

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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MAINE PEOPLE SPEAK

**SUMMARY OF
REGIONAL PUBLIC HEARINGS OF
THE COMMISSION ON MAINE'S FUTURE**

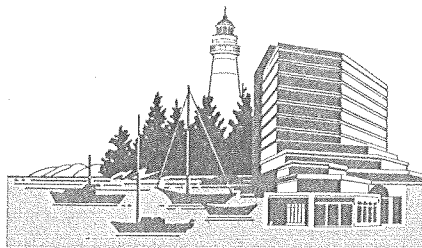
October 4 - November 15, 1988

February 1, 1989

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The Commission on Maine's Future

State Planning Office
State House Station 38
Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 289-3261

February 3, 1989

Dear Maine Legislator:

During October and November the Commission on Maine's Future held public hearings in seven locations throughout the state. Enclosed for your information is a brief summary of the issues and concerns raised by members of the public at those hearings.

The Commission is in the process of drafting its report to the Legislature and Governor following a year of research, public input and public opinion polling. In April, we will present a report which describes (1) the forces shaping Maine's future today, (2) a vision of a desirable future reflecting the values and priorities of Maine people and (3) strategies to achieve that vision.

We invite you to review the enclosed summary of the Commission's seven public hearings and would appreciate your thoughts on the issues raised as well as any comments you would like to share with Commission members on Maine's future.

Sincerely,

Annette Ross Anderson
Chair

ARA/hj

During October and November 1988, the Commission on Maine's Future conducted a series of seven public hearings across the State of Maine. The hearings were designed to provide the Commission with regional perspectives on the issues and aspirations important to Maine people as they look to their future. This summary presents an overview of those hearings, the common themes and regional differences encountered by the Commission as we traveled to Machias, Caribou, Rockland, Waterville, Bangor, Farmington, and Portland.

The following discussion is not --- and is not intended to be --- a substantive assessment of public attitudes on state policy issues. Rather it is a brief and, we hope, non-judgmental reporting of issues and concerns about Maine's future raised at the Commission's seven public hearings by those attending. Not surprisingly, the identification of issues facing Maine proved to be, throughout the hearing process, an easier task than identifying solutions. The testimony received at these hearings will assist the Commission as we complete our legislated mandate to identify trends shaping the state's future as well as to learn how Maine people view their future. The testimony, however, is only one component of the Commission's data collection process which will also include scientific public opinion surveys, expert research and testimony and extensive discussions with representatives of numerous community and government interests and organizations representing key aspects of Maine life.

The Format

Each hearing was conducted in two sessions. In the afternoon, the Commission met with an invited group of regional and community leaders in roundtable discussions. These "focus groups" were designed to tap views from the widest possible range of constituencies and to identify a broad base of regional issues. Participants included town managers and school superintendents, foresters and farmers, merchants and trade unionists, developers and entrepreneurs, representatives of the poor and elderly ... and more. (see Appendix A for a listing of participants and their affiliations).

During the evenings, the Commission held formal hearings open to all members of the general public. The hearings in each region were promoted through a variety of local media including newspaper and radio news releases, public service announcements, flyers and posters (See Appendix B for key media coverage of hearings).

The Issues

Despite clear regional differences, Maine people appear to hold a common view of life in Maine and the challenges of Maine tomorrow. Participants throughout the seven week hearing process identified thirteen basic issue areas. A "top tier" of six issues tended to dominate the discussions statewide while a lower tier of issue areas varied in importance among regions

Basic Issue Groups

First Tier Issues

Growth
Education
Economic Base
Resource Use
Regionalism
Workplace

Second Tier Issues

Transportation
Affordable Housing
Property Taxation
Health Care
Social Services
Waste Management
Aging Population

Growth

Not surprisingly, the general issue of "growth" was consistently among the top issues raised at all seven hearings with participants holding one of the following three positions:

One perspective favored no growth, in population or in economic development. Proponents of this view saw growth as environmentally and socially destructive, wasting natural resources, destroying traditional communities and undermining quality of life.

A second perspective viewed population growth with suspicion but accepted economic growth as a needed component of an improved quality of life for all Maine people. Proponents of this view seek slow, managed growth to minimize congestion, social dislocation and environmental damage. They want exhaustive research into the population carrying capacity of basic regional resources like water supplies, open space, roads and the unique, local sense of place in their communities.

A third perspective considered growth as an opportunity for economic, social and cultural development in Maine, provided that the process is sufficiently managed to preserve the quality of the state's natural environment.

Participants expressing each of these perspectives were found at all seven hearings although clearly the "no-growth" sentiment was strongest in areas currently experiencing significant development pressures such as Farmington, Portland and Machias.

Education

The second consistently high ranking issue area in all regions was education, topping the list at Bangor and Waterville, second among the issues at Portland, Farmington and Caribou, and important if not dominant at Machias and Rockland. Views expressed included concerns about the quality of schools and teachers, the time allowed teachers to do

their jobs, the level of illiteracy among high school graduates, the attitudes and aspirations of students and the continued viability of school financing based on the property tax. There was widespread concern that students without special abilities, special needs or college aspirations are being systematically neglected. Many participants felt that schools and teachers are overburdened by mandates to provide health, social and vocational services far beyond the "three R's" and viewed this as a fundamental problem interfering with educational quality.

The challenge to higher education was seen principally as one of continuing adaptation to the needs of older, "nontraditional" students, previously in the workforce or managing households, who will return to the university and VTI systems for advanced training and professional development or for retraining for a second or third career. Greater coordination among the university, the state's independent colleges and the VTI's was often emphasized as was the need for greater responsiveness by these institutions to changing student and business needs.

Participants agreed that the agenda for the 21st century should clearly emphasize the concept of life long learning. At all educational levels, closer links with business in areas of program planning, financing initiatives, quality control and guaranteed employment opportunities before and after graduation were considered important, particularly by participants in the northern and eastern regions.

Economic Base and The Workplace

Workplace issues were in the top tier statewide but received particular emphasis in the northern region. Participants noted two interconnected and important trends which are already shaping Maine's economic future: a shift to an information-based and service economy and the increasing presence of women in the workforce.

Participants at several hearings argued that the long term shift to an information-based and service economy, driven in part by demographics, technology and global competition, will require that Maine's workforce acquire the technical skills needed in the changing economy. They pointed out that, while more than 90 percent of Maine's labor force in the year 1995 is already in the workforce today, experts predict that 50 percent of their jobs will be phased out or restructured --- necessitating massive training and retraining initiatives.

Participants also noted that greater numbers of women entering the workforce during the next 20 years would continue to transform traditional patterns of work and increasingly create the need for more flexible work arrangements and support services such as adult and child day care.

Resource Use

Many participants in the Commission's regional hearings testified that Maine's rural character and the resource industries that symbolize rural life -- fishing, farming, and forestry -- are fundamental to our ideal vision of Maine and "quality of life." Even in Southern Maine the loss of an accessible rural land and recreational base has raised questions about the region's overall capacity to absorb further growth.

In the rural northern, eastern and western parts of the state where traditional resource industries are considered viable, strong sentiment was expressed for preserving

the rural way of life by focusing economic development on resource based products including nontraditional resource uses such as cranberry and aquaculture development, tourism, and biomass fuel harvesting. In Caribou and Machias there was considerable support for resource base diversification and secondary processing initiatives, tourism and recreational development. In the remaining rural pockets of central Maine, where the continued viability of traditional resource industries is in doubt, speakers advocated a protectionist strategy for the resources and infrastructures that support farming, fishing and forestry.

A more generalized strategy of environmental and resource protection was a common theme throughout the state, particularly with reference to water supplies and open space. Recreational access was important statewide. Speakers in Aroostook County warned that unlimited vehicular access would result in the destruction of wilderness areas while residents of central and western Maine advocated further development of rivers for recreational use. Forest practices, focused on clearcutting, received considerable attention not only in Farmington and Caribou but also in Rockland, Bangor and Portland. As with growth, positions were split between those who wished to ban the practice and others who saw the technique as useful if regulated under sustainable yield guidelines.

