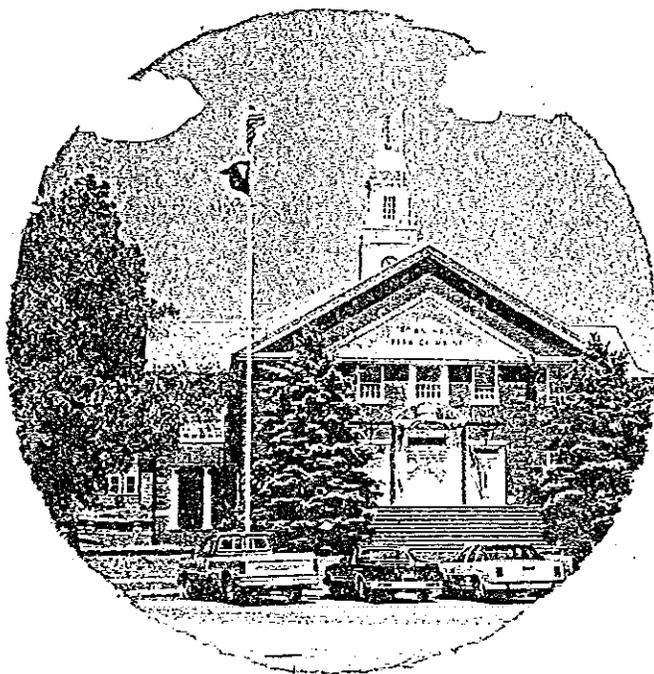


COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1991

Berwick, Maine



PART II - THE PLAN

BERWICK COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

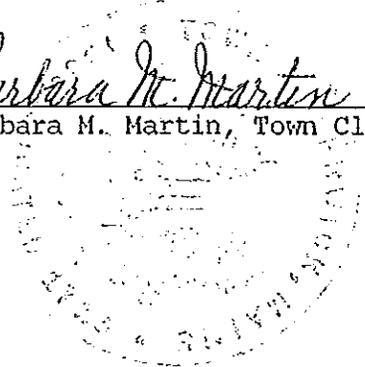


COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1991

Berwick, Maine

ATTEST:

A true copy of the "Comprehensive Plan, 1991, Berwick, Maine", as certified to me by the Municipal Officers of Berwick, Maine, on May 21, 1991.


Barbara M. Martin
Barbara M. Martin, Town Clerk

CERTIFIED BY:

Keith L. Bowler
Richard F. Hayes
Wendy A. White
Shirley M. Mitchell
Municipal Officers

PART II - THE PLAN

BERWICK COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1991

PART II - THE PLAN

BERWICK, MAINE

Prepared with technical assistance from the
Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

TOWN OF BERWICK, MAINE

RESOLUTION CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- WHEREAS, The Town of Berwick is the fastest growing community in the State of Maine, having grown over 36% during the period of 1980-1987, and
- WHEREAS, the pace of land speculation and development has outstripped the capacity of the town to manage this growth; and
- WHEREAS, this unplanned growth threatens the integrity of our natural resource base, the ability to provide necessary public services, the affordability of decent housing, the long term viability of the economy, and the quality of life enjoyed by our citizens; and
- WHEREAS, comprehensive plans and land use ordinances are the key to planning for the future; and
- WHEREAS, the most effective land use planning occurs at the local level of government; and
- WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Maine has provided the tools for managing growth with the passage of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT there is hereby created a Comprehensive Planning Committee for the Town of Berwick;

THAT the Committee shall be widely representative of the community and its members shall serve without compensation at the pleasure of the Board of Selectmen; and

THAT the Committee shall be responsible for developing a growth management program for the Town which shall include without limitation a comprehensive plan and an implementation program as described in the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act.

GIVEN UNTO OUR HANDS THIS EIGHTH DAY OF AUGUST, 1989.

