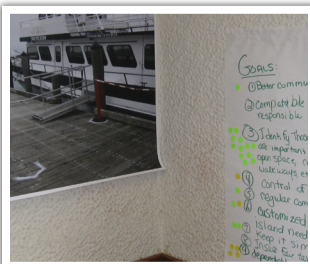
Consequently, while providing a valuable snapshot of opinion, the lesson is that a continual process of communication – a conversation – is needed to determine current values and desires among the town's population.

Most Recent Process and Results



As part of the most recent process, two meetings were held on May 25, 2012 to assist in preparing this report on long-range planning for Cuttyhunk Island. The first meeting was a presentation to the Selectmen by the Town department heads on their department's top priorities and goals. The second meeting was an open participation session to discuss Island issues and goals. Approximately 40 people attended the meetings.

At the first meeting before the Selectmen, each department head was permitted to make a presentation on their priorities. For those departments that had submitted the priorities before the meeting, a poster with the bullet point ideas was placed on the wall of the meeting room.



For the second open session, an initial presentation was made after which the attendees were broken up into two groups and asked to first discuss a pre-written problem statement and then generate ideas about making choices for the island. The second part of the session was for the participants to suggest overall goals and actions for the Island's future. Both of these sessions were recorded on large sheets of paper and posted on the wall beside the previously-posted Town department priorities.

People were then allowed to “vote” on all the ideas by placing sticky dots next to the content. The voting was done in two ways: people were given only four green dots to place where they were in favor of the idea; the three yellow dots they were given meant that they wanted more discussion on the item before taking that action. The votes were limited to help set priorities because not all of the ideas can be accomplished at the same time.

The report on the results is included as Attachment B.

From the results of the meeting and the subsequent discussion in the LRPC, the issues that were determined to require further planning and action were as follows:

- Harbor Development – What is the future for Cuttyhunk Pond? Should water- and land-side facilities be expanded and managed differently to expand income to the town while not overwhelming the harbor and town with additional visitors, and if so, how?
- Water – How are the public and private water supplies protected, and how should wastewater be treated?
- Energy – Considering technical requirements and fuel supplies, what is the best option for energy production, and could the cost of energy be mitigated with alternative sources?
- Land Management – Is the island managing growth and change in the best way, or would additional regulation or additional conservation of land by purchase or easement be in the island's best interests?
- Open Space – Are there more lands to preserve, what are they and how should they be preserved?
- Town Services – How should public buildings be utilized, particularly the Library, School and the Coast Guard Station.
- Jobs and Business – What is needed to live and work on the island? Are there opportunities for commercial enterprise other than ocean and harbor-related business?
- Governance – Is there another (better) way to make decisions?

In the Summer of 2012, the LRPC divided work into subcommittees and successfully acted on two key improvements. The first was restoring community recreation by finding a location for a volleyball court and organizing games. The second was beautification of the Island gateway at the Town Landing.

4 NEXT STEPS FOR PLANNING



Methods of Master Planning

For community master planning, there are possible options to consider in terms of the structure of the plan or plans and the means of communicating the plans to the community.

Standard Massachusetts Comprehensive Plan

As previously noted, under MGL c.41, section 81D, the state law provides the option for a master plan. The elements typically used by towns include:

- Goals and Policies
- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Cultural and Historical Resources
- Natural Environment
- Circulation and Transportation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Open Space and Recreation
- Implementation



The elements could proceed in sequential phases or steps to distribute the costs over time. While the basic structure has been used in many communities and could apply to Cuttyhunk, customization of the plan would be appropriate since less planning and more implementing actions was heard in all the recent conversations.

Community-Specific Comprehensive Plan

In most of our master plans, The Cecil Group has customized the product to fit local needs. This is because to build a real consensus, to properly represent the vision of the community, and to be pragmatic about implementation, the plan must be adjusted to adequately address local issues and preferences. In these cases, the planning elements evolve directly from the public process, and the resulting plan reflects the confirmed vision. As an example, from the conversations on Cuttyhunk, additional elements or categories in the master plan that could be included are:

- Education
- Improved Governance
- Energy Independence
- Harbor Management



This type of planning usually requires a fully-developed public participation process that allows people to understand and participate in the evolution of the plan's choices and actions for implementation. However, the result is something that everyone feels connected to because their input is reflected in the product. Project websites are particularly helpful in meeting these needs for communication.

Strategic Plan

Strategic plans are focused to efficiently address prominent community issues. By attacking the most pressing needs - such as aquifer protection and wastewater treatment to address public health and safety and reduce community liability, or an energy plan to address security and affordability - the town can advance community planning incrementally and where it most needed. Pooling these strategic plans together, the town can then tie them together under the umbrella of a master plan if desired.

Often communities prepare one or more strategic plans that can act as elements of a comprehensive master plan if needed. In these cases, the approach is not to redraft these elements but to incorporate them into the master plan. However, each strategic plan should be able to stand on its own and be implementable separate from the other strategic plans.