Regionalism

The need for improved regional management was cited as a top tier issue in each of the Commission's seven hearings. Participants cited weaknesses in the current county government system which, although the natural seat of regional government, is generally considered unequal to the task. It was pointed out that county lines no longer relate to economic or demographic regions making effective regional management improbable. Regional Planning Commissions, on the other hand, represent voluntary associations of towns and lack any governmental authority to raise revenue or to impose solutions.

Although there was no consensus among participants as to any specific regional restructuring, participants generally favored some new institutional arrangement which would incorporate natural and human resource management, inter-region coordination of economic and other development initiatives and improved regional data bases, information sharing and informational flows with state government. Concerns expressed about a new regional authority included the cost of staffing, as well as the perceived loss of local autonomy and personal freedom which might accompany more efficient regional management.

Regionalism appeared among the top five issue areas at Farmington and Machias and dominated discussion as the top issue in Portland. In Bangor, regional management was considered a low priority issue.

Second Tier Issues

Second tier issues, while given a lower priority statewide in hearing discussions, were often regionally important. Transportation related issues were in the regional top tiers at Farmington, Waterville and Rockland, while the burden and structure of the property tax system also reached into the top concerns at Farmington. This section reviews the second tier issues in order of their statewide ranking.

Top Issues By Region

<u>Farmington</u>	<u>Waterville</u>	<u>Bangor</u>	<u>Caribou</u>
Growth	Education	Education	Economic Base
Education	Workplace	Workplace	Education
Economic Base	Transportation	Resource Use	Resource Use
Resource Use	Resource Use	Growth	Workplace
Regionalism			
Property Tax			
Transportation			
	<u>Rockland</u>	<u>Machias</u>	<u>Portland</u>
	Growth	Growth	Regionalism
	Economic Base	Economic Base	Education
	Transportation	Resource Use	

Transportation

Transportation issues tended to be very specific and related to particular regional requirements. The premier role of good roads, and especially good four lane roads, in economic development was widely acknowledged. On this basis, the preponderance of sentiment in most of rural Maine favored improving key roads and economic corridors in their areas. A small constituency in western Maine also recognized that population growth also tends to follow good roads and, for that reason, saw highway improvement as a threat to the region's rural quality of life. Each region favored specific highway projects related to both present and future population and economic needs.

Other forms of transportation were also highlighted at individual hearings. A regional airport serving Augusta-Waterville was seen as essential for local economic growth. The preservation of the state's rail infrastructure and abandoned roadbeds drew comment at Waterville, Machias and Rockland. Development of efficient and flexible mass transit systems in the face of an aging population base was seen as essential for continued access to mobility in Rockland and Portland.

Affordable Housing

Participants at each hearing cited the lack of affordable housing as an outgrowth of reduced federal support for elderly and low-income housing as well as inflated land and housing values resulting from the state's unprecedented growth and land boom.

Suggested solutions generally followed the recently completed recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Affordable Housing that emphasize joint public-private housing ventures, density incentives to private builders and revenue sharing incentives to towns and the formation of non-profit community housing corporations. Land trusts were suggested in Portland, Rockland and Machias; speculation taxes on land in Machias and Farmington.

A number of other problems were included with affordable housing in some regions. In Portland and Machias, the focus was on affordable housing near the workplace -- within commuting distance in Portland and on the coast in Machias. In Rockland, the problem of displacement of long-time residents who cannot afford rising property taxes and the middle income elderly who may lose their independence after illness drew the most comment.

Property Taxation

Discussions focused on the property tax in all regions but were of particular concern in Farmington, Portland, Bangor and Rockland. While increasing demands for services and infrastructure expansions were seen as contributing to rising property taxes in growth towns, the state's role in exacerbating the problem drew considerable comment. A loss of local control over mill rates was seen as arising from the statewide redistribution of income from wealthier to poorer towns through the reduction of revenue sharing funds as town valuations rise. Unfunded state mandates for landfill closings and education reform were especially unpopular. The long term security of school financing was considered questionable in view of the increasing share of local budgets spent on the schools, the rate of increase in local tax bills and the aging of the Maine population.

Farmers and the elderly were cited as candidates for special property tax relief. A desire to shift a greater share of the total tax bill onto seasonal home owners surfaced in Farmington and Machias. A shift to user fees and a closer match between specific taxes and the services they fund had supporters in Portland and Bangor. Proposed solutions included local option taxes on incomes, retail sales and services, Homestead relief which cuts rates by half for primary residences while doubling the mill rate on all other property, and regional systems of tax and revenue sharing.

Health Care

Maine's health care system was described as fragmenting under the pressure of rising costs. Rural hospitals, long term nursing care and home health care were described as threatened with extinction under cost control programs of the State, the Federal Medicare system and private insurers.

Waste Management

Speakers throughout the state were concerned about the financial and environmental costs of solid waste disposal. Disposal costs may match education costs in municipal budgets by the 1990's, according to one estimate, implying a 60 to 70 percent increase in local revenue requirements. Testimony focused on long term solutions rather than the near term need for incineration and secure ash landfills. Source reduction and recycling were seen as the cheapest long run options, while the need for materials bans and the lack of recycling markets for up to 70 percent of the present waste stream were considered major obstacles to instituting these solutions. State leadership in identifying or even organizing recycling markets was believed to be essential.

Aging Population

The fundamental demographic shift in the age structure of the population was widely recognized throughout the state, but the scope of this shift may be so vast that few speakers were prepared to fully grasp the implications. While the need for an expanded health care system, twenty years out, was generally considered to be inevitable, the current problems of financing and reorganization within the system overshadowed longer term considerations. The emerging structural problem of more aging consumers and fewer young producers was also noted as a general trend to be monitored. The recognition that elderly people represent untapped resources within their communities rather than burdens may develop over time into increasing emphasis on improved quality of life for the elderly and the expansion of productive opportunities in retirement.

Structuring Solutions

The preceding discussion, not unlike the hearings themselves, has focused on issues, rather than solutions. Where strategies were offered, however, consistent themes emerged: Regions look to state government for the leadership functions of problem identification, guideline development, financing and technical assistance, but prefer to craft localized solutions unencumbered by top-down mandates and inflexible regulations. The preferred route to problem solving is by building on the capacity of local institutions with training, advice and financing, and turning to state level legislation only if local institutions fail.

Speakers throughout the state expressed a high opinion of public-private partnerships to achieve socially productive goals as well as an appreciation for purely private initiatives in areas like land trust formation, affordable housing development and educational improvement. The quality of leadership in Maine, however, brought equally widespread expressions of doubt. Leaders at all levels of government were considered unable to get out in front of difficult issues to generate support for action before problems become acute. Waste and growth management, education and property tax reform were all cited as having generated reactive solutions in a crisis atmosphere rather than proactive planning at times when a greater choice of options was available. A decline in citizen participation in self government was also cited although participants attributed the decline to increasing time pressures on the two-income family and the growing complexity of government rather than disinterest or disillusionment.

Conclusion

The preceding, as mentioned earlier, is a cursory summary of issues raised at seven public hearings throughout the state. The issues and accompanying implications are not examined in depth here and should be viewed accordingly. This report should, however, outline generally a commonality of themes across Maine as well as identify those issues unique to specific regions.

Appendix A

Focus Group Participants
in the
Regional Hearings
of the
Commission on Maine's Future

Machias

October 4, 1988

John Ahlin
University of Maine
Cooperative Extension Service

Sandra Prescott
Washington-Hancock
Community Agency

Jim Doyle
Eastport Port Authority

Tom Duym
Washington County VTI

Reinald Nielson
Whiting, Maine

Nick Greer
Washington County RPC

Ed Blackmore
Maine Lobstermen's Assn.