Keith L. Bowler

Richard F. Hayes

[Signature]

Henry Upson

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Berwick, Maine
August 8, 1989

Berwick, Maine

Comprehensive Plan, 1991

Planning Board

Frank Underwood, Chairman
Paul Boisvert
Janet Frost
Jaqueline Mueller
David Salois
Gerald Skidds
Ann Smith

Board of Selectmen

Keith Bowles, Chairman
Robert Dowling
Richard Hayes
Samuel Mathews
Shirley Mitchell
Larry Upson

Comprehensive Planning Committee Steering Committee

Richard Stillings, Coordinator
Judy Burgess, Clerk
Melvin Amareen
Robert Cowther
Ken Hall
Barbara Martin
Dennis Plante

Chris Rose
Scott Waldron
Win Webster
Mary Ellen Wright
Board of Selectmen
Planning Board members

Demographics Committee

Ken Hall, Chairman
Gary Branyen
Marcia Elton
Judy Haley
Lorraine Jones
Jeanne Lessard
Phillip Mason
Karen Messier
Wayne Stocker
Oscar Stone
Harry Tasker
Craig Therrien
Frank Underwood
Scott Waldron
Win Webster

Natural Resources Committee

Ann Smith, Chairman
Donald Burgess
Nancy Cook
Richard Foss
Lisa Huestis
Art Lessard
Jaqueline Mueller

Berwick, Maine
Comprehensive Plan, 1991

Public Facilities Committee

Robert Crowther, Chairman
Pat Adams
Melvin Amazeen
Ron Bickford
Keith Bowles
Maurice Butler
Linda Hafford
Curtis Hendrickson
Gale Hersey
Paul Johnson
Paul LaPierre
Barbara Martin
David Salois
Janet Saucier
Larry Upson
Thomas Wyman

Cultural
Resources Committee

Mary Ellen Wright, Chairman
Paul Boisvert
Peter Cook
Beryle Garneau
Kelley Williams
Mary Williams

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Berwick Comprehensive Plan is a guide for managing all aspects of the town to the year 2010. It is based upon Berwick residents' and landowners' expressed needs and their aspirations for the town that has resulted in part from a public opinion survey conducted early in 1990 and in part from public participation throughout the plans' development.

This plan updates the 1985 Comprehensive Plan and fulfills the 1988 requirements of the State statute, The Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, 30 MRSA § 4960. Pursuant to the statute, this plan provides: (1) the basis for zoning and other land use ordinances; (2) the basis for town-wide capital improvements planning and budgeting; (3) the basis for detailed plans for housing, historic preservation, village center revitalization, open space, recreation, transportation, town facilities and other public facilities and services in Berwick.

HISTORY OF THE PLAN

In 1989, Berwick and 22 other towns mostly in York County were designated by the Maine Office of Comprehensive Planning as Round 1, Tier 1 towns under the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act. This required the town to submit a comprehensive plan in conformance with ten State goals and a set of regional policies for State and regional review and approval by 1991. After town meeting adoption of the Plan, Berwick has one year to make any adjustments to its land use regulations to bring them into conformance with the Plan. Pursuant to a timetable within the plan, capital improvement budgeting and other plans and programs are to be implemented. Failure to secure an approved comprehensive plan may result in the Town's land use regulations becoming invalid, ineligibility for most State grant programs, inability to adopt an impact fees ordinance and to receive State funds to defray court costs for defending local land use ordinances.

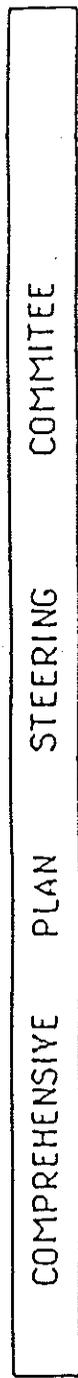
In August, 1989, the Selectmen by resolution created the Berwick Comprehensive Planning Committee and encouraged all residents and landowners to participate. With a State comprehensive planning grant matched by local funds, the committee, made up of over 60 citizens, in late 1989 and 1990 developed this plan. A contract with the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission provided technical assistance in its development.

