

November 20, 2024

Wiscasset x MECERP | Stakeholder Workshop – Takeaways

Meeting Time: November 12, 2024, 6-8pm

Location: Wiscasset Senior Center

Attendees: 6 project team members + 18 stakeholders

Development Priorities Exercise - Index Card Response Summary

Workshop participants were asked to rank the following development priorities in order of importance and were invited to consider how your rankings may differ for the two sites.

- A. Stabilize and increase the local tax base.
- B. Identify areas for development of workforce housing (and other housing?).
- C. Repurpose existing energy infrastructure toward a renewable energy future.
- D. Create good jobs, prioritizing the creation of permanent, high-quality jobs through the expansion of commercial recreation and clean energy businesses within the town.
- E. Create public open space and activate the property waterfronts.
- F. Bolster climate resilience by prioritizing land uses that mitigate climate impacts.

Birch Point

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	How many votes in Top 3?
Local Tax Base	3	2	3				8
Housing		1	1	2	3	1	2
Repurpose Energy Infra.	2	3		1	1	1	5
Create Good Jobs	3	1	1	2	1		5
Public Space	1	1	1	1	2	2	3
Climate Resilience			2	2		4	2

Old Ferry Road

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	How many votes in Top 3?
Local Tax Base	2	2	2	1	1		6
Housing	1	2	2	1	2		5
Repurpose Energy Infra.	1		2	1	2	2	3
Create Good Jobs	2	3		2	1		5
Public Space	1	2		1	2	2	3
Climate Resilience	1		1	3		3	2

Birch Point & Old Ferry (Combined Ranking)

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	How many votes in Top 3?
Local Tax Base	2		1	2		2	3
Housing	2	1	1		3		4
Repurpose Energy Infra.	2	1	2	2			5
Create Good Jobs	1	2	2	1		1	5
Public Space		1	1	1	3	1	2
Climate Resilience		2		1	1	3	2

Exercise 1: Site-Specific Development Priorities

Top 3 Priorities – Birch Point	Top 3 Priorities – Old Ferry Road
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stabilize local tax base 2. Repurpose existing energy infrastructure 3. Create good jobs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stabilize local tax base 2. Housing 3. Create good jobs

Land Use Mapping Exercise Results

Workshop participants were then asked to use sticky notes, which represented various land uses listed below, and paste them on two maps of the Birch Point and/or Old Ferry Road sites based on where they thought the land use would be most suitable. If the participant thought that a certain land use was unsuitable for either site, they were invited to “dispose” of the land use. Participants were asked not to consider the specific location within the two sites.

Exercise 2: Land Use Mapping (Results Ranked by Count of Votes)

Birch Point	Old Ferry Road	Disposal
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Light Industry (15) 1. Clean Energy (15) 2. Commercial Recreation (11) 2. Mixed-Use Development (11) 3. Open Space (6) 4. Housing (5) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing (14) 1. Mixed-Use Development (14) 2. Open Space (12) 3. Light Industry (8) 4. Clean Energy (7) 5. Commercial Recreation (5) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing (3) 1. Commercial Recreation (3) 2. Public Recreation (2) 3. Light Industry (1)

Discussion Summary Notes

- **Overall Development Priorities:**
 - For both the Birch Point and Old Ferry Road sites, stabilizing the local tax base and creating good jobs were top development priorities.
 - However, stakeholders noted during discussion that top ranking priorities can subsume many of the other development priorities.
 - Ideally, they would like to see projects that can address as many of the development priorities as possible.
 - Stakeholders discussed the importance of understanding the impact of these new developments on Town services and ensuring that coordination is happening.
- **Distinct Differences in Site-Specific Priorities:**
 - Stakeholders see Birch Point as more appropriate for industrial and clean energy activity.
 - Stakeholders see Old Ferry as more appropriate for housing and mixed-use development.
- **Recreational Considerations:**
 - Stakeholders noted that they would like to see more recreation and publicly accessible open space in Wiscasset.
 - Stakeholders discussed the opportunities summarized in the recently assembled “Wiscasset Riverwalk Plan”.
- **Birch Point**
 - CMP confirmed the viability and value of the Birch Point site for battery storage. Currently, CMP is not allowed to generate or own batteries.
 - Concerns about the safety of battery storage, particularly lithium ion, were raised by Peregrine.
 - Stakeholders discussed the potential of a data center on Birch Point. Moreover, battery storage may be utilized as an energy generation asset (whereby the heat generated is harnessed).
 - Concerns about the flood plain on Birch Point were raised.
 - Peregrine expressed support for more light industry at Birch Point, which could include their own research and development (R&D) and test lab facility expansions.
- **Old Ferry Road**
 - Stakeholders confirmed that Old Ferry would be appropriate for mixed-use and more open space amenities (e.g., walking path from the site to downtown).
 - As they pertain to recreational opportunities along the waterfront, concerns were raised about the disparity between waterfront and inland residents as well as the physical accessibility of the waterfront in many spots given the steep slope.
 - The site may not be large enough for a classic Amazon Web Services (AWS) center.

Appendix

List of Attendees

In-Person:

Core Project Team

1. Aaron Chrostowsky, Town of Wiscasset
2. Ryan Gahagan, Mason Station Redevelopment Company LLC
3. Aaron Svedlow, Mason Station Redevelopment Company LLC
4. Jonathan Meyers, HR&A Advisors
5. Stephan Petryczka, HR&A Advisors
6. Lynn Chong, HR&A Advisors

Stakeholders

7. Dennis Simmons, Town of Wiscasset
8. Sy Coffey, Maine Governor's Energy Office
9. Amy Marston, CMP
10. Adam Desrosiers, CMP
11. Alice Richards, CMP
12. Sarah Whitfield, Wiscasset Selectboard
13. Lawrence Hesseltine, Chief of Police
14. Peter Arnold, RePower Wiscasset
15. David Stapp, Peregrine
16. Larry Legree, Peregrine
17. Cassandra Rose, Wiscasset Climate Action
18. Karl Olson, Planning Board
19. Alex Zipparo, Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission (LCRPC)

Zoom:

20. Patricia Cloutier, Wiscasset Chamber
21. Tuck O'Brien, Maine Redevelopment Land Bank
22. Kate Klibansky, Island Institute
23. Kathleen Capstick, Maine Yankee