Ron Brand
UM Coop Extension Service

Fred Reynolds
U of Maine at Machias

Alan Brooks
Quoddy Region Land Trust

Brian Beal
U of Maine at Machias

Caribou

October 13, 1988

James Baressi
Northern Maine RPC

Robert Soucy
Fort Kent, Maine

Louis Bone
Town of Houlton

Tim Crowley
Northern Maine VTI

Dr. Wayne Mowatt
MSAD #24

Phil Sullivan
Irving Forest Products

Ray Hews
R.D. Hews & Assocaites

J. Paul LeBlanc
Maine Potato Board

Don Tardie
J. Paul Levesque & Sons

Brian Thibeau
Aroostook Co. Actoun Program

Stephen Farnum
Senior Spectrum

Lee Miles
Cary Medical Center

Dave Peterson
Aroostook Medical Center

Mitch Lansky
Wytopotlock, Maine

Rockland

October 20, 1988

Kathy Smith
City of Rockland

Pat Jennings
Eastern Midcoast RPC

Alan Fernald
Down East Magazine

Jack Williams, Sr.
Knox Semiconductor

Ron Philips
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.

Don Green
City of Rockland

Dana Totman
Coastal Economic Development

Don Grant
Town of Searsport

Douglas Fredericks
MSAD #5

Dawn Genes
Time and Tides RC&D

John Fosket
The Camden Conference

Bill Terry
Town of Montville

Capt. Stetson Hills
Maineport Council

Mike Bush
Eastern Me. Development Corp.

Chris Legore
UM Midcoast Learning Ctr.

Muriel Scott
Senior Spectrum

Chuck Baker
Coastal Transportation

Peter Wintle
Midcoast Human Resources Cncl.

Waterville

October 26, 1988

Mark Johnson
Fleet Bank

Duke Albanese
MSAD #47

Harry Faust
Waterville, Maine

Paul Mitchell
GHM Agency

Elery Keene
Northern Kennebec RPC

Barbara Woodlee
Kennebec Valley VTI

Charles Conley
Central Maine Labor Council

Ray Richard
Kennebec Valley CAP

David Bernier
City of Waterville

Richard Larochelle
Irving Tanning Co.

William Spolyar
Mid-Maine Medical Center

Joseph Ezhaya
Comm. on Waterville's Future

Frank Harding
Comm. on Waterville's Future

Ann Beverage
City of Waterville

William Cotter
Colby College

Rep. Ruth Joseph
Waterville, Maine

Debra Halm
Senior Spectrum

Andre Pied
Skowhegan High School

Paul Jacques
Waterville Housing Authority

Henry Magnuson
Paper Industry Information Office

Bangor

November 1, 1988

Gordon Manuel
Great Northern Paper Co.

Tom Sawyer
Sawyer Environmental Recovery

Robert W. Foster
R.H. Foster, Inc.

Jean Dieghan
Winslow Investment Co.

Robert W. Brandow
Eastern Maine Medical Center

William Beardsley
Husson College

Charles O'Leary
Maine AFL-CIO

Steve Thornburg
Eastern Maine VTI

Herb Gilsdorf
City of Ellsworth

Madeline Freeman
Eastern Maine Task Force on Aging

Edward McKeon
City of Bangor

Scotty Stowell
Bangor Chamber of Commerce

G. Clifton Eames
N.H. Bragg & Sons

Edward Barrett
City of Bangor

Marie Baker
Town of Hampden

Michael Aube
Eastern Maine Development Corp.

John Hauptman
Acadia National Park

Charpes Newton
Penquis CAP

John Hansen
UM Bureau of Labor Education

Farmington

November 10, 1988

James Bowse
Franklin Hospital

Dana Bradley
Town of Farmington

Warren Cook
Sugarloaf Mountain Corp.

John Durham
Franklin Savings Bank

John Jaworski
Androscoggin Valley COG

Preston Jordan
Town of Carrabassett

Bob Kimber
Town of Temple

Evelyn McAllister
Rangeley Chamber of Commerce

Tom McAllister
Saddleback Mountain

Eloise Moreau
Senior Spectrum

Peter Webber
Sugarloaf Mountain Corp.

Charles Noonan
Town of Jay

Rev. Scott Planting
Farmington, Maine

Dr. Lawson Rutherford
MSAD #9

Mark Sullivan
Western Mountains Alliance

Portland

November 15, 1988

Michael McGovern
Town of Cape Elizabeth

Katherine Buiteweg
Northeast Management

Roxane Cole
Ram Harnden, Inc.

Pamela Plumb
City of Portland

William Richards
Vision 2000

Fred Thompson
WCSH-TV

Paul Haskell
Alfred Shelter

Fred Nutter
WCSH-TV

David Sweet
Kennebunk-Wells Water District

Tom Wood
Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Appendix B

Press Coverage
of the
Regional Hearings
of the
Commission on Maine's Future

More Hearings Are Planned

Commission on Maine's Future Hears

ELLSWORTH, MAINE 04605

Thursday, October 13, 1988

Concerns from Downeast Residents

By Mary Anne Clancy

The University of Maine at Machias was the site of the first of seven regional public hearings by the Commission on Maine's Future Tuesday, as 10 of the commission's 40 members came to the Downeast area to hear from residents of Washington and Hancock counties.

The commission, which was established by the 113th Maine Legislature to "recommend a desirable and feasible description of the state's future," will also hold hearings in Caribou, Farmington, Waterville, Bangor, Portland, and Rockland before making its recommendations to the Governor and the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government following a second round of hearings next spring.

Tuesday evening's public hearing, which was attended by approximately 20 people, was preceded by an afternoon round table discussion with 11 selected representatives of Washington and Hancock counties and a tour of the Maine Wild Blueberry Company in Machias.

Those persons attending the round table included: John Ahlin of the Washington County Cooperative Extension Service; Sandra Prescott, director of the Washington-Hancock Community Agency; Jim Doyle, the director of the Eastport Port Authority; Tom Duym of the Washington County Vocational Technical Institute; Reinald Nielsen, who described himself as a professional citizen; Nick Greer of the Washington County Regional Planning Commission; Ed Blackmore, president of the Maine Lobstermen's Association; Ron Beard of the Hancock County Cooperative Extension Service; Dr. Fred Reynolds, president of UMM; Alan Brooks, executive director of the Quoddy Regional Land Trust (QRLT); and Brian Beal, the environmental resources coordinator at UMM.

Nancy Orr, Calais city manager and Pete Grant of the Down East Peat Company, were invited but were unable to attend the afternoon discussion.

Annette Ross Anderson, the chair of the commission, opened the discussion, commenting on the large number of calls the commission's statewide public television program broadcast the previous week had received.

"It was a 90-minute program with

experts speaking on the issues of education, the environment, and the quality of life in Maine," said Anderson. "We had five operators and the phones never stopped ringing. Responses and questions came from all over the state, predominantly from rural areas."

Panel members spoke of their concerns for the next two hours with commission members asking questions for clarification.

Although many concerns were identified, including the preservation of Maine's natural resources and the lack of public transportation and inadequate roads in Washington County, the major concern was the influx of growth and development and the impact of rising land prices on the native population.

"Local people can't compete with people from away," said WHCA's Prescott. "People are coming in here who sold their homes in Massachusetts for \$200,000 and they buy prime real estate here. Property values are going up and we can't plan locally because the members of the planning boards are volunteers. They don't have the technical information they need."

WCVT's Duym told the commission that the Marine Trades Center in Eastport is training people for jobs that pay \$6 to \$10 an hour and they can no longer afford to live on the coast where they work.

"They have to live 30 or 40 miles inland to be able to afford a rent," said Duym.

Commission member Eugene Churchill, a Hancock County commissioner, said his primary concern is housing for young people and the elderly and the solid waste problem.

Brooks, who said that his work with the year-old QRLT and his position as a paralegal at Pine Tree Legal Services gave him a binocular view, told the commission that the state has to look at affordable housing or "simply paper over the needs of low-income people."

"My weakest view of Washington County is dominated by three strips," said Brooks. "We'd have the wealthy along the coast on Route 1, waste dumps and other facilities on Route 9 and the low-income people out in the puckerbrush."

Brooks pushed for stronger state controls and a change in the property tax system, which he said, after revaluation, taxes property owners

because they are "potentially wealthy" when they are, in fact "landed poor."

WCRPC's Greer emphasized that land is not like "real property that can be written off the books."

"Once land use is determined, it sets patterns for years," said Greer. "We need broad-based education that zoning and land use plans are not something to be avoided. The University of Maine has no degrees in landscape design or planning."