PLANNING PROCESS

The comprehensive plan is presented sequentially in four-phases that correspond to the Comprehensive Plan Statute.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Phase 1: <u>Inventory</u> - | Collection and analysis of data about Berwick; projection of trends |
| Phase 2: <u>Policy Development</u> - | Generation of Town goals, policies and objectives |
| Phase 3: <u>Plan Formulation</u> - | Development of a master land use plan, and housing, public facilities, open space/ recreation, and historic village center plans |
| Phase 4: <u>Implementation Program</u> - | Development of updated land use regulations reflecting the Plan; Capital Improvements plan, impact fees and transfer of development rights systems; and open space, historic programs, etc. |

PLANNING PROCESS



PHASE I

INVENTORY

DEMO. GROUP →

PUBLIC FACILITIES GROUP →

NATURAL RESOURCES GROUP →

CULTURAL RESOURCES GROUP →

PHASE II

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

GOALS/POLICIES OBJECTIVES →

GOALS/POLICIES OBJECTIVES →

GOALS/POLICIES OBJECTIVES →

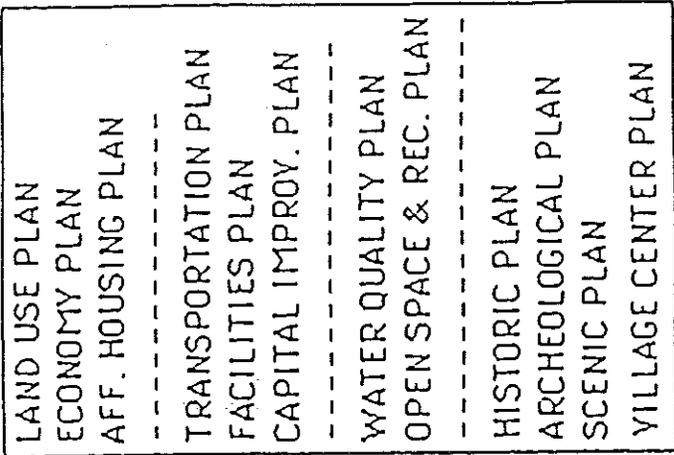
GOALS/POLICIES OBJECTIVES →

S T A T E G O A L S

R E G I O N A L P O L I C I E S

PHASE III

PLAN FORMULATION



PHASE IV

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

ZONING
SUB/SITE REGS
OTHER LAND USE
REGULATIONS

C.I.P.
IMPACT FEES

OPEN SPACE
RECREATION
T.D.R.

HISTORIC PROGRAM
ARCHEO. PROGRAM
VILLAGE CTR. PGM.

The Inventory phase is divided into ten subject areas corresponding to the categories of data required by the State Law to be analyzed and projected. Correspondingly, the Berwick Comprehensive Planning Committee divided itself into five working sub-committees for developing the plan.

<u>Steering Committee</u>	Overall responsibility for the plan and scheduling; Coordinator Richard Stillings
<u>Demographics Group</u>	Population, land use, economy housing; Chairman Kenneth Hall
<u>Public Facilities Group</u>	Transportation, public facilities & services, education & fiscal capacity; Chairman Robert Crowther
<u>Natural Resources Group</u>	Natural resources, unique natural areas, open space, passive recreation; Chairman Ann Smith
<u>Cultural Resources Group</u>	Community character, historic and archeological resources, scenic resources, village center; Chairman Mary Ellen Wright

For continuity and efficiency, the four working groups continued with their subject areas through the subsequent policies development, plan formulation, and implementation phases of the plan.

The planning horizon for the Berwick Comprehensive Plan is the year 2010, a period of 20 years. This time span is deemed reasonable due to the long-term periods necessary to implement a number of the plan requirements, especially capital improvements such as equipment acquisition. Capital improvement budgets are typically done for six year periods with capital investment plans for up to 20 years.

GEOGRAPHIC SETTING AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Berwick is a town with a long history. There were Native Americans living in this area long before European settlers arrived in 1631. This 1631 settlement allows Berwick, together with South and North Berwick, the right to claim the distinction of being the first permanent settlement in Maine. At first, Berwick was part of Kittery but was incorporated as a separate town in 1713. Further divisions in 1814 and 1831 created the separate towns of South Berwick and North Berwick, respectively. Until recently, Berwick maintained a fairly stable and consistent character as a small, rural town inhabited by lifelong residents who based their livelihoods on goods and services produced locally.