Communications

For each of these planning options, the process of completing the plan will vary but should include a highly interactive public communication process. A combination of an online, multiple-format blog and comment site and 'community conversations' scheduled with a series of open and focused meetings is recommended. Two site options were created for the purpose of illustrating this concept:

<http://cuttyhunkislandfuture.wordpress.com/>

and

https://www.facebook.com/CuttyhunkIslandsfuture?bookmark_t=page

Administration of these sites could be taken over by the LRPC or other entity, or project specific sites could be newly created and linked.

Recommended Methodology: Issue-based Planning

The recommended method for planning on Cuttyhunk Island involves the Selectmen and LRPC, with community participation, through a series of tasks.

- The Selectmen will present issues to be addressed by the LRPC.
- The LRPC will develop expertise to focus on the issue(s) identified by the Selectmen.
- The LRPC will make recommendations to the Selectmen.
- The Selectmen and LRPC will jointly hold a meeting to discuss with the town.
- The process and recommendations will be posted on a project or town website for public review.
- The Selectmen and Town Meeting will make the final decisions.

Best practices for planning suggest a series of basic elements: technical background assessment, setting goals and policies, community education, a financing plan, and a business or implementation plan. The task elements for planning within this proposed approach are the following:

- Building information and expertise – This is the technical basis and information needed to make informed decisions, whether that comes from outside technical expertise or local expertise.
- Discussions leading to consensus decisions – This is the community conversation that is facilitated best within the community but can be done with outside facilitators.
- Design and detailing of implementable actions – A designer is needed when the actions must be detailed so that the specifics of the plan can be reviewed.
- Listing financing and other funding – The options for public (and private) financing should be listed to determine the most cost effective approach.
- Lobbying for higher-level government action and funding – State and federal permits may be required, and grant funds may be available for the implementation plan, and these should be listed.

Planning Subcommittees and Goals

The broad goals to address island issues are recommended to be divided into Safe and Affordable Living, Environmental Quality, Economic Development, and Efficient Use of Community Resources. These could be taken by subcommittees of the LRPC to develop expertise and advance the planning decisions.

Safe and Affordable Living

This broad goal covers public health and safety in the peak of activity and demands on the island during the summer when traffic, use of water, use of electricity and waste disposal are at their highest. This also covers the points of lowest activity in the off season when the infrastructure systems supply only the year-round residents with higher operating costs. The subcommittee's tasks will be to develop a database of information needed to define the potential problems within peak- and off-season conditions and to become knowledgeable about public policy for management of traffic and technical solutions for utility systems.

Environmental Quality

The environmental resources and values of Cuttyhunk have been cataloged in different formats and need to be evaluated for accuracy and utility in making public policy decisions. The task will then be to suggest where more accurate information, such as delineations of wetlands, is needed in the context of how it may be used for permitting and resource management. This subcommittee could also be responsible for defining the potential impact of climate instability and sea level rise and what should be the long-range response.

Economic Development

The definitions of economic development typically include growth of businesses and job creation, and/or improvement of the tax base. Since expansion of the tax base is severely restricted by the limits on potential island development, economic development will primarily focus on business development, in whatever form, and revenue enhancements from management of the Town's harbor facilities. The subcommittee's tasks will be to understand local businesses and the conditions in which they function and to make recommendations on new economic opportunities.

Efficient Use of Community Resources

The Town has limited property holdings, and some of the properties have historic value and significance to the character of the village. While the properties are not predicted to change substantially, determining what legislative action would allow a more discrete use of State funds under the unique conditions found on Cuttyhunk could be used to effectively lobby for support. In addition, this subcommittee could help the Selectmen create a consistent way of presenting information needed to translate and understand Town finances for the public.

Table1 Master Planning Matrix
Master Planning Matrix

The following matrix is a listing of the elements of the planning issues identified in the public process. Categories across the top are the basic planning elements recommended for issue-based planning. The content is suggested information to facilitate the completion of the planning for the element, and what might be expected as a measurement of action upon completion.

Project	Technical Information	Goals and Policies	Financial Plan	Business/ Implementation Plan	Public Communication/ Education	Primary and Other Responsible Parties	Performance Measures/ Metrics
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production System Requirements and Alternatives Current and Backup Fuel Sources Distribution System Requirements and Alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy self-sufficiency and reliability Lowest cost total energy requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates Capital funding Tax credits for private entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management and operation Public/Private venture Public and private management and operation Permitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual conservation measures Alternative and renewable sources and supplies 	Electric Light Commission <i>and</i> Selectmen <i>supported by</i> LRPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reductions in total energy demands Greater alternative energy use
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of school children reasonably expected Value of families on island Success of school programs Alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education consistent with island life style School facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget State reimbursements and grants Fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management and operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of school children reasonably expected Value of families on island Success of school programs 	School Department <i>and</i> Selectmen <i>supported by</i> LRPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of school children
Harbor Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of potential visitors that would be attracted Impact of new facilities and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowance for expansion of activities Revenue goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates and rents Capital funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public operation and management Private operations Permitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to harbor resources Revenue potential Impact mitigation 	Harbor Commission <i>and</i> Selectmen <i>supported by</i> LRPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions on new revenues Decisions on new projects
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groundwater flow and land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual conservation 	Water Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drinking water quality