Beard of the Cooperative Extension Service said that citizens need to be educated in decision-making and leadership skills if they are going to be able to take information in and work with others to process it.

"I work with a program called MDI Tomorrow, which is looking at these issues," he said. "MDI has four towns and Acadia National Park trying to work together and identify a consensus for the future."

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CMT

Eastport Port Authority's Doyle said that Eastport had several developers that had submitted the type of subdivision plans that Greer refers to as "sales maps" and the planning board, of which he is a member, told them to come back with other plans.

Doyle also spoke of Eastport's attempts to increase port business in Eastport and diversify shipping, but also manage the marine environment so that recreation, aquaculture and shipping could all coexist.

Blackmore of the Maine Lobstermen's Association said that commission members "might be surprised to see that I have education at the top of my list."

Characterizing Washington County as a "hard, hard county, where only the toughest can make it," Blackmore said he chose education because "you have to work harder and know more to succeed in Maine."

Blackmore also identified research, access to the water for

fishermen, protection of the environment, marketing, and involvement in local politics as necessary for Maine's success in the future.

"If you refuse to be involved in your town's government, you'll pick up the paper someday to find out about all the nice things people from away have done while you were busy working," he said.

The issue of town planning board inability to deal with accelerating development and the lack of code enforcement officers was one that was mentioned throughout the day.

"All we have, right now, is a few embattled people called planning boards who are pushed up against the wall handing out permits," said John Ahlin of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Another topic brought up during the afternoon and evening public session was the proposed incinerator ash dump in Washington County's Township 30.

Cathy Cook of Cherryfield told the commission that, although she had originally started out "arguing with people here that the Department of Environmental Protection is on our side," she believes as a result of her participation in the process that it is "Washington County versus the State of Maine."

"If the State of Maine decides the solution to the state's solid waste problem is Washington County, then it's insurrection time," said Cook. "All we've got here is our environment."

State Rep. James R. Coles (D-Harpswell), a commission member, is also a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and was a member of the study committee that developed the state plan that calls for

61 percent of Maine's solid waste to be incinerated by 1990.

Township 30 is the proposed repository for the incinerator ash

from the Maine Energy Recovery Company (MERC) incinerator in Biddeford and the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) incinerator in Orrington, which have contracts to incinerate solid waste from more than 100 Maine towns.

As Coles attempted to explain that, if Washington County benefits from certain statewide programs, it must contribute to statewide efforts, Eastport's Doyle, answered him.

"I think we're interested in a redistribution of cash rather than a redistribution of ash," said Doyle. "This administration pledged to help us out of being the second Maine and now we're looking at being number three."

Doyle went on to say that Washington County has: several hundred miles of the worst roads in the state; no transportation for poor people; had received \$2 million for port development while the mid-coast had received \$30 million; and that the county's airports are so bad that last thing Nate Bowditch, the commissioner of economic and community development, had done before flying out of the area last week after the Governor's "Capital for a Day" program had been to ask how much money Eastport needed to improve it's runway.

"The only time we see state officials down here is during dog and pony shows," said Doyle. "This region has a resource-based economy, not a service economy, and it takes an enormous amount of land

and water to support the same type of social and cultural environment that people have been used to at a wage they've never been used to."

The strong reaction that the proposed ash landfill inspires in Washington County was also expressed during the evening session.

John Pike Grady of Eastport, who mentioned runaway real estate as a major problem, and said that the county is just beginning to be able to offer jobs to keep young people from leaving in order to find employment, told the commission that Washington County would not accept the dump.

"When we're finally crawling up here, don't do this to us," he said. "We will not become the dumping ground for Maine or the Northeast. The problems with MERC and PERC are all over the papers. This is not political. We won't let you do this to us, ladies and gentlemen."

Much of what was said at the evening session corresponded with problems mentioned earlier.

Jane Hinson of Machias, after mentioning a need for research and development into the secondary development of natural resources and the danger of Route 9, asked who on the 40-member commission, with the exception of Richard Burgess of Machias, is a Washington County resident.

Burgess said he is the only one and Anderson explained that 20 of the members had been appointed by the Governor and 20 by the Legislature.

"I'd like to make a recommendation that when boards and committees are formed, please make an effort to get representatives from all parts of the state," said Hinson.

Much of the evening session was devoted to concerns with the state's role in preserving coastal access and the state's resources for native Mainers. After approximately two hours, a woman rose and told the commission that she and her husband, who had been sitting quietly throughout the discussion, were "from away."

"We've been afraid to speak because we're from away," she said. "We've been coming to Maine for vacations for 13 years from Indiana and we just purchased land on Campobello. I'd like to suggest that you determine how best you can utilize people from away. We'd do much more for Maine than we'd do for Indiana."

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CARIBOU, MAINE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1988

Education, environment top residents'

by Liz Chapman

Maine's future must include quality education, job retraining and a safe, clean environment, Aroostook County residents and officials told the Commission on Maine's Future Thursday during two meetings at the Caribou Motor Inn.

In one of seven statewide stops, commission members heard testimony from a cross-section of northern Maine's population. An afternoon session was attended by a variety of municipal and industry leaders representing interests as varied as health care and the elderly, agriculture and organized labor.

An evening session, opened to the general public, was sparsely attended, but lasted three hours as commission members asked questions and sought advice from the audience.

"Our task is to develop a vision or series of visions for Maine's future that reflects the priorities and values of Maine citizens," said Annette Ross Anderson, chairman of the commis-

sion, "and to develop strategies to get from there to here."

"If we don't plan for the future, we'll end up inheriting it," she said. "We want to make sure Aroostook County is what we want it to be 15 to 20 years from now."

Anderson said the commission was not formed to solve today's problem, but to "try to prevent problems in the future."

Quality education

Education was on a lot of people's mind during the afternoon session. Tied into the discussion was job training and retraining for all sectors of society. The lack of graduate programs in northern Maine was noted by Paula Fowler-Kilby of the University of Maine-Presque Isle, who said the public needs to be educated on the importance of quality education at every level.

Tim Crowley of the Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute predicted "the technologies is where our growth will come from," adding,

"but we need people with skills to fill the jobs."

Wayne Mowatt, SAD 24 superintendent, said, "Our children are our future. Education is the key building block for the future."

Mowatt told the commission he believes education leaders "have done a very, very poor job planning for the future. We've been looking in the rear mirror and not out the window."

The executive director of the Aroostook Area Agency on Aging said retraining programs should be especially targeted to older citizens. He said that as the population ages, elderly people will play "a vital role" in the future labor force.

"The vast majority of (today's) 60- to 65-year-olds are going to be with us in 20 years," Farnham said. "...There should be retraining, especially for the elderly, those approaching retirement age, and a fundamental change in attitude about how we look at the elderly."

The director added that the "vast

THIRTY-SIX PAGES

PRICE 50 CENTS

concerns about future

majority" of elderly citizens are not a problem. "They're a resource."

Dwight Stickle of Caribou, a veteran industrial arts teacher for the Fort Fairfield school system, spoke during the evening hearing about a reduced work ethic in today's students. "The work ethic is lower than 15 or 20 years ago. The generation of parents that are sending their children to school have a work ethic, but the students don't have it themselves," he said.

"That has to be turned around with education and community," he continued. "Attitude is the problem. It's not a mental problem."

Quality of life

Some people expressed fear that the quality of life in Aroostook County could be compromised in the future if the region's natural resources and environment are exploited.

Citizens agreed northern Maine needs continued business growth, but not an avalanche that would bury the beauty and quality of the land and waters.

"Our quality of life is something we could lose if we don't control our destiny," offered Maine Public Service Co. Vice President Fred Bustard. On the environment he said, "There is a limited impact we can have on the environment. We have to limit that impact."

Education leaders "have done a very, very poor job in planning for the future. We've been looking in the rear mirror and not out the window."

State Sen. Donald F. Collins of Caribou, addressing the commission during the Bate session, noted that the city of Portland was named in a study released Thursday as one of the top 100 "most stressful" cities in America.

"I don't think northern Maine is anxious to be identified as a stressful place to live," he said.

Another citizen offered, "The

pressures in southern Maine are not pressures we want here."

