

**Board of Selectmen
Listening Tour
Rockport Village
October 11, 2012**

Select Board

William Chapman
Geoff Parker
Ken McKinley

Charlton Ames
Tracy Murphy
Robert Peabody, Town Manager

Public

Betsy Elwin
Bonnie Gibbons
Jan Baldwin
Bob Baldwin
Will Gartley
Melissa Sweet
David Jackson
Eliza Haselton
Vic Steinglass
Marsha Steinglass

Anne Kilham
David Barry
Art zur Muhlen
Joan Welch, Representative
Bill McClellan
Pat Messler
Larry Lehman
Doug Day
Mary Orear
Lynn Schoen

Mr. Parker opened the Listening Tour at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.

- A. Residents were reminded of the Tax Club. The voter approved tax club is paid in 12 monthly installments at no interest. Anyone interested should contact Town Clerk Linda Greenlaw.
- B. Any e-mail addresses listed will become public information.

What makes the Village so special?

- Beautiful views of the harbor, musical community
- Working waterfront is “exciting”
- Can walk and get to places
- Opportunity to exercise on trails and around the harbor
- “Moved here by chance” – nice thing was little son could walk down hill and catch the bus, likes her neighbors and likes to see lights
- Bay Chamber and MCCA

Has anyone noticed the changes in characteristics of neighborhoods?

- Almost no houses have lights in winter – glad children grew up in a time when there was more activity
- Older people choose to go somewhere warm in the winter
- Devastating with all the hedges along the road
- Love being in a sense of community where you could see people and talk

- “Many year round people when I moved here now I am about the only year-round person on Sea Street”
- Neighbors not very courteous – planting trees that block views, granite walls, leaving lights on all night, etc. “Totally wiped out the friendly aspect.” “Don’t know neighbors anymore.”
- “Thrilled with renovations to Shepard Block and Union Hall.”
- New sign in Mary Lea Park is “awful” and an “abomination”
- New fence at Mary Lea Park is “horrible” The fence at “just showed up one day” also the parking restrictions on Beauchamp Point Road. Residents did not have the opportunity to participate in a discussion.
- Concern with businesses that come in and abut private property

How to people feel about the balance of small/large business and would you like to see it go a particular way?

- Economic development in Rockport. Rockport “blessed” with considerable amount of companies: – Leuacadia, Rockport Marine, Yachting Solutions, Cellar Door Vineyard, etc.” Not sure if there is enough economic Development for Rockport.
- Flanked by neighboring town with formal economic development programs – Rockland, Camden, and Belfast. Wonder if Rockport can compete with other towns for economic development.
- Rockport may not want to adopt a formal program but should have a volunteer committee.
- Former RES member: “efforts went to no avail, not making decisions is not the way to go, put in two to three years with no results although the timing with the economy may have been bad.”

Was this a tremendous learning experience for the Town?

- It’s negative if we don’t do anything with that experience
- ‘Didn’t result in ... a lot of interesting ideas.’
- Coming in from Route 90, “RES is the perfect gate to Rockport”
- Summer Street has not been paved and sidewalks not plowed in the winter time.
- Need to develop parking.
- Restaurant takes all the downtown parking
- Move library to RES - draw people out of downtown
- Bay Chamber patrons park at the Post Office.
- Number of issues will take years to implement
- Immediately address parking matters
- Economic Development covers all of Rockport not just the Village
- Routes 1 and 90 are “prime” for development.
- Consider doing something with the commercial side of harbor – improving, paving/stripping it, boat storage in winter on boat club side
- Focus on things that improve life in village – need to fix up walking/biking paths – make attractive for year-round residents

Economic and Community Development

- It is unclear what Mr. Ford does. He writes grants, works with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, building permits, oversees Land Use Ordinance, etc. “Tom Ford does excellent job. He needs support of the Select Board and community.”