Berwick today is an area of 42 square miles bounded, clockwise from the north by Lebanon, North Berwick and South Berwick, Maine and Rollinsford, Somersworth and Rochester New Hampshire. It is approximately 20 miles from Alfred, 100 Miles from Augusta and 75 miles from Boston, Massachusetts. Once established, the population of Berwick remained fairly stable at about 2,100 until 1960. The population now exceeds 6,050. With current trends, it is expected to grow to about 9,400 by the year 2000. The largest employer is Prime Tanning Company. Currently, 86% of employed residents work outside of the town and the majority of goods and services are purchased elsewhere.

There seems to be consensus among citizens that Berwick is changing. Given recent growth, it is undeniable that Berwick may soon no longer be a small, rural town. While growth seems inevitable, many want to preserve what they see as the best of Berwick. This document will attempt to determine a community sense of what makes Berwick unique for us, corroborate what is changing, examine the negative and positive impacts occurring from these changes and present a comprehensive plan for the future that the citizens of Berwick can use when faced with decisions that affect the physical and cultural heritage of Berwick. Our first task is to examine our history to determine those elements which formed the character of our town. One obvious starting point is our geography which is dominated by the Salmon falls River.

The Native Americans used the river for travel and as a source of fish. The first European explorers found it a convenient landmark and called it Newichawannock, after the Native American tribe living on its banks. River travel was easier than cutting roads through land and early settlers were used to working their way upland, drifting down river or simply rowing across to reach destinations. They must have seen little distinction between the land on the east bank and that on the west. The river may have been a convenient boundary line yet it also helped erase artificial boundaries set first by courts far away in England and later by local governments.

The history of Berwick includes a succession of different identities: Newichawannock, Parish of Unity; North Parish of Kittery; Kittery Commons; the Berwick created in 1713; Great Falls, Berwick side and finally, the Berwick of today. We feel that this early identification with both shores of the Salmon Falls River and the succession of various configurations and affiliations are important points to remember when defining the character of both Old Berwick and Berwick today. Yet, to balance these decentralizing factors, there must have been common elements which encouraged our first settlers to join together, stay on the land and develop a consciousness that they were a community.

Ambrose Gibbens was an agent for Captain John Mason who claimed title to the land through a grant from the British Crown. In 1631, he came up river with a commission to found a trading post and make a profit for his employer. Unlike some colonial settlements, which were founded by people who shared common ideals such as religious worship, the foundations of our towns were openly commercial. Our roots and our traditions are commercial and this is another important point in understanding Berwick. Gibbens' attempts to turn a profit for his employer would become the first permanent settlement in Maine.

There is one further historical point which helped to define the character of Berwick. Many early settlements involved groups of people who banded together and came to the New World seeking opportunities which were denied them in England. They chose the uncertainties of this country because they thought they could find a better life here. By comparison, many of our founding fathers and mothers did not settle here by choice.

Ambrose Gibbens founded a settlement, not from personal conviction but because it was his job. When his wife and daughter came to live with him, we can only wonder how eager they must have been to follow husband and father into a wilderness "far from any neighbors" with none of the advantages of more populated settlements and only four other men to help with all the work which would be required. They had no choice. Both law and custom gave the husband/father the power to compel them to live where he chose. The four men are described as servants and, as such, also had little freedom of choice.

Gibbens did his best to find wealth for his employer. He traded with the Native Americans and made abortive attempts to find valuable mines. When Mason complained that he had little return for his investment, Gibbens responded that a plantation must be provided with cattle and good hired hands. At that time, he and his servants had little food or clothes and no money. The most important resource of the region was the pine forests. Carpenters and millwrights were sent from England in 1634 and the first sawmill in America and the first water-run grist mill were built on the tributary which the Native Americans called the Assebenedick. They soon renamed it "the place of great works" after the rapid increase in mill activity. Still, the problems continued. Mason wanted to model this settlement after the great estates in England. He would own all the land which would be worked by tenant farmers. Few of the workers he sent over were content to work rented lands near Newichawannock when they could buy their own land elsewhere. At the time of Mason's death in 1635, there remained at the settlement only a few men listed as his stewards and servants.