Economic development

Fowler-Kilby of UMPI said education and business should continue working together for economic development. She cited the university's new economic development

center as a resource that will link educational institutions with developers as the need for skilled workers becomes even more pressing in the future.

Ray Hews, a Presque Isle business and agriculture consultant, said there is a "continued move" for business to move to northern Maine, "but lack of labor will be a problem."

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Commission warned supply of clean water not unlimited

Resident says county needs better roads in the future

By Diana Graettinger
Down East Bureau

MACHIAS — Twenty residents who attended a public hearing Tuesday sponsored by the Commission on Maine's Future discussed several key issues — unbridled development, bad roads and an ash landfill — that they believed would have an impact on Washington County and Maine in the next 20 years. The public hearing was the first of seven regional public hearings to be held in Maine.

"We are here to gather information and to ask each of you to help develop a vision or series of visions for Maine's future that really reflects the values, priorities and expectations of Maine's people," said Annette Ross Anderson, chairman of the Commission on Maine's Future.

The commission was established in 1987 by the 113th Maine Legislature to "recommend a desirable and feasible description of the state's future, including an integrated and progressive plan for reaching the goals contained in that description."

In a prepared release, the commission said it had several questions that were "fundamental to the development of a long-term vision and strategic plan for Maine."

- What do we cherish most about Maine and wish to preserve? What would we change?
- What is the collective vision of Maine people for our state's future?
- What trends or events enhance or threaten this vision?
- What is our individual and collective capacity to anticipate and respond to change?
- How might we enhance our capacity to manage change and shape the future?

"Technological advances and a rapidly changing economic and social order in Maine are profoundly affecting every aspect of life in our state. Understanding how these trends will affect ourselves, our families and our institutions is critical if we wish to preserve what is uniquely Maine while seeking the most secure and prosperous future possible for all our citizens," the release stated.

Nathan Pennell, director of the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District, told the commission that clean water and planned growth were critical to Washington County's future. "There

are some things we are going to have to do very quickly if we are going to have a future here in Maine. We are going to have to identify some of those resources which we depend upon so desperately for our income and our economy, and we are going to have to protect them so that we can continue with the economic boom that we have."

Pennell said that many people believed that there was an unlimited supply of clean water in Washington County. He said that although there was an abundant supply of clean water, it was not unlimited and the only way to protect it was a statewide

plan of protection.

The director said that the county would need help from its neighbors in the southern and central half of the state to protect a large aquifer in western Washington County. He said that it was not logical to turn Washington County into a large dumping ground for ash from a waste incinerator in Orrington and jeopardize the future of the county's clean water.

Last year, Penobscot Energy Recovery Facility of Orrington sought approval from the Department of Environmental Protection to construct a landfill in Township 30 to be used as a disposal site for ash produced when trash was burned at PERF's Orrington facility. Pennell has been vocal in his opposition to the proposed landfill because of the potential adverse impact on the county's clean water.

Opponents of the proposed secure landfill have maintained that the site of the landfill is adjacent to the Mopang aquifer, a water source that feeds into the Machias river.

Henry Dowling of Whitneyville

said that the roads in Washington County were a statewide embarrassment. "Our roads in Washington County date back to the 1940s, not the 1980s." The Maine Highway Department comes along and lays just an inch or 2 of hot top and thinks it will take care of the trucks. ... The reason we don't have a lot of income coming into Washington County is because businesses won't come here because of our roads. ... Route 9 is an example of a poor road. Number 9 is a trucking route, and if you dare to drive on it, you might make it to Bangor," he said.

Other key issues identified at the public hearing were unbridled development, escalating land costs, affordable housing and the cost-effectiveness of public education.

Anderson said that the commission would take the information gathered at its seven regional public hearings, develop some strategies and present those strategies on the state's future to the public, the governor and the Legislature sometime next year.

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October 15, 1988

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Residents' concerns for future run the gamut

By Gloria Flannery
Central Aroostook Bureau

Aroostook

CARIBOU — The training and re-training of residents in Aroostook County to prepare them for future jobs, economic growth, the protection of natural resources, transportation, recreation and tourism were concerns expressed during sessions held in Caribou by the Commission on Maine's Future.

A dozen commission representa-

tives heard testimony from Caribou High School pupils, community leaders and the public about their visions for the county in the next 20 years. The 40-member commission was created by the Maine Legislature in 1987.

The Caribou meetings were second in a series of seven to be held throughout the state to solicit region-

al views of priorities, expectations and values for the future.

Annette Anderson, chairman of the commission, said that every region deserves the opportunity to prosper in the years ahead and the commission wanted to see that Aroostook County is not excluded.

Aroostook County commission members are James Carter of Washburn, Rep. Carolyn Mahany of Easton and Roland Burns of Fort Kent.

A majority of the high school pu-

pils who spoke said they planned to leave the area after graduation but would stay if high-paying jobs and more leisure and recreation activities were available.

At a roundtable discussion of community leaders in business, education, agriculture and health care, concerns focused on the mechanics of basic training for job skills and funding for education programs that would bring it about. Participants

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Commission On Maine's Future Meets tonight

A state committee studying the path Maine should take in the future is scheduled for 6 p.m. (Thursday) at the Rockland Community Building.

The meeting of the Commission on Maine's Future is holding the public hearing to gain opinions from residents on a wide range of issues.

Of particular interest is Mid-coast residents' opinions about the impact tourism and population increases have had on natural resource industries such as fishing, commission Chairwoman Annette Ross Anderson stated in a news release.

Route 1 traffic and the islands' future are also expected to be topics raised, she predicted.

During the afternoon, the commission will meet informally with regional transportation planners, economic development officials, human services representatives, fisheries representatives and other community leaders.

"Most important, however, is the vision that Maine residents have for our state 20 years from now," the chairwoman stated.

This is the third in a series of seven public hearings conducted across the state.

The community building, also known as recreation center, is located at the intersection of Union and Limerock streets.

Concerns for future run the gamut

● from page 1

said schools and businesses as well as management and labor need to work closely together for economic growth; institutional competition for the same available funding may be a problem.

At the public hearing Thursday evening, participants talked about balancing a need for economic growth without losing the "flavor of rural Aroostook County with its traditional values." Conscious and comprehensive planning toward that end was needed, commission members said.

A major highway extending to the northern part of the county and an east-west highway would help improve tourism and commerce, residents said.

Concerns also were raised about the lack of skilled workers for local businesses, the high cost of doing business for small and medium-sized enterprises and preservation of northern Maine forests.

Fears were expressed about commercial clearcutting practices that damage watershed basins and a perceived overcutting of Maine's forests to fuel six proposed

wood-to-energy plants.

A free trade agreement was seen as a significant disadvantage to northern Maine in the forestry and agriculture sectors.

The commission plans to hold another round of meetings to receive public input in the seven regions before making final recommendations to the Legislature in the fall of 1989.

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Future

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During the evening meeting, businessman David Donovan told the commission that lack of workers is already a problem. He said his firm has raised the starting wage for one position by \$2 per hour. A recent comprehensive ad campaign generated only two resumes, he said.

"We have a real need for skilled labor," Donovan said. "Business is great; we're experiencing real gains, but we have a real problem competing for skilled labor."

He hinted that perhaps the state could subsidize small and medium-sized businesses' payroll as a way of recruiting workers without forcing businesses into bankruptcy.

Frustration over a shortage of workers is not a new theme. Business leaders last year testified in Presque Isle before the Governor's Task Force on Economic Development that while northern Maine's unemployment rate

is high compared with southern and coastal regions, there remains a need for trained workers and others who want to be trained.

Sen. Collins offered during his evening testimony, "We need to train people today for the jobs of tomorrow, not the jobs that were available yesterday."

James A. Barresi, executive director of the Northern Maine Regional Planning Commission, predicted "a very, very bright future for northern Maine." He noted the six proposed wood-fired electricity plants, two proposed pulp mills, a potential vegetable oil factory and the commission's proposed east-west highway as possible future benefits for Aroostook County.

He lamented the number of people in the area who are unwilling to invest in northern Maine, using the oil factory as an example of what could happen if people were willing to "take the risk."