Project	Technical Information	Goals and Policies	Financial Plan	Business/ Implementation Plan	Public Communication/ Education	Primary and Other Responsible Parties	Performance Measures/ Metrics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> area of contribution Sensitivity of land use within area of contribution Demand and supply Reliability of system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and operation Permitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> measures Sources of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>and</i> Selectmen supported by LRPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and quantity
Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volume of wastewater Treatment alternatives Disposal alternatives Health impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and safety Resource protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates Capital funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management and operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual conservation measures Treatment, disposal, and construction alternatives Costs Mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selectmen supported by LRPC and Health Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision on treatment and disposal alternative
Solid Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volume of waste Disposal alternatives Health impacts Odors and visual impacts Illegal dumping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and safety Resource protection Visibility at Town Landing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees Capital funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management and operation Public-private operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual conservation measures Disposal and operation alternatives Costs Mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selectmen supported by LRPC and Health Agent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision on treatment and disposal alternative
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping of resources Quality of resources Use of resources Sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of protection and conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for resource analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management Conservation trusts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values of resources Demands on resources Management of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Commission and Selectmen supported by LRPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of protected resources Management plans put into place
Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listing of resources Condition of resources Sensitivity to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of protection and conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for resource analysis Capital funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public management Historic Society Preservation trusts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values of resources Demands on resources Management of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selectmen supported by LRPC and Historic Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of protected resources Management plans put into place
Roads and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and type of existing vehicles Number of potential vehicles Accident data Quality of roads Controls used in other communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of safety Private rentals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and outreach program costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and outreach program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of current safety Control in other communities Education and outreach program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selectmen supported by LRPC and Local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced complaints
Climate Instability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projections for sea level rise Near-term and long-term impacts of sea level rise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of investment in protection of property and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs associated with erosion prevention, restoration Lost revenues from loss of private property Capital funding for replacement of public facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding of near-term and long-term capital costs and replacement of lost revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projections for sea level rise Near-term and long-term impacts of sea level rise Costs of sea level rise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selectmen supported by LRPC and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to a level of investment for protection and restoration prior to considering alternatives
Improved Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form of government in small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open democratic process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of alternatives and impact on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to town bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form of government in small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRPC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision on form of governance

Project	Technical Information	Goals and Policies	Financial Plan	Business/ Implementation Plan	Public Communication/ Education	Primary and Other Responsible Parties	Performance Measures/ Metrics
	communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of current form • Problems in communications and decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive communication and distribution of information 	town budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter proposal alternative 	communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of current form • Problems in communications and decision-making • Alternatives 		

Working Plan Considerations for Specific Issues

The following are ideas to consider while developing work plans for some of the key planning issues. Additional ideas are included in the memorandum from Stewart Young included as Attachment A.

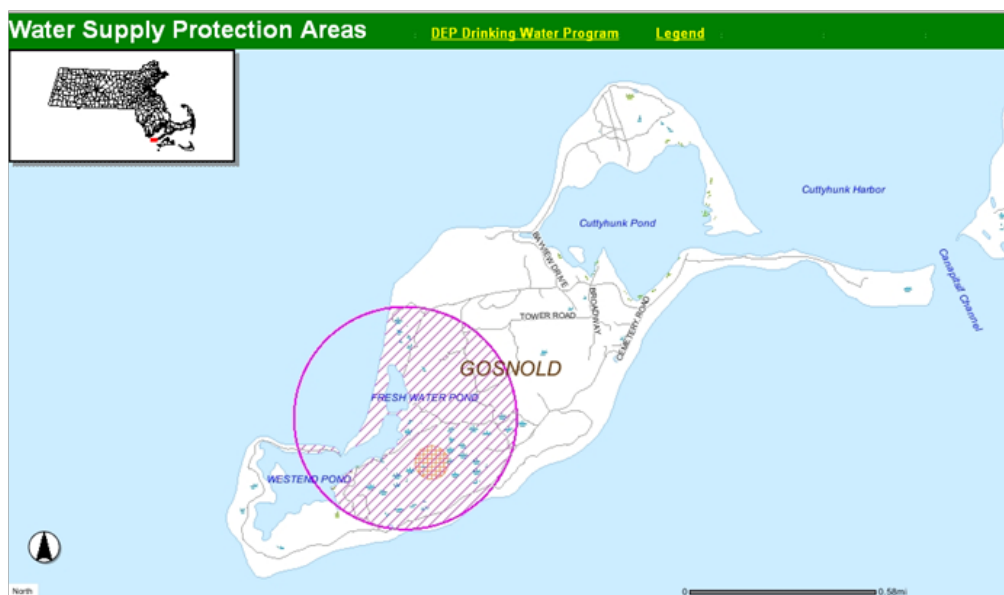
Sustainable Water Supply

In 2004, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs published the Massachusetts Water Policy that promotes four environmental principles that apply to Cuttyhunk:

- Keep water local and seek to have municipalities live within their water budgets by addressing issues from a watershed perspective
- Protect clean water and restore impaired waters
- Protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat
- Promote development strategies consistent with sustainable water resource management.

With little change in development and consequent new demand for water on the island, the water supply may not be under significant pressure. However, the information necessary to determine this condition is limited. As an example, the following graphic is taken from the State Geographic Information System (MASSGIS). What it shows is the best estimate of the area where Island drinking water is collected naturally before entering the five municipal wells clustered in the area shown on the map as the smaller, inner circle. The large circle with a radius of 1,840 feet is called the Interim Wellhead Protection Area because specific information on the actual recharge area is not available. As drafted, the map suggests that a large area of the water supply is contributed by the ocean. Since salt water intrusion has not been reported, the conclusion is that this information is not accurate enough for planning the long-term protection of the water supply.

Figure B.
Water Supply Protection Areas Map



The methodology for determining the actual area of contribution, known as the Zone II, involves the use of test wells spread through the expected recharge area to determine the geology, the elevation of the groundwater and the direction of groundwater flow. This is followed with pumping tests to determine the influence of water supply pumping on these conditions. The engineering calculations determine the Zone II area during the peak demand on the groundwater during drought conditions. Armed with this information, the Town can determine the safety of the groundwater from use of the lands within the Zone II area.

The cost of such a test is not insignificant and should be assessed against the potential of changes in demand and the risk of pollution or saltwater intrusion. Changes in demand could be calculated for future building construction and additional water to supply showers for boaters, and these changes could be compared with the levels of safe water. According to the state, a public water supply system approved for more than 100,000 gallons per day must provide a Zone II delineation, and the Cuttyhunk wellfield was reported to be only rated for 50,000 gallons per day (letter from R.E. Chapman Co. January 19, 2007). However, as an island, Cuttyhunk has few reasonable back-up options should something happen to the existing water supply.

Energy Infrastructure

The following is an outline scope for a comprehensive energy plan. Use of the information developed from this list would allow the Island to make complex decisions regarding improvements to the island's overall energy and public electrical systems.

Overview of the Existing Energy Systems

Prepare an overview of the Island's energy systems, including energy use and costs, disaggregated by time of year, type of energy and users. Evaluate future energy and infrastructure requirements and costs, supply options, and system reliability needs. Assess potential system, market and regulatory changes: efficiency improvements, technology development and implementation, and environmental impacts, with focus on the potential contribution of energy efficiency, renewable energy and distributed sources to meeting energy needs. Examine the drivers of energy costs on end-users. Assess the impact of energy and regulatory policies on energy costs, particularly on year-round island residents.

Consideration of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Resources

Assess existing energy efficiency options to achieve higher conservation goals. Assess the potential for meeting future energy needs by increasing cost-effective energy efficiency and conservation, thereby reducing total energy bills. Assess methodologies and metrics used to assess the net benefits and cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency activities. Assess the current and potential role of building and energy codes (changes to the State Building Code) and appliance standards, and assess the effect of increased compliance in achieving energy efficiency goals and accelerating technology implementation.

Assess existing renewable resource initiatives in achieving their goals, such as the recently constructed solar array on Naushon. Assess the potential for implementation and use of renewable energy resources for meeting energy needs. Assess renewable resource potential, including grid-level electricity generation (offshore). Assess methodologies and metrics used to assess the costs and benefits of renewable resources. Assess needs for transmission and distribution upgrades, and assess the ability to balance sources and support integration of variable energy resources, e.g., wind and solar.

Meeting the Island's Energy Needs for Electricity

Provide historic, current and forecasted electricity load, prices and supply requirements, taking into account system and technology changes and the potential contribution of energy efficiency and renewable resources in meeting energy needs. Assess the existing generation supply portfolio and transmission and distribution infrastructures. Assess the available options to replace, modernize, upgrade or repower outdated infrastructure, potentially increasing capacity in the process. Assess opportunities and issues associated with the siting of new infrastructure, including the potential for smart grid projects to help meet infrastructure needs. Consider the effects on the reliability of the electric power grid of potential changes in federal and state policies, including environmental policies that may affect air emissions. Assess fuel diversity, development of alternative energy resources and system upgrades. Assess infrastructure needs, costs and impacts associated with potential development of energy storage and other emerging technologies.