Now there was further deterioration of the ties to England. Shipments of supplies were suspended and, in 1638, widow Mason's new agent, Captain Francis Norton, drove off most of the cattle from the settlement at Newichawannock. This left Mason's remaining servants destitute and, most probably, rather embittered at being abandoned. They had to survive and did so by seizing the lands they had cleared and the houses and mills they had built. The former servants now were independent enough to take their future into their own hands. We believe that this acceptance of reality and the getting on with the business of living is the spirit which united our founders and continues to define the town and its people.

The same spirit is found in the next large group of settlers. In 1652, Richard Leader came up from Lynn, Massachusetts to revive the sawmills. He brought with him a number of Scottish prisoners, captives of the wars between the supporters of Charles II and Oliver Cromwell. These men had lived through battle and survived both random executions and an atrocious death march through the town of Berwick, England, to the coast. There they were crammed into the hold of the ship Unity and sent to Massachusetts where they were sold for twenty to thirty pounds each. It is probably an understatement to say that only those with the strongest of constitutions and spirit made it to the auction block. The men who came north with Leader were probably luckier than most. When Leader sailed for Barbados in 1656, he left his workers here. They were now free although left destitute in what was then the most northern of the inland outposts in the New World. Settlers, especially skilled workmen, were more important than legal or social distinctions imposed by far away British courts. The former rebel-prisoner-servants were granted lots of land in Newichawannock and so great was the impact that the area soon became known as the Parish of Unity, after the ships that brought them from England, and, later Berwick, after the town where they had been held captive. In this new land, men who had once been little better than slaves eventually married the daughters of their former owners and went on to lead prosperous lives.

Local historian, E.S. Stackpole, asserts in his Old Kittery and Her Families that other settlers who arrived from 1650 to 1682 shared similar experiences. Until forbidden by royal order, entrepreneurs would kidnap young men and women from the coasts of Ireland and Scotland and ship them to the colonies where they were sold as servants. He states that many of these

Irish maids became wives in this area and that the first Stackpole to come to this country was abducted. If this is true, it supports our contention that many of those who settled this area did not come of their own volition but, once here, took advantage of opportunities to create new lives.

While the exact locations of the homes and mills of many of these first settlers are in what now is South Berwick, the geographic conditions and the character of the individuals involved surpass later boundaries and, we believe, are rightfully claimed as the heritage of Berwick today.

The character of Berwick continues to be a reflection of these same attitudes and beliefs. We have always accepted and made use of the physical realities of our location. We do not have a traditional town green because the original town center for our earliest citizens is now part of South Berwick. Our origins were commercial manufacturing and our town center grew up around the mills and tanneries, with small stores and shops to supply our local needs. However, we have always tended to disregard the river as a boundary, going where convenience and economics lead us. Current tax laws, space limitations, and population concentrations have helped to encourage commercial growth in neighboring towns while discouraging these same enterprises locally. Many of us now work and shop across the river and not in Berwick. We must decide if this trend is acceptable or if we should make an effort to return more employment and commerce to the town.

As stated above, those first citizens of Berwick were not united by some common ideology. Instead, they were thrust onto the land. However, once here, they worked hard to get ahead. Perhaps this lack of some common unifying force and the need for each person to work to survive has resulted in what some outsiders consider our strong belief in individuality and, to some degree, in our desire to be left alone to get on with life. This seemed to work for over 300 years. Of course, we got together to found the town, provide necessary services, set up churches and schools, and when the outside world needed it, to provide men and women to defend the nation and to help make decisions for the State and the nation. However, the majority of Berwick citizens chose to lead fairly simple lives which were pretty much the same lives their parents led. Today, however, we are living in a more populated town where everyone is just a bit closer together and face many more questions about issues such as land use, pollution, increasing demands for town services and Berwick's role as part of a rapidly expanding seacoast area. Many do not lead the kinds of lives our parents did. To get on with our lives requires more of today's citizens than it did for those first settlers or, even our parents. We are at a point where we must assess our community and our future.

Southern Maine

Planning and Development District