Sen. Collins also addressed economic development and the fiscal

blow that would result from closing Loring Air Force Base. He said he is hopeful the Pentagon will continue to view Loring as "a justifiable base," but that any planning for the future would be greatly impacted by a base closure.

He said mining is a "distinct possibility" for Aroostook County within the next two years, but expressed concern over the proposed wood-fired plants.

The wood-fired proposal disturbs me a little bit. I'm not sure that's a

good utilization of our resources," Collins, a lumber company owner, said. "I really don't think it's going to happen, but if it were, I think we'd be cutting down trees to build fires."

The Commission on Maine's Future was established by the Legislature last year. It will report to lawmakers in January on its findings and plans of action.

Serving on the commission from Aroostook County are state Rep. Carolyn Mahaney, D-Easton; James F. Carter of Washburn and Dr. Roland Burns of Fort Kent.

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Concerns Aired For State Commission Studying Maine Future

by Stephen Betts
Staff Writer

The Midcoast is an area steeped in natural beauty but experiencing a growing crisis in health care and affordable housing, especially for its elderly.

Such was the picture painted for the Commission on Maine's Future during a public hearing held Thursday evening at the Rockland Community Building. Fifteen people attended at various times during the evening.

The committee was formed in 1987 at the direction of the Maine State Legislature and consists of 40 members from the private and public sector. The committee is scheduled to present a report to the Legislature next year on the direction Maine should take and offer strategies to reach those goals.

The Rockland hearing was the third of seven to be held across the state.

The growing shortage of affordable health care and housing dominated the first 90 minutes of the hearing as representatives of the elderly addressed the eight commission members in attendance.

Joyce Champlin, a former Rockland City Councilor and now a member of the Retired Senior Volunteers, said the elderly are facing problems in paying for their property taxes.

Champlin noted that a revaluation of Rockland properties was recently completed and taxes are rising.

"Some are going to have a hard time paying," Champlin noted.

Eunice Anderson, director of the Retired Senior Volunteers, said many elderly people now face homelessness because of the taxes brought on by skyrocketing land prices.

She said a flexible tax base is needed for property owners over 60 years old.

Peggy Haynes, executive director for the Methodist Conference Home, cited a shortage of housing for the elderly and stressed that current guidelines for congregate housing projects like the Methodist Home limit residents to the very low income. Haynes said those people who "did all the right things" by saving for retirement are not eligible because their incomes are slightly too high yet they need the minimal services, such as housekeeping, that are offered in the congregate setting.

Haynes said the Methodist Home regularly turns away people strictly for reasons of income eligibility. In addition, the Home has a waiting list for eligible people.

She also warned about the health care crunch that has developed.

"Patients are being discharged quicker and sicker," Haynes said.

She said this situation has developed because hospitals such as Penobscot Bay Medical Center limit their in-patient services to acute care and those who need a few extra days "to get on their feet" are discharged. Haynes said there is often no place for these people to get the care they need.

(Continued on Page Two)

Concerns Aired

(Continued from Page One)

She said the home health care services are being used to their limit.

"It's a real crisis and its frightening," she said. "People are going home without the support services in place."

A staff member for the Commission noted that the two areas of concern cited by the people, health care and housing, are two that used to be more heavily covered by the federal government.

Commission on Maine's Future hears housing, taxation concerns

By Ted Sylvester
Midcoast Bureau

ROCKLAND — Affordable housing and health care for the elderly were major issues discussed Thursday night at a public hearing conducted by the Commission on Maine's Future. The hearing was the third in seven to be conducted by the commission in preparation of compiling a report to be submitted to the legislature early next year.

Annette Ross Anderson, chairman, said the role of the commission was to identify visions for the future that reflect the priorities and values of Maine people and to identify the issues that already were shaping the future.

The 14 attending the Thursday hearing including a couple who had moved to Round Pond from Massachusetts, a former resident who attended from Westbrook to make recommendations, the first selectman from Unity, and several local area people.

The overwhelming mood of the group was that increased land values were forcing people to sell their homes, and that rising health care costs were preventing some elderly from getting adequate care, especially after being discharged from the hospital.

Emmie Anderson, project director of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program in Knox County, told the commission that, "A great many of our elderly will be the homeless of the future. Skyrocketing land costs are forcing people out of their homes." She advocated that a flexible tax base for those older than 60 be established. Otherwise some elderly residents will be unable to keep their homes.

Anderson said that the just-completed property valuations in Rockland had driven up land values, in some cases, to more than 200 percent of previous values.

Joyce Champlin, also a volunteer worker, said that high taxes and high health costs were of major concern to the elderly. She said the news that

the hospital (Penobscot Bay Medical Center) would have to let people go because of high costs was of concern. She said many elderly believe that health care will be more difficult to get.

"The elderly should be considered when we look to the future," Champlin said.

Peggy Haynes, executive director of the Methodist Home, explained the dilemma facing many elderly with moderate incomes. She said there was sufficient housing in the city for low-income elderly, but for the middle income, "who do everything right," this housing is unavailable to them because of mandated income guidelines. People who work all their lives, save money and built a retirement fund, are unable to find affordable housing when they sell their homes, she said.

Haynes said that the Methodist Home was currently investigating the possibility of developing housing targeted for the middle-income elderly. But, she said, that with construction costs about \$60,000 per unit, many would be unable to afford to purchase such a unit when coupled with service fees and expenses.

An indication of how the elderly population was growing in the area, Haynes reported that the Meals on Wheels program had experienced a 47-percent increase in requests for meals in one year. She said many of those elderly were living alone and many times, unable to suitably care for themselves. Especially affected are those who are discharged from hospitals when they no longer require acute care, but who still are unable to care for themselves.

G. Merrill Thomas of Westbrook, formerly of Rockland, presented a detailed written report to the commission on his views on the problems and trends for the future. He recommended against development of railroads because trucks could transport cargo for half the price. He warned against the continued proliferation and control of major industries and commercial entities in Maine from outside interests. He

mentioned that the Dragon Cement Co. at Thomaston was recently purchased by a consortium from Spain. Many banks, he said, were controlled by out-of-state interests.

An approach worth pursuing, Thomas said, would be the location of a cargo-only airport within Maine. He suggested that Loring Air Force Base at Limestone be converted to a combination military-civilian cargo airfield. Loring, he said, was within seven hours flying time from major points in Europe. He pointed to a Miami-based cargo-only airport in Miami, Fla., that was growing in cargo volume by 8 to 10 percent a year.

Eleanor Ward, first selectwoman from Unity, pointed out the difficulties of a small town trying to cope with government regulations and still serve the needs of the people. She said that the elderly in her town were "too proud" to ask for help. She said that the biggest problem in Waldo County was jobs.

She also blasted the favorite whipping boy of most public officials, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. She complained that regulations being imposed was placing a burden on taxpayers. It will cost up to \$200,000 to close the town's landfill, she said.

"They won't let us burn it. We used to take care of two other towns when we could burn and we didn't have any trouble," she said.

Rep. James Coles, D-Harpswell, a member of the commission, informed Ward that the DEP was responsible for paying the closeout costs, and that the town was eligible for reimbursement of any costs associated with that closing.

Ward said she had tried to get help but was told there was no money available. Coles offered to help the selectman deal with the state DEP.

Anderson-Ross said that during the afternoon Thursday, the commission met with several local area municipal officials and agency heads. The big issue with them also was affordable housing, she said. Other topics discussed included energy needs and transportation.

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Gerry Boyle



An honest crystal ball

It's been 11 years since a Commission on Maine's Future got together in Waterville to hash over things and you can bet there will be plenty to talk about when the commissioners roll up their sleeves at the Muskie Center Wednesday.

A sort of mobile think tank is coming to town and an influential one it is, with political heavies, planners, legislators, lobbyists and Waterville Mayor and Sen. Judy C. Kany on board, but that doesn't mean the public isn't invited to jump right in.

The idea is to talk about what might happen in the future, what you want to happen, and how you want to make it happen. This is no small task, and those of us who have trouble predicting what's for breakfast might gulp once or twice when asked to tackle issues like Maine's aging population and "increased traffic congestion and degradation of critical resource areas."