Golf Carts

When on a public road, these vehicles must follow the rules of the road.

Others consider Golf Carts to be vehicles with a maximum speed of less than 20 mph, while Low Speed Vehicles (LSV's) or Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEV's) have speeds between 20 and 25 mph.

Accident data shows that pedestrian safety is greatest when vehicle traffic travels at no more than 15 mph.

Meeting the Energy Needs by Fuel Type

Provide historic, current and forecasted natural gas, petroleum and alternative energy demand and prices. Consider the comparative costs for heating and energy production. Assess existing and future supply sources, storage capabilities, delivery and reliability.

Environmental Impacts

Assess the impacts of energy production, transmission and use on air emissions. Evaluate the potential impacts of proposed environmental policies on the energy production. Assess the potential environmental impact of smart grid and other technologies or initiatives designed to improve energy services.

Resilient Energy Infrastructure

Assess the importance of maintaining the reliability and resiliency of the energy system. Assess issues and potential impacts associated with siting, cost recovery regulations, federal policy and technological advancement.

Regional, State and Federal Action and Collaboration

Discuss the option of various levels of government in energy and related climate planning and decision making. Assess enforcement of building and energy codes and equipment standards. Identify opportunities for improving the regional flow of fuels. Identify legal and jurisdictional issues that would need to be addressed in order to achieve potential benefits.

Transportation and Vehicles

Management of golf carts and other vehicles on the roads is a concern because of crowding and safety during peak times. Jurisdictions elsewhere in the country have dealt with golf cart etiquette and safety. Examples from other jurisdictions could be used to consider options for management of traffic on the island. Arizona and Florida have a large number of community examples.

Harbor Management

Cuttyhunk Pond is a very important source of revenue for the community. The options to expand the revenues include a plan presented by Seth Garfield to the Harbor Management Committee to modify mooring fees by day of the week to attract additional boaters during off peak times of the summer. Additional ideas include more facilities on the land side to increase business opportunities and rental fees.

Additional facilities on the limited land will push the edge of jurisdiction into the area under State Chapter 91 regulations. This is a comprehensive land use and environmental law and regulations that control development within the historic flowed tidelands. Creating a full Harbor Management Plan, also under the State standards, would reduce the liability and complexity of permitting new facilities. An example of a Harbor Management Plan for Chatham is found at the following web link:

http://www.town.chatham.ma.us/Public_Documents/ChathamMA_Coastal/tocscpdocs

This plan may be of other interest in that it also deals with erosion and loss of access across Monomoy, which could be compared as a strategy for Barges Beach.

Local Business Development

It is expected that ocean-based businesses, such as Cuttyhunk Shellfish Farms, and tourism will continue to be the major sources of local business development. Consequently, a Harbor Management Plan may also be used to support economic development.

Other options to consider are dependent on answering certain questions of policy and market potential.

- Is there a desire to expand business activity in the peak or off-peak times? What kinds of businesses are acceptable?
- Should creative types and craftspersons be attracted in higher numbers?
- Do housing prices have any bearing on existing and new businesses or the creative types deciding to expand or start and locate on island?
- Are the options for off-island communications sufficiently secure and fast enough to allow business activity? (At least one Island business is using a small card reader for sales.) Is high-speed internet an option given the Cape Access project bringing broadband to Woods Hole institutions?
- Should the summer market be expanded into the shoulder seasons and with what attraction? Can the markets be diversified in any other way?
- Is there an ability to establish a new market with available resources?

5 CONCLUSIONS

This report proposes a methodology for planning on Cuttyhunk and provides ideas for work plans to accomplish some of the key planning needs. It is fully possible with a clear relationship between the Selectmen, the LRPC, other Town committees and the general public to effectively plan for the future. Tasks and goals are suggested in terms of the approach to a series of specific issue plans. This includes specific policies and information needed for certain issues and a general approach for all other specific planning needs before the community. The broad reaching goal or vision will be to maintain the sense of freedom and community within a unique island coastal environment that people feel they can experience on Cuttyhunk Island.

The recommended priority issues are the supporting infrastructure that allow people to live, work and visit the island. These priority issues are water supply protection, energy and harbor access.



6 ATTACHMENTS

The following attachments are included for reference:

Attachment A: Topics Requiring Long Range Planning

Attachment B: Results of Department Heads and Open Community Meetings

Attachment C: Draft Vision Statement 'Passion to Action'

ATTACHMENT A



May 24, 2012

From: Stewart Young
To: Ken Buckland, Cecil Group
Cc: Dix Leeson, Gail Blout, Ginny Doran
Subject: Long Range Planning Issues

Some Topics of Concern Requiring Long Range Planning:

1) Climate Change

The potential for significant sea level rise accompanied by more frequent severe weather poses risks to town infrastructure and barrier beaches. We need to understand the timing and magnitude of these risks and to plan for mitigation measures and funding.

