

Natural Resource Eco-tourism Steering Committee
Special Meeting
unapproved draft of minutes
December 10, 2011 10 a.m.--4 p.m. at the Peaine Township Hall

Archived information on: www.peaine.org

Mission Statement: *The Beaver Island Natural Resources and Eco-tourism Commission is committed to understanding and preserving our natural resources and promoting opportunities for their appreciation and enjoyment.*

The special meeting was posted and agenda submitted electronically to members as required by the OMA.

Meeting called to order by NRESC Chairman Peter Plastrik at 10:20 am.

13 NRESC members participating: Sandy Birdsall, Bill Cashman, Jim Gillingham, Pam Grassmick, Paul Johnson, Bill Markey, Dan Martell, Brian Mastenbrook, Ken McDonald (for BIA), Seamus Norgaard, Pete Plastrik, Jeff Powers, Ed Wojan. Others: Jack Gallagher, Neil Schock (CMU), Joe Moore.

Plastrik explained that the purpose of the meeting was to work with two facilitators from Michigan State University, John Beck and Julie Boardman, who would facilitate the development of a natural resources management planning process for Beaver Island. The MSU support had been offered to Peaine and St. James Townships by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the townships had asked the NRESC to take on the task. Copies of the joint township resolution establishing the NRESC were circulated and accepted as our working document. Then Plastrik turned the meeting over to Beck and Boardman.

The MSU facilitators produced the following meeting agenda and meeting notes made by the facilitators from the discussions during the meeting, which serve as minutes for the meeting. These notes came out of many brainstorming discussions by the meeting participants, so they don't always reflect the context or the precise meaning of the discussions.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Grassmick, Secretary

10:45am Environmental Scan and Capability Analysis

What is the current and future environment within which our NRESC efforts do and will operate? What is the state of our personal and institutional capability to meet the challenges of this environment and the potential of activities together?

- **Internal Capabilities**
 - **Strengths**
 - **Weaknesses**
- **External Environment**
 - **Opportunities**
 - **Threats**

Strengths (number in parenthesis reflect the number of check marks next to each item)

- Conservancy areas
- Manageable size of island allows for positive environmental management changes
- Rich history (1)
- Strong foundation
- When community coalesces around a priority, lots of energy and ingenuity
- Trail systems
- CMU and other professionals (1)
- Passionate lovers of BI (1)
- Commitment toward research (1)
- Tribal resource commitment (1)
- Community involvement (7)
- Family values (2)
- Professional expertise wide range of views toward using resources
- Natural beauty of the island (3)
- Lake Michigan
- Open-ended, professional process
- Biodiversity of island (4)
- Human resources (1)
- Timber resources (2)
- Smart people (1)
- Large areas of state land
- Isolation (2)
- Self-reliance
- Position in Lake (1)
- Wetlands
- New school (1)
- Established community/infrastructure (1)
- People here who are committed (1)

- Historical sites (1)
- Wildlife
- “clean” environment

Weaknesses

- No “middle” generation to step into leadership- business, govt, non-profits
- Difficulty in establishing dialogue (1)
- Lack of process for resolving conflicts (1)
- A tendency toward polarization
- Lack of skilled labor to utilized current resources
- Different interest sets- islanders, summer residents, tourists (2)
- Travel expense to reach BI
- Isolation (1)
- Large seasonal population
- Lack of good income sources (4)
- Resistance to change (1)
- Lack of knowledge about habitats/science (ignorance) (4)
- Lack of knowledge and facts re: DNR land ownership and rules governing (1)
- Unmanaged forest (2)
- Lack of funding (4)
- Limited area
- History of distrust, suspicion, mistrust, assumptions, rush to judgment (1)
- Lack of property owner participation in the effort to keep the island looking natural (1)
- Returning family members (local)
- Assumptions that forests need to be “managed” in the ways we’re doing it
- Apathy (1)
- Lack of accepted goals for natural resource
- Degradation of habitats
- Lack of air ambulance
- Poor regulatory oversight and necessary policies/regs

Opportunities

- Better job of promoting natural resource features (2)
- New members of the island community (2)
- Many groups, private and public organizations, committed to improving biological interests of island (2)
- Ecotourism destination (1)
- Increased best practices for island

- Green electrical generation (1)
- Hunting/fishing increasing market
- Trail system education
- Identify and adapt to changes in environment (1)
- Redevelopment of agriculture (1)
- Forestry
- Creativity in finding “win/win” solutions, uses of resources, economics and environment
- Because we are 30 years behind the mainland in development, we can keep BI different than outside resort areas by keeping it looking natural.
- Taking advantage of outside human resources and finances (1)
- We can manage natural resources for a desired outcome (3)
- Cohesive approach to island planning
- Increased visibility of island with outside organizations
- Injection of young families
- Promote our uniqueness-islands are special (1)
- Sustainable hunting and fishing
- Interpretive center