Well, it can be done. In fact, it was, Jan. 8, 1977.

Immediately following the opening remarks by Mayor Carey, Ms. Kany requested the full assembly to divide itself into four morning subgroups. She informed the participants that they were free to join the group of their choice. Each participant in the subgroups was asked to respond by questionnaire to the probability and desirability of 20 possible future events that might transpire in the Greater Waterville Area by the year 2000.

Last year, the Legislature established another Commission on Maine's Future to get a handle on how we all want the state to be in the 21st century. The Waterville Future's Day is one of as many as eight such days to be held in coming weeks.

The idea is to get a feel for what the general public thinks is important, presumably to avoid misunderstandings and end up with a future that is not what people wanted at all.

Event One: The state and private business will enter into a cooperative partnership for economic development.

In response to this potential future event the respondents felt that this was both a desirable and probable future event. More than half the group found it desirable, while sixty percent thought it to be probable. However more than two-thirds of the political subgroup and three fourths of the social life subgroup found the event to be desirable.

If anybody can get a handle on the future and preserve The Quality of Life, these hand-picked experts can. To help them do that, the Commission on Waterville's Future will take the Commission on Maine's Future to the railroad yard, then it's on to the Two-cent Toll Bridge and Fort Halifax for more talk about The Quality of Life, presumably as it relates to the Kennebec River.

Event Five: Waterville will increase the number of services for tourists, attracting more summer visitors to the area.

The tourist industry in the Greater Waterville area is one of the larger industries. The Oakland-Belgrade-Lakes region attracts thousands of vacationers each summer. Residents found this future event to be both desirable and probable. However, it was emphasized that the increase in tourists should not contribute to the ruination of the more beautiful areas in the state.

Understand that these are the best and the brightest, which is why they might want to consider the following problem.

The problem involves a 65-year-old Winslow woman who is scheduled to appear today at Waterville District Court, across from the Two-cent Toll Bridge stop on The Quality of Life tour.

Juanita Peters is charged with criminal trespass, stemming from her eviction from a trailer park in Winslow, which is a long story that took place over a period of several months. She was arrested after she went back to her trailer when she'd been ordered not to, police say.

Today at 9 a.m. Peters will appear to plead not guilty and get a court-appointed lawyer. She hopes she'll be able to tell the judge her side of a long story that has a lot to do with the fact that she has nine cats that she won't give up.

For more than two months, Peters has lived with her cats in an unheated garage offered by an elderly couple on the Cushman Road.

Peters sleeps on a lawn chair with a trouble light attached to it, with cans of motor oil and tools pushed to one side to make room. She wears gray plastic winter boots, green woodsman's pants, sweaters and shirts, and an old London Fog raincoat liner.

At night, as early as 5:30 p.m. these days, the burly gray-haired Peters puts a hood over her head and climbs into bed because the sleeping bag, with the cats piled on, is the only warm place.

There is no heat at all and the temperature in the garage has dropped to 20 degrees.

"Don't think I don't cry at night because I do," Peters said, turning toward nearby houses. "I see those chimneys and I'm in here."

A lot of people have tried to help Juanita Peters over the past two months. The elderly owner of the garage has driven hundreds of miles looking for a trailer lot. Along with the Winslow police, a state social worker has gotten involved and there is housing available, but not for a strong-willed old woman with nine cats.

In the meantime, the nights get colder and colder.

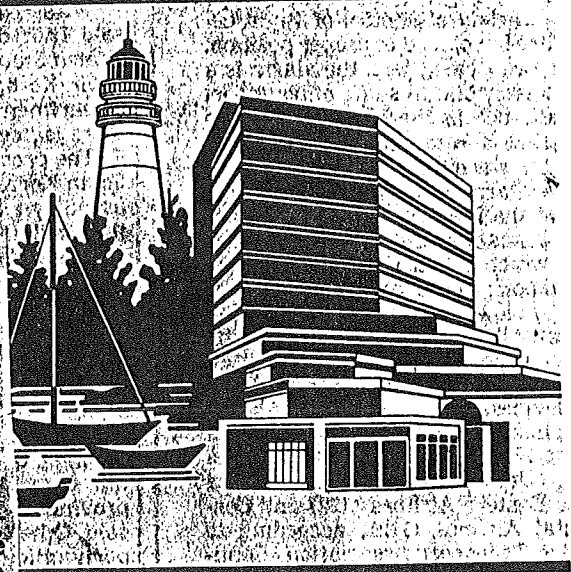
So what's the answer?

It's a tough question but maybe the Commission on Maine's Future could think about it, even just for a few minutes after dinner, maybe over coffee.

They might even consider the fact that for some people the Quality of Life isn't worth preserving, no matter how nice the view from the Two-cent Footbridge, that you can't look at the future without honestly facing the present.

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The Commission on Maine's Future



Editorial

MS-10/2/88

It's time to speak out for a better Maine future

The Commission on Maine's Future will be meeting at the Muskie Center Wednesday, Oct. 26, from 6-9 p.m. and is virtually pleading with the public to show up and speak out.

The Commission seeks to identify issues, problems and opportunities facing the state over the next 20 years and figure out how to handle them.

Anyone concerned with public affairs should have no problem coming up with a short list of concerns, as in the following:

- Solid waste disposal. Not only does Maine have a problem with what to do with its own garbage, every night the out-of-staters keep trucking it into places like Norridgewock.

- Affordable housing. Waterville stands as a prime example of a creeping crisis. When the Hudson's Modern Apartments were closed, the best the city could do was place tenants in motels. One source estimates the state is losing 6,000 low income units annually to high priced development and "condominiumization" of existing units. There simply are fewer places for people of modest means to live.

- Water quality. In Greater Waterville, the China Lake potable source is getting worse, suggesting the need for a multi-million dollar filtration plant, new wells or both. That may be the tip of the iceberg as the waste disposal solutions help pollute the aquifers.

- Diminishing forest reserves. It doesn't seem possible out there in the woods, but the state's forest products industries are running out of trees. They eat them faster than they can grow.

- Prison and jail space. Better enforcement and tougher laws

have resulted from public demands. The population of the state has grown nearly a quarter million people in three decades. The state prison system and nearly every county jailer now faces a continuing problem of how and where to house offenders.

- Upgrading the university system. There is an absolute, undeniable connection between the quality of a state's higher education system and the prosperity and quality of life of its citizens. Bad politics and poor administration have hampered the Maine cause. Only recently has the University system demonstrated the will to recover. If it wants to lead, the people should be prepared to follow.

- Upgrading the infrastructure. Away from the interstate and the Turnpike, Maine's roads and bridges are better suited for the 1950s than the 1990s. Route 1 has become one long Main Street which every summer resembles a California freeway, unmoving. There still is no good way to motor east and west in this state — nor in New Hampshire and Vermont, for that matter. With a 200,000 population growth in the past 30 years, we haven't built a major highway since the Turnpike.

- A practical, enforceable loan program for Maine students. The prime reason many bright high school graduates don't go to college is simply because they cannot afford it. Between tax credits and bond programs, this problem ought to be solvable.

As we said, this is a short list. We hope the public will take advantage of the Commission's availability and willingness to listen. A little salesmanship from people with ideas never hurt any government.

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Bangor Daily News

A. Mark Woodward, Editorial Page Editor
 Dan Namowitz, Assistant Editor
 Richard R. Shaw, Editorial Page Assistant

491 Main St.
 Bangor, Maine 04401
 Tel. (207) 942-4881

Editorials

A futuristic dilemma

Citizen participation in public decision-making makes the world go round. But just as a commission studying Maine's future is concluding that more volunteer service will be needed if Maine is to meet its future challenges, some indicators show the art of civic volunteering in decline.

The Commission on Maine's Future has held a series of hearings around Maine for its report on the state's challenge of the next 20 years. With local growth-control measures on the fast-track, the state tax structure sick, landfills full, and personal career paths in flux, a clear message, says commission spokesman Annette R. Anderson, is that "the individual must participate more" in Maine's public decision-making process.

Unfortunately, as that need grows, so does the burn-out rate among prospective participants: such as working parents, double-income families, and busy professionals all struggling to cope with the pressure-cooker world.