2) Population (Year Round, Students, Summer, Tourists)


The year round population seems to be decreasing and presents a risk that the population will become so small that it will not be economically feasible to operate the town on a year-round basis. When does the population become too small? Some of the population decline is likely due to increasing costs of living and some is likely due to changes in personal lifestyle choices. We need to understand the most important factors leading to this population decline and the implications of not having a year-round population. Assuming that the Town wants to have a year-round population, we need to have a plan to address these factors. Specifically, I would like to understand how much the Town is willing to spend to support year-round residency. For that matter, how much support is required to maintain year-round residents? Conversely, too many people, either resident or day-trippers, stress natural resources and the ambiance of Cuttyhunk. More people spending may be a short-term economic plus, but there are short and long-term negative consequences of development.

3) Employment

One way to address costs is to provide opportunities for greater income. We need to create more jobs for Gosnold residents. Ideally these would be year-round jobs. Aquaculture and other marine activities in town waters should be investigated and encouraged. I recommend that the Gosnold Community Fund support hiring an intern from a university aquaculture program to focus on this topic and submit planning grants.

4) Housing

Probably the single largest cost of living on Cuttyhunk is housing. The lack of affordable housing restricts potential employees to those who have connections that can provide lower cost housing. In a way this is a positive in that it reduces



competition from outsiders for the limited job opportunities. Is there an opportunity to create small apartments in larger houses that might provide more affordable housing? Do current zoning laws restrict this kind of creative housing? And if so, how can these laws be changed?

5) Energy

Another significant cost of living on Cuttyhunk is energy. As the Packer contract comes up for renewal, it is opportune to investigate alternative ways to procure fuel oil and marine gasoline. In addition, alternative energy sources should be considered. The newly formed Alternative Energy subcommittee of the Electric Light Commission is taking the lead on this topic and should coordinate with the Long Range Planning Committee.

6) Environment

The residents of Gosnold treasure their environment. It is beautiful in so many ways and it is also fragile. In particular, we need to consider impacts on the water supply in all planning and development activities. For example, consideration of showers for boaters may bring in extra income, but may also severely draw down the water resource. Solid waste management is a serious concern. The habits of some for road side dumping of trash, appliances, golf carts, compressed gas bottles, etc. create, in some cases, a serious public safety problem as well as endangering the aquifer. I believe that the current system of paying for solid waste disposal is broken. I frequently see trash waiting for pick-up without green bags. I would like to see a solid waste system that encourages conservation and recycling, penalizes waste generation, and has serious consequences for illegal dumping.

ATTACHMENT B

Results of Department Heads and Open Community Meetings Town Hall, May 25, 2012

The department priorities from the first session and the recorded ideas, actions and goals from the open session are listed here. The numbers beside them represent the voting (green dots) for 'like,' and [yellow dots] for 'more discussion needed.' The Department Priorities are listed as presented. The Open Public Session results combine the record from both of the two breakout groups and then order the ideas according to the number of votes.

First Meeting: Presentation of Department Priorities

Wharf Department: Submitted by George Isabel

Future Projects List:

- Complete repair of fish dock (Brow) (1)
- Create a grilling / cooking area in marina for transient boaters
- Change slip configuration of the south side of marina from pilings to floating docks
- Renew or repair Harbormaster and First Aid buildings
- Install concrete floating docks at the end of both finger piers in the marina (1)
- Build a dock over the stone jetty near Harbormaster office
- Dredge marina slip areas and west side of fish dock (4)

School Committee and Superintendent: Submitted by Russell Latham and voted on May 21, 2012

Top Priorities for the Next Five Years:

- Maintain a minimum population of elementary students especially on Cuttyhunk
- School Dept land acquisition for Cuttyhunk Elementary School
- School building maintenance:
 - Recreation and Physical Education space
 - Upgrading of the basement at the school
 - Handicapped accessibility to restroom and entrance
- Historic designation for the school?
- Teacher Housing – possibly a town facility (1)
- Remain current with professional standards in hiring

Highway Dept: Submitted by Seth Garfield

Short Term: Yearly maintenance of roads, clearing views, repair holes, clear drains, snow plowing

Next 24 months: Possibility to start process for repavement - Apply for state funding

5 year: Improve roads as decided, using State grants, work with water and electric dept. on any work under the roads to coordinate major construction within the roads, before paving is done (1)

Fire Dept: Submitted by Seth Garfield

Current: Improve yearly training, include mutual drills with USCG, DFD, Nbfd (2)

24 months: Expand group training for fire/rescue/police—off island seminars (1)

5 year plan: Idea of fire barn to expand dept storage and location of truck. Need to work on additional Town land acquisition (4)

First Aid: Submitted by: Seth Garfield

Current: Training, quality response to emergencies, proper records

12-24 months: maintain infirmary, improve service for year round population (3)

5 years out: Possibility of Town rescue/fire boat, Relocation of infirmary

Harbor Committee: Submitted by Seth Garfield

Current: Routine replacement of floats, Continue to build special projects fund, Support Town projects, what to do about water tank payoff, where does that \$\$ go in 2 years, Future projects to fund.

