**Community Development Committee**

October 4, 2017

Attending: Audrey Knight, Chuck Renneker, Catherine Samuels, Evan Miller, Jana Richards, Margaret Lindsey, Martha Cummings, Bob McHatton Sr.

Absent: Bob Peabody, Dave Crowell, Ursula Flaherty, Carmen Lone, Nelle Ely, Phyllis Roth, Peter Dubrule, Steve Rickert, Justin McIver

Chuck made a print out list of local businesses.

657 businesses in alphabetical order

Not for town website since the list is impossible to keep updated.

Carmen submitted a list of nonprofits to the subcommittee previously

Chuck – 10 years ago there were 520 businesses, and now 657 so increase of about 20% over 10 years

Lots of new businesses, categories – building/contracting is a large group

Lot of seasonal businesses, maybe a balance of summer/winter

Unemployment level is 2%, which is why Bridgton is a good business place

The list is a good communication method – the format needs a concise form with facts and stats for marketing and hand out

Coordination and communication important and lacking, we don’t have a business czar for bringing it all together, and website will help bring it about.

We can start employing survey monkey and create an online place for telling about an event or education program

What to do with the list? Who, how do we communicate? Two way street of communication. Facebook as interactive, website as static pushout

Town calendar to show what events are going on.

Meeting with website designer on Wednesday to get more information before finalizing, and training for town website.

If a business has a website it may not have an email address

Would be good to have a way to look at stats of Bridgton

We don’t have a good demographic online, but a type of handout that talks about Bridgton could work.

20 somethings that want to live in Bridgton but don’t know how to make money here.

What does a sustainable community look like?

Important to find what is sustainable and keep that

If that’s the market, what stats will appeal to new people?

How do we want the town to grow?

What are the nature of the businesses that would draw new residents? What kind of businesses would they want to start?

Own business, kayaking, own house, walk down to eat, wear blue jeans

What kind of business would I work for or work from?

We want a cross section, how to bring in young people?

Martha and husband moved here this summer, and found it difficult to find affordable rents or property to purchase.

Jana said that she and her husband have had a similar experience.

Jana says young people like her are priced out of Portland.

How do we help revitalize some areas of Bridgton?

That area may get better with streetscape

Home abandonment is one problem

A question of lifestyle and quality of life – What we are selling is a lifestyle, the natural environment, – as part of our economic lifestyle

Seasonal population

Entrepreuners

Non-profits/organizations

Affordable – Attractive alternative to Portland

Recreation

Agriculture

Evan – We need businesses for tax base

93% of taxes paid by residential

In town data base there is a lot of information

We need a 5-10 year plan

If a town doesn’t grow it’s going to die

What do we as a community want for the town?

Bridgton is becoming a “hot” place

How do we take that and feed it? We publicize it

Quality of life:

Locally grown food

Cool places to go and socialize

What do young people want for this town?

Affordable housing

1000 sq ft home $150,000 for house and land

Could it be done for less, maybe not as nice, but for a single person or young couple, maybe a little smaller could be done for $80,000?

Then we need jobs that are closer, or start remote businesses

Affordable housing is a struggle, profit, cost of mat, labor

No way to build a house cheap

Private/public housing is a creative set of units

Need for seasonal at service wage, or you find a group house, or a set aside for seasonal

Some towns have a housing czar.

Closest we have is CDBG funds, but that has not gone into housing in the past

Next meeting dates:

Oct. 18, Nov. 1, 15, 29, Dec. 13, 27

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Samuels