Threats

- Lack of enforcement of the zoning ordinance (1)
- Shoreline development as related to biological (3)
- Overdevelopment (1)
- Deterioration exceeds capacity to sustain
- Cultural divisions: old timers vs. newbies; old ways of doing vs. new (modern) ways; working folks vs. retirees/absentee owners (5)
- Forces impacting us from the greater outside world (eg, Wall Street, housing)
- Invasive species issues (8)
- Declining health of Great Lakes (5)
- Loss of wetlands
- Seasonal involvement (1)
- Few jobs to attract new families (1)
- Human activity (1)
- Lack of knowledge and facts (2)
- Habitat #'s vs. sustainable food
- Global warming (1)
- Lack of open and honest discussion (1)
- Greed, extreme, energy exploitation, state auction of our public resources, minerals, etc (hydraulic fracking)
- Pollution: point source and non-point source
- Native algae
- Inconsistent messages

- Greater division of community
- Aggressive regulation of selected species
- Lack of funding
- Over growth of forest (human dimension)
- Threats to groundwater
- Insulation-“island effect” (biological)

11:30am Break

11:45am Debrief/ Discussion

12:30am Lunch

1:00pm Identify Stakeholders and Interests

Group 1

Stakeholders	Interests
Landowners	Natural beauty of island
Tourists	Natural (ecosystem) functions
Business owners	Going green
Seasonal residents	Recreation and recreational facilities (boating
Full-time residents	hunting fishing, hiking biking, golf, tennis)
DNR	Cultural arts
Michigan citizens	Solitude/privacy
Tribes	Cultural use of land
The Nature Conservancy	History
Little Traverse Conservancy	Economic security and ?
CMU	Family environment
Beaver Island School	Economic growth and development
Wildlife club	Economic sustainability
Hunters	Sustainability of natural resources
Fishermen	Invasive species eradication/control
BI Association	Research
Charlevoix County	Education about environment (how to achieve
Peaine Twp	and in balance)
St. James Twp	Preservation
All wildlife here	Restoration

Ecosystem Plants (flora) Chamber of commerce Historical society Loggers Ecobusiness owners Boaters Agriculture Employees campers	Maintaining and improving services and tax base Good trails
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Group 2

Stakeholders	Interests
Island resident property owners Island non-resident property owners Renters (non-property owners) Seasonal visitors (short-term tourists) Business owners Employees Government units/NGA's Nonprofits Recreational sportsmen	Preservation of natural resources Economic stability and expansion Balance of the two above Access to natural areas Integrative, comprehensive mapping Sustained and enhanced biodiversity Balance between conservation, preservation and development (and promotion of this) Incorporating natural preservation into development with enforcement

Group 3

Stakeholders	Interests
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seasonal residents 2. Property owners without houses 3. Large estate owners (deer camps) 4. Year-round residents 5. Business owners 6. MI DNR 7. Universities 8. Conservancies/LTC/TNC 9. BIA 10. WC-hunters/fishermen 11. BIC School 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preservation of vacant land Lack of visible development Cutting edge technology Better medical capability Maintaining property values 2. The right to build with limited restrictions Financing opportunities Lower costs for their land (use) 3. The right to access entire holding Reasonable property taxes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Economic sustainability Services availability (including medical) Jobs for kids Preserve island character 5. Better business Year-around delivery Increased tourism Reasonable regulations and taxes 6. Funds for land management Public consensus Legislative support 7. Public support Research access 8. Funding Cooperation with DNR 9. Environmental/economic sustainability 10. Land access (public and private) Reasonable regs 11. More kids
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Group 4

Stakeholders	Interests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer residents The Nature Conservancy State office of Great Lakes (Lake MI coordinator) Dean Solomon (Charlevoix Cty) DNR- Sue Tangara (Land Incentives Program/invasive species); Amy Clark Eagle (forestry) Tribes (2 bands) MI Natural Features Inventory Island business owners/chamber (transportation, construction, retail) School kids School employees/EMS-health center/county employees Retired residents Tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viable way to make a living Affordable costs (including taxes) Preservation of biodiversity (the archipelago) Restoration of Great Lakes quality Historical/cultural ties to Islands Natural beauty Recreation/natural resources Education about islands' value/plans/history Safety and quiet way of life

2:00pm Charter the Planning Process

Purpose of the initiative:

- To create a plan for natural resources/ecotourism
- Recommend adoption to townships
- Integrated whole
- Use of expertise
- Public input and review of plan
- Create a common voice to move plan forward
- Need public/government approval
- The product is the PLAN and a plan for implementation
- Consensus
- Practical goals

3:30pm Next Steps

- Transcribe notes and send to Pete. Pete will then send notes to all participants.
- Information exchange
 - Inventory of knowledge base
 - Shared electronically, through presentation, maybe a webinar?
 - Need participants to identify:
 - What they want to know
 - Who can provide the knowledge
 - What information is available
 - What other information does the group need to know/have
 - What questions do participants have about current initiatives
 - Need to build a common context

3:50pm Evaluate the Day

Group writing Open discussion Participation Facilitation Agenda Rules of the road	
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