Marina: Submitted by Seth Garfield

Current: Continue to replace pilings, power posts, as routine yearly operations, Support staff, Continue to track income/ expenses better, Look for future projects.

24 months out: Re-direct marina note payment to stabilization fund, Rebuild wharf office, Support /redesign of first aid shed, decking, open space idea. (1)

5 years out: Long range plan for development of the wharf area and Ferry Dock, add bathrooms at ferry dock, showers for the public? (4)

Solid Waste: Submitted by Seth Garfield

Current: weekly trash pick up, maintenance Equipment, arrange barge runs, keep costs in line

24 months out: Possible addition of fork lift to handle material, used dumpster truck replacement

Possible Town barn for all trucks, Work on land acquisition for expansions, Replace town bags with stickers, look at cost/benefit of this

5 years out: Replacement of town truck, replacement of dumpsters, revisit waste hauling practices - Is it worth the Town running this dept?

Public Toilets: Submitted by Seth Garfield

Short term: Keep facility running properly, yearly pumpouts, cleaning

2 years out: Look at adding restrooms showers at Ferry dock area, work on septic issues. Continue to develop alt. to current waste disposal that cords.

With Sewer line issues that the Selectman are working on. (1) (5)

5 years out: upgrade current facility, redesign/ relocate to fit in with long range plan that has been worked on. Apply for State funding to help with this. Build in upgrade funding in the stabilization fund. (3)(3)

Conservation Commission: Presented at Meeting and Not Posted

- Hire combination Building Inspector and Conservation Agent
- Prepare a Wetland Boundary Map

Electric: Presented at Meeting and Not Posted

- Modernize transformers and deal with load balance problem
- Look at other fuel options
- Solar cell project on Naushon could provide 8 months supply – will be monitoring

Second Meeting: Open Public Session Input


Goals

- Identify things that are important to the essence of Cuttyhunk – open space, certain buildings, walkways, etc. (12)
- Alternative energy (10)[2]
- Control vehicles (9) [1]
- Preserve quality of water (6)
- Customized zoning for Island needs (5)[1]
- Maintain a working town for families and jobs (4)[1]
- A community that recognizes and respects the relationship between its resources and citizens (4)
- Clean water, fresh and salt (4)
- Keep it simple (4)
- Protect our views (4)
- Dependable and expandable utilities [4]
- A vibrant, year-round population with education and multiple ages (3)
- Recognize connection between marina and town – appearances, upkeep, etc. (3)
- Communications and leadership, cohesively working (3)
- Keep a “step behind the times” from the mainland (3)
- Preserve historic resources (Coast Guard facilities, Winter house, Church) (2)
- Provide something for the kids (1)
- Bring community to another level through recreation and community facilities (1)
- Clean beaches (1)
- Be a community of friendly people (1)
- Better communication (1)
- Regular community meetings (1)
- Provide a simpler way of life (1)
- Ensure fair taxation and cost sharing (1)
- Identify simple things we can make happen this summer and make them happen (1)
- Make the off-season more viable with a critical mass (1)
- Remain an enjoyable place to live and visit [1]
- Encourage new families to come in [1]
- Old World charm
- A community with independent spirit
- Take stock of resources and determine how to conserve for future generations
- Be able to raise kids in a simple way
- Keep the magic in this gem of an island
- Be a safe place for kids
- Become a year-round economy and living situation that attracts younger families who are able to maintain themselves
- Compatible change responsible change

Ideas and Actions

- No showers (1) [9]
- Communication is essential – regular community meetings, discussion, clarity (2)
- Reduce the number of vehicles to keep life simple (7) [1]
- Improve ferry dock as gateway to island (4)
- Publicize departmental goals (3) [1]
- Use Gosnold Community Fund to access more open space(2) [2]
- Restore dike by the well (2) [1]
- Recognize generosity of those who contributed to open space and encourage others to follow (2)
- Gosnold Monument is important(2)
- Preserve the essence /well maintained (2)
- Structures, monuments, open land – what do we want to preserve? (2)
- Put buildings on National Register (2)
- Paid town communications director (2)
- Adopt local wetlands bylaw (1) [1]
- Do something about the ticks (1)
- Improve existing walkways (1)
- Cuttyhunk is an experience (1)
- How can we protect its character? (1)
- Start slow. Be specific on properties. (1)
- Don't put in showers and use town water (1)
- Identify walkways on a map [1]
- Walkways and paths need to be preserved [1]
- Different rates for use of marina and facilities – more revenues to compensate for use? [1]
- Is water available for marina use? [1]
- Get rid of useless vehicles
- Protection is important
- Restrict children driving
- More regulations on vehicles and require registrations
- Marina and town go hand in hand – must both fit character of Cuttyhunk
- Preservation – towns adopt stricter regulations than national or state
- What have we gotten for the regulations that we recently added
- Need coordination with other agencies
- Regulations –adopt through education, sufficient time to decide, and media (newspaper and website)
- Need better forms of communication
- Minutes of meetings not being posted
- Paula's list is a service for people who ask vs. town website which people may not know about
- Different people require different harbor facilities
- Must decide how to treat wastewater
- People should feel like “part of the family” to keep from wasting resources

