

ISLAND PLAN

CHARTING THE FUTURE OF THE VINEYARD

c/o MARTHA'S VINEYARD COMMISSION
BOX 1447, OAK BLUFFS, MASSACHUSETTS, 02557
508-693-3453 FAX 508-693-7894
INFO@MVCOMMISSION.ORG WWW.MVCOMMISSION.ORG

Natural Environment Work Group Core Meeting Notes of March 7, 2007, 11:00 A.M., MVC

Present - Members: Tom Wallace (Chair), Tim Boland, Judy Crawford, Leah Smith, and Tom Chase

Present – MVC Staff: Jo-Ann Taylor, Mark London

1. Work Group Progress

- The Core reviewed the rough draft Synthesis Document and thanked Jo-Ann for preparing it.
- The Core would like to encourage more involvement by the larger Work Group, and discussed means such as individual outreach with assignments. Their ideas will be forwarded to the process committee.

2. Short-term Strategies

- There was some discomfort expressed with the term "Short-term strategies". This will be forwarded to the Process Committee, with a request to call them something like "Short-term Actions" or "Quick Action Steps". There was general agreement to also ask the Process Committee to better define "Short-term strategies", but meanwhile to use a loose definition that the strategies may not make a huge difference but are empowering and achievable relatively quickly (within 2 years).
- The Core reviewed a draft prepared by Tom Chase and discussed several short-term strategies for consideration, by subtopic:
 - For Recreation:
 - Emulate the Chappaquiddick Island Association's community-based outreach program to link trails and to provide shore and water access.
 - Backed by public petition, municipalities or other public entities will contract legal services to identify unused but legally available public access and rights of way across the Island (e.g. Slough Cove and various ancient ways); to publicize them and to reactivate them under municipal management.
 - Develop an indemnification resource (e.g. an insurance pool) for landowners who provide public access.

- Character: **Roadside Vegetation and Lighting Initiative:** The character of the Island comes largely from what people see as they drive along Island Roads. The purpose of the Roadside Vegetation and Lighting Initiative is to:
 - Open up the views that are an important part of the Vineyard’s identity (e.g. Views from Tashmoo and Menemsha Pond overlooks, roadside farms and fields),
 - Increase vegetation and reduce exterior lighting along Island roads to strengthen the rural character especially adjacent to public, institutional, utility, and commercial properties, outside of town centers. In the longer term, this could lead to more general strategies to maintain rural roadside character dealing with fencing, vegetation, and lighting.
- Biodiversity: The MVC and/or Island conservation partners will prioritize and map Integrated Landscape Zones, to help municipal boards, private landowners and the State (e.g. the Correllus Forest) regulate and coordinate compatible land uses practices to achieve viable habitats and ecologically serviceable watersheds for humans and all native species.
- Working Landscapes: Support the “buy-local” campaign.

3. Bold Initiatives

- It was agreed that Jo-Ann will draft a list of potential Bold Initiatives, for discussion at the next meeting.

4. Upcoming Meetings

- Core – Thursday, March 22, 11:00 A.M., at MVC
- Core – Thursday, April 12, 11:00 A.M., at MVC

Notes prepared by Jo-Ann Taylor