

*****Minutes*****

Frenchman Bay Planning Group

Meeting Date and Time: Wednesday April 6th, 2011

Place: Dahlgren Hall, MDI Biological Laboratory

In attendance: Jane Disney, George Kidder, John Bennett, Antonio Blasi, Billy Helprin, Terry Towne, Chris Petersen, John Kelly

Frenchman Bay Partnership Discussion: We started with an overview of the Frenchman Bay Partnership discussion of 3/3/2011 by Chris Petersen.

I. Mission—needs to be honed, but essentially the steering committee came up with this:

“The mission of the Frenchman Bay Partnership is to ensure a healthy future for Frenchman Bay—a future where multiple users can enjoy the inherent beauty and benefit from the economic viability of the bay. The Frenchman Bay Partnership will provide a means by which local stakeholders in the bay can come together to address issues in a way that does not require top down intervention or legislative action.”

We will work on this more—perhaps if there is time at the retreat.

II. Structure of the Frenchman Bay Partnership—to be decided

There was general agreement that at the very least, Frenchman Bay Partnership members should:

- **Support the mission and vision of the FBP**
- **Commit resources to the FBP which may include:**
 - ❖ **Expertise**
 - ❖ **Advice**
 - ❖ **Meeting space**
 - ❖ **Collaborative fundraising**

Who should belong?

As an example, Casco Bay Estuary Partnership:

.... includes local, state and federal government organizations, non-profits, local businesses, citizens, universities and more.

III. Function of the Frenchman Bay Partnership—we see two roles for the Frenchman Bay Partnership: One is information gathering and information sharing; the other is doing things, taking action, initiating projects, etc.

- **Create a Frenchman Bay Plan**
- **Produce a Frenchman Bay Atlas**
- **Publish “State of the Bay” Reports**

- **Maintain a Website with Information on Frenchman Bay**
- **Facilitate Discussion and Resolution of Issues that Arise Among Stakeholders**

IV Website—we agreed that a website is important to the success of the Frenchman Bay Partnership and implementation of a Frenchman Bay Plan. We agreed that the Frenchman Bay Plan should be an on-line tool—searchable by chapter etc. The website should have ways for members and the public to click into various projects and also suggestions for what everyone can do to keep the bay healthy. The website should contain links to Partner Organizations and their Frenchman Bay Projects. The Alex C. Walker Foundation grant awarded to MDI Biological Laboratory may help to fund the initial stages of developing a website.

In addition to a website, we need to begin getting some attention for the project. Jane contacted Maine Sea Grant about help with developing graphic materials, posters for distribution in towns, postcards to mail to citizens or particular groups, inviting them to focus sessions on the Frenchman Bay Plan etc. We may also want to make a video about the Partnership and the Plan and run it on the cable access channel.

RETREAT DISCUSSION:

- I. Outline Agenda for Retreat—Sunday and Monday May 1st and 2nd at SERC (Schoodic Education Research Center)**

We agreed that the agenda recommended by facilitator, Marcia Brown, is a good one:

Sunday Morning: Review Adaptive Management Process and Draft Conceptual Model with all participants.

Sunday Afternoon: Brainstorm Strategies for addressing threats to habitats and species, Prioritize Strategies

Monday Morning: Lesson on how to develop Results Chains, practice developing a few together

Monday Afternoon: Develop objectives

- II. Who is attending the retreat, who should be invited?**

The following people have committed to the 2 day retreat. If more than three others are interested, then we will limit participation to one person per organization. As per the discussion of the steering committee, Jane contacted Darrin Kelly, Ken Cline, Dick Fisher, who cannot attend, and Dana Rice who has not returned calls.

RETREAT PARTICIPANTS TO DATE—we have space for 3-5 more people:

Jane Disney

George Kidder

Bob DeForrest

Chris Petersen

Fiona deKoning

Terry Towne

Anne Krieg

Antonio Blasi (Monday only)

John Kelly (Monday only)

III. ATTEMPT TO BEGIN THE BAY PLANNING PROCESS SO AS TO HAVE A STARTING PLACE ON MAY 1st

We looked at the work of the University of Maine Graduate Students who used Frenchman Bay as a case study in January 2011. We used their findings as a jumping off point for discussion. Their findings are not included here, so as not to confuse the reader.

Frenchman Bay Vision:

The planning group decided that it should be short—so that anyone in the Frenchman Bay Partnership could repeat it. We agreed that we liked the following elements: a viable, healthy bay with economic benefit-- the term sustainable should be added somewhere.

John suggested something like this:

Vision for Frenchman Bay Plan:

Frenchman Bay is ecologically, economically and socially healthy and resilient in the face of future challenges.

We will work on this more at the retreat. The vision must also inspire the reader to action!

Conservation Targets:

We agreed on

MUDFLATS

EELGRASS

INTERTIDAL AREA

These are areas that are under threat and perhaps need strategies to protect them long term. Because of the work of Joe Porada who helped to forge the Frenchman Bay Shellfish Committee and develop a 7-town clam ordinance, we thought it would be helpful for him or other members of the committee to participate in the Bay Planning Retreat. Joe was present at the first stakeholder meeting on 3/30/2010. Jane agreed to get in touch with him.

As an ecologist, Chris Petersen commented that structurally complex substrates (whether eelgrass, rockweed, kelp, rocky bottom, etc.) are important for a plethora of species, and so that perhaps ensuring the future structural complexity is important. We didn't decide how to define these substrates as conservation targets.

Antonio points out that water quality needs to be conserved. Water quality may not be a conservation target per se but must be preserved in order for the conserved habitats to remain viable. So assuring good water quality may be one strategy toward conserving habitats.

We were less certain about including offshore areas. We discussed having a more narrowly defined initial plan, with a focus on near shore environments. We could add other targets at a future date as we re-visit our adaptive plan. We will see what a larger planning group decides at the retreat.

THREATS:

We discussed threats to these areas. These include access to the area, and dragging in these areas. Off the coast of Hulls Cove there was a rich kelp bed. Lobstermen could catch many lobsters in this complex habitat. Sea Cucumber draggers destroyed this entire area in a day. There used to be much more Irish moss in Frenchman Bay. What has happened to it is unknown. Coastal development and land use were discussed. These are also a threat to near shore environments. There are many agricultural uses in the Skillings River. There are not as many in the outer bay.

This is as far as we got in discussing the early phases of conservation planning...to be continued at the retreat!