Prepared by Ken Buckland, The Cecil Group 6/1/12



Attachment: Problem Statements Distributed for the first part of the second meeting; the open public session

1. Preservation and Development

You have chosen to live or visit on an island with restricted access and limited services. Some parts are relatively undeveloped and others are relatively dense housing. Most people are here because of the water. Much of the built conditions of the island are unique and cannot be replicated.

Issues: Does the character of the island need protection? What should be maintained, how should it be preserved and what should be allowed to change?

Possible Actions: The existing development of the island could be preserved using regulations such as historic preservation ordinances or zoning bylaws. These would require a more careful review of changes to buildings and properties based on additional standards for design. This would also make it harder to make improvements to properties. Zoning could be customized for the Island and define the amount of change allowed in buildings and properties, but these restrictions must apply to all similar properties.

Questions:

- a. Would you rather preserve existing conditions or allow some change?
- b. What are the limits on what has to be preserved and what should be allowed to change?
- c. Do the limits that you want have an effect on your own property?
- d. Are you willing to accept restrictions on your own property and buildings? To what level of restriction; i.e., no change, small changes, or significant but compatible changes?
- e. Is preserving the culture and quality of life on the island more important to you than preserving buildings?

2. Water Resources and Harbor


People have stated that the harbor, water and natural resources on the Island are very important to them. Their values are for access and recreation, potable water, habitat conservation, and esthetics. These resources are defining Cuttyhunk as a coastal and island community.

Issue: Is there a need for a more refined management approach for these resources?

Possible Actions for Wetlands: State law defines the level of protection needed for wetlands and groundwater resources. Additional regulatory restrictions could be placed on the wetlands and groundwater resources to more strongly protect them. They could also be monitored for change and responses as appropriate.

Questions:

- a. Would you be willing to restrict and/or reduce your own spaces for living, working and playing to protect or improve the water and natural resources?

- 
- b. What reductions in buildable area and use of lawn chemicals would you be willing to relinquish to protect the water resources?

Possible Actions for Harbor: The Harbor can be managed through the Harbor Management Plan which can be amended and after approval by the State can be used to change the use of the structures and the watershed. Since the Harbor is actually a 'public trust' resource, public access cannot be restricted but the town does not have to build facilities to increase public access.

Questions:

- a. When improving the design and use of the harbor, wharf and piers: should these changes allow for additional visitors to the island?

PASSION TO ACTION CUTTYHUNK

This is a proposed template for the preparation of a statement, which will define the process and activities of the Long Range Planning Committee as they and the consultant develop action items for securing the future of Cuttyhunk.

STEP 1. Create a Mission Statement. Such statement should elaborate on how we bring our vision for the future of Cuttyhunk into practice and reality.

The Mission Statement must contain three elements:

- A. Vision. Identify community vision for the future.
- B. Mission. Identify action items necessary to secure the vision.
- C. Values. Define the values, which make up the context or “testing board” against which all actionable items are measured.

PROPOSED EXAMPLE:

- A. Vision. Our vision of Cuttyhunk is a community that protects our heritage, our environment, our community and, our shared values while conforming to the regulatory economic and social needs of the future.
- B. Mission. We will accomplish our Vision with specific steps (to be determined in this planning process) that must gain universal consent and reflect the values of the community as stated herein.
- C. Values. We will accomplish our vision of Cuttyhunk by completing action on items in B within the following parameters:

1. Reflect self-reliance.
2. Represent minimalist acceptable solutions.
3. Supporting modest and simple lifestyles.
4. Respecting of Island traditions.
5. Be consistent with the development of Island resources.
6. Promote natural resource - based economic development.
7. Minimize “carbon footprint”.
8. Respect Island stakeholders in priority:
 - Year-round residents
 - Property owners
 - Taxpayers
 - Visitors

STEP 2. Develop community projects that reflect and fit within the Mission Statement and the universally shared Vision and Values enumerated herein.

STEP 3. Propose a timetable for each project consistent with necessary regulatory and environmental needs or deadlines.

STEP 4. Propose a financial plan for each project on its planned timetable.