- Economic development responsibilities are shared by Mr. Ford and Mr. Peabody. They, along with Chairman Chapman, are involved with REDAC and CEDAC. Camden has a Director of Economic Development. Could Rockport work with Camden on economic issues?
- There are highly qualified people in Rockport who might be available to serve on an economic committee

Interaction with Town facilities and Town employees

- Library too small
- “Stand on top of Mt. Battie to sing the praises of the library staff”
- Library is “one of real gems of Rockport”
- Tremendous number of people would be upset to move library
- Definitely worth in-depth study moving library
- Consider what library will look like 5-10 yrs from now – might not be many books with technically – kindles
- Circulation and visitations at the library keep rising
- Don’t have to move present library – consider annex – move children’s library programs to RES
- Marine Park is “one of the most beautiful places in the world” but hard to see because of the trees. The park should be better maintained. Because of Shoreland Zoning rules, only a certain percentage of vegetation can be removed.
- Marine Park is a “good facility with competent staff”
- Where is the balance between the Town telling you what to do with you property vs. raising consciousness about being a good neighbor?
- Only one of the picnic tables at the Glen Cove Rest Stop has a view of the harbor. The State owns from Route 1 almost to the edge of the rest area road. The Town of Rockport owns the remainder of the site.
- Catamaran comes in several times daily but stays less than one hour
- Concern for pollution in harbor. The Planning Office and Conservation Commission tested the beach and other areas during the summer months.
- Be careful not to create erosion when removing vegetation
- There will be a Conservation Commission Workshop on December 6th at 7:00pm at the Opera House meeting room to discuss harbor issues.
- The Camden-Rockport Pathways Committee will clean up the Union Street Pathway on October 13th.
- Concerns about people parking in front of the Post Office. Very difficult to turn left onto Union Street from Summer Street. The cross walk should be restriped. Spoke with police chief regarding a three way stop as traffic calming measure.
- Public Works is “magnificent.”
- Speed limit on Union Street changes two to three times and is not clearly marked.
- The roadway by the Opera House is “confusing.” There is no defined direction on which way a vehicle should turn.
- A request to MDOT must be submitted for any change in speed limits.
- Select Board can make a formal request to meet with the Camden Select Board to deal with the speed limit. Rockport contacted Camden six years ago regarding this matter and their citizens said “no.”
- A resident did not know about the tax club. This is voted on yearly and is now on the tax bill.

- The Board was questioned on when the Town would accept on-line payments, credit cards or PayPal. Only two companies provide these services for municipalities and charge 3% to process each payment.
- When will voting issues be available for review on the Town website?
- “Enjoyable experience and glad to have an excuse to come to the Town Office”
- “Nothing but high marks for town administration.
- There is a situation with drugs in town – lot of traffic to harbor – vehicles stay a short time and leave
- Property in front of a resident was residential and was then sold to a businessman who expanded parking in the back. She can see the parking area from her property. Three days ago a refrigerator, half a refrigerator, a pool and boat arrived on the commercial site. The resident has tried working with the Town since January to resolve the matter. She is “totally astonished at the foot dragging that has been going on at the Town Office and with the Select Board.” She is an “extremely unhappy person.” Mr. Parker said it is not appropriate for the Select Board to individually address this issue and he cannot speak on behalf of the Board. All employees involved are “doing what can be done.” Mr. Ames questioned why the resident “doesn’t speak with the businessman herself. There seems to be more to the story than what is being said.”
- Permit parking on Beauchamp Point Road “adds to the exclusivity of Mechanic Street.” All but one house has a parking area. The Town Manager has received complaints for eight years in a row regarding the erratic parking on Beauchamp Point Road. Grandchildren in the area had close encounters with some of the vehicles. Emergency vehicles and plow trucks could not get through due to lack of access. Residents did not comply with parking only on one side of the road.

The Police Chief, Fire Chief, Town Manager and Charlton Ames visited the site again after the matter was brought up at a Select Board meeting at the beginning of the summer. The matter was thoroughly discussed at many Select Board meeting and a decision was made to institute the permit process.

- The street sign for Beauchamp Point Road and Chapel Road has been stolen. A resident was concerned emergency vehicles would have a difficult time find the road. Several signs keep disappearing in Town. They will be replaced.

Communication received the day after the meeting

- Occasional use of parking lots at Graffam’s and Rockport Marine for Opera House events. Arrangement and possible payment by Bay Chambers.
- Use of parking behind the Shepard Block and Union Hall. Better signage for parking areas.
- Use RES for Opera House events in a Park and Ride Share way
- Better signage for parking at Cramer Park
- Ticket Rockport Marine employees for using the harbor lot.
- Is the Town charging enough for boat storage? Clean up this area.
- Possible use of Megunticook Golf Course parking area for dog walkers, Beauchamp Point and the Children’s Chapel
- The Town needs to solve the parking problems. Address exact number of spaces needed, when and where.
- Resident “loves the dog poop bags and cans. And the grass planting on the median of the bike path.”

A recap meeting will be held on October 15th at the Rockport Opera House.

Mr. Parker thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Sainio
Recording Secretary