

TOWN OF LA POINTE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING

October 24, 2013

Present: Holly Tourdot, Greg Thury, Burke Henry, Regina LaRoche-Theune, Tom Wojciechowski,
Lisa Potswald

Goal 7: Economic Development

- Regina headed study circles on the Island in 2005 on sustainability. She sees sustainability and economic development going together; tourism and food independence is not mutually exclusive – it can attract additional tourists invested in the same values.
- Greg said that sustainability is about making do with what you have; there is not one way to approach it. Economic development is based on financial interest; jobs have to provide income that covers costs. In that way, sustainability is tied to economic development, making tourism necessary.
- Holly is alarmed about the focus on tourism. There are now so many tourism jobs on the island that the residents can't support the jobs – people are coming to work on the island from the mainland. She wants the island to become producers of necessities – food, clothing; self-sufficient industries based on recycling and fixing things. She commented on Action Item #1, which she thought was good, and Action Item #5, to which she commented that there are all these summer houses but no permanent places for people to live.
- Burke noted that we must plan for area sustainability, not just on the island. We can implement actions on the island but cooperatively program with communities around us. Town government should not be leading economic development – they must maintain the infrastructure to property protect those who live here.
- Holly mentioned that a phrase she has heard “external locus of salvation” has stuck with her; that people depend on job and money instead of coming together to solve problems. Her concern about attempting to expand tourism through such activities as expanding the town park is about the attitude and garbage; people bring over lots of garbage and expectations of what will be on the island.
- Burke's expectation of town government was that the town park expansion should not be done with taxpayer money. He was assured that it would be paid for through its fees. He keeps monthly track of the town park and the airport.
- Regina pointed out that different types of markets attract different types of tourists; for example, MISA could do more educational seminars.
- Tom noted that there is a statewide “Travel Green” program.
- Regina said that the Chamber has meetings to discuss opportunities, and that this is an area of possible future discussion. The museum also has lecture series.
- Tom mentioned work that is going on locally regarding “asset based community development”.
- Greg said that tourism is a necessary part of the economy but he would like to see less indiscriminate activity and more work to draw/target tourists.

- Some thought that having a list telling tourists what's here and what's not might help in targeting and is an approach that promotes tourists of a specific type. The lists could be at the ferry information station – it was suggested that people would get a ferry ticket discount for going to the information station.

Goal 1: Housing

- Burke noted that when he was Town Board Chair, he worked on affordable housing issues. He wanted to build homes on town-owned property and allow people to rent the land and make improvements on the property. They were to be modest houses that would not cost more than 30% of total income. It all fell apart when people looked at how much income they would have to make to support owning the house. One needs a job to have a house, and need a house to live here, but the job doesn't support home ownership.

Other comments

- Recycling/garbage can be improved through education. Garbage recycling should be instituted at the town park.
- When the comprehensive plan was written, there were problems with the projected growth numbers, but they didn't get changed.
- Burke noted that 75% of property owners don't live here full-time. This poses unique problems as to how to get people involved in the community.
- Tom pointed out that the Extension Service does leadership programs in other communities, and wondered if something like a 2 day leadership program might work on the Island.