The problem can be clearly seen at the State House. Both parties had recruitment problems for 1988 legislative races. In the Maine House of Representatives, 19 incumbent legislators — 13 Republicans and six Democrats — declined to seek re-election in 1988. That's six more lawmakers than declined to seek a new term two years ago. For the Republicans, the number doubled from two years ago.

In 31 races, a candidate faced no opposition, up from only 17 uncontested races in 1986. And among the surprise retirements from the Legislature this year were both the House majority and minority leaders, Democrat John Diamond of Bangor and Republican Thomas Murphy of Kennebunk, two men considered bright future lights on the state political scene.

"Time demands are the biggest problem," said a local lawmaker. "It's a full-time job that pays part-time."

Such a view of legislative service may help explain why, on both sides of the aisle, "there's a reluctance on the part of well-qualified people to make the commitment."

Licking that problem may be one of the most challenging tasks for the future, on the state and local level.

But make no mistake — the issue is time, not money! Compensation for House members is \$9,900 for the first year of a two-year term, in which a lawmaker can expect to spend up to seven months in Augusta passing bills. The pay is \$6,600 for the second year, in which he or she can expect to spend roughly four months in the Capitol. Such service was never advertised as employment. The volunteer spirit was, and is, part of the package.

But now, with issues growing more complex — try tackling solid waste, the state tax structure, growth control and education in your spare time — such political service has become more of a sacrifice than many people can afford to make. At the same time, legislative campaigns are becoming more hard-nosed, with conflict-of-interest charges flying this year — adding one more disincentive to the list. On the local level — the governmental tier where many of the crucial issues on such matters as growth control will be made — the problems will doubtless be the same.

The Commission on Maine's Future will repeatedly hear that Maine should cling to its heritage as a place governed by citizen lawmakers, part-time local boards, and grass-roots decision-making.

How Mainers can devise the incentives that preserve that heritage while adjusting to changing times could well prove the most challenging task ahead.

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Education a top concern at forum about Maine's future

By Andrew Kekacs
Business Writer

The environment. Economic growth. The elderly. Education. The poor.

These are only some of the issues that the state Legislature — more accurately, all state residents — must consider as Maine marches at double time toward a future that will bring profound changes to our way of life.

In 1987, the state Legislature established the Commission on Maine's Future to identify the issues most important to state residents, define their vision of the future and develop strategies for achieving that vision.

The 40-member commission has been meeting with business, governmental and social service groups throughout the state, as well as polling residents and conducting public meetings. On Tuesday, it met with community leaders and residents at the Bangor Auditorium.

None of the issues discussed were new. Education was one of the foremost. "In the 1940s, '50s and '60s, we were educating our young people but exporting them to Connecticut where they could get better jobs," said G. Clifton Eames, president of N.H. Bragg. "Now we're keeping more of them, but they're not as

"There is a concern that secondary education isn't what it used to be, or what we used to believe it to be."

— G. Clifton Eames,
president of N.H. Bragg

well-educated as we thought. There is a concern that secondary education isn't what it used to be, or what we used to believe it to be."

Several educators said that, as the pace of technological and social change intensifies and non-traditional workers enter the labor force, education must address the needs of a far more diverse population than it has in the past.

"Learning must not be something that ends with a high school or college diploma," said L. Steve Thornburg, director of Eastern Maine Vocational Technical Institute.

Maine needs to change its educational system immediately, according to Michael Aube of the Eastern Maine Development Corp.

"Education and training need to be a lifelong

process," he said. "We can't have a conflict between young people and those who need retraining over (educational) resources."

The state's quality of life — that almost indefinable phrase that includes economic opportunity, the social fabric and the unique relationship between Maine residents and nature — was touched upon by many who spoke.

For Gordon Manuel, manager of public affairs for Great Northern Paper Co., quality of life was tied to "keeping the values of Maine that we've known in the past as we plan for the future."

But Manuel noted the conflict inherent between natural resources and economic growth.

"The conflict between (industrial) operations and the need for recreation is one of the biggest issues we are facing," he said. "This is a growing conflict for companies in the natural-resources industries."

The conflict between development and resource preservation was one of the major topics at a recent retreat for community leaders sponsored by the Greater Bangor Chamber of Commerce, according to Elizabeth Scott Stowell, its president.

Stowell said the group also discussed the need for problem-solving at the regional level.

greater support for education, investment in technological ventures and greater involvement in the global economy by local businesses.

Charles Newton, executive director of Penquis CAP, cautioned the commission not to overlook the needs of the poor.

"People who do not work are disenfranchised from this process," said Newton. "As you talk about the development and quality of life, you need to decide what level of income is adequate to allow someone access to this quality of life."

Edward McKeon, economic development director for Bangor, discussed the problems caused by increasing property taxes.

"We need to alleviate local property taxes," said McKeon, who added that economic development efforts on a local level will be derailed if citizens are forced to control tax increases through a spending cap.

"We have heard about the need to strengthen the regional approach to problem-solving," said Annette Ross Anderson, chairman of the commission. "If counties are perceived as weak, how do you do it?"

"We should reorganize the counties," said Charles Pray, president of the state Senate. "As roads and highways were built and the infrastructure changed, towns within the counties no longer have a community of interests."

Commission on Maine's

Community leaders defined problems easily;

By JOE RANKIN

Sentinel Staff

FARMINGTON — Affordable housing, property tax relief, the solid waste crisis to maintaining Western Maine's identity, improving transportation to controlling growth and development.

A group of community leaders on Thursday had no difficulty coming up with issues facing the western mountains region immediately and over the next few years.

Harder to come by were solutions and recommendations on how state leaders should act. And it seemed at times that some of the "issues" were at odds with one another.

About 15 local government officials, businessmen, social service professionals and others met Thursday afternoon with members of the Commission on Maine's future in the sixth of seven scheduled

hearings as the 40-member Commission attempts to assemble a blueprint for the state's future.

The issues facing the region are many, including lack of parking and better transportation facilities, the threat to rural hospitals, unchecked growth that threatens to price local people out of the housing market and skyrocketing property taxes that make home ownership even tougher.

"I get frustrated because the problems are so evident and the solutions are so hidden," said Carrabasset Valley Town Manager Preston Jordan, one of three town managers taking part in the discussion.

Robert Kimber, a member of the Temple Planning Board and vice chairman of the Natural Resources Council of Maine, said the problems "sometimes obscure what we really want our lives to be."

Kimber said in his vision of the future

solutions

and suggestions were harder to find

Future hits Farmington

the area remains rural "because that's what defines our way of life" — our land-based activities.

"I would like to see this area remain a rural 'backwater' where everybody could make a decent living and have a good education. I think people are willing to do without the fat living if they can live in an area they enjoy."

That would require a diversified economy dependent on small industries, said Kimber, "how much can we develop that economy and still have the kind of life we want to live here."

Tom McAllister, the general manager of Saddleback Ski Area, however, identified a need to improve transportation as a major issue, while his wife, Evelyn, the director of the Rangeley Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, said improving the state's economic climate should be a priority.

Scott Planting, the pastor of three small churches in Franklin and Somerset

counties, said a survey of his congregations show local people who grew up in the area are "frightened and in despair."

They feel control of their future has been turned over to outsiders and the connection they had with the land has already been broken.

While some people might feel high taxes and trash disposal are the big problems Maine is facing, Planting said one of his big concerns is, "where are all the wise people going to come from — with out some sense of the land?"

And John Jaworski, the executive director of the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, said surveys of area residents show many of people's concerns about the future relate to the land — concerns like being priced out of the property market by rampant growth, restricted public access to land and high taxes.

Asked what directions the state's leaders should take in addressing some of the issues, the community leaders weren't as

talkative.

But Jay Town Manager Charles Noonan suggested the state should provide leadership, financial support and technical aid, not just a blizzard of studies and commission reports.

On the solid waste issue it would be good if the state were to help the towns set up regional recycling centers and find markets for recyclable goods, Noonan said.

Jaworski said an effort to preserve the uniqueness of each of Maine's almost 500 municipalities should not include blanket regulations that treat them all the same.

But he noted that in trying to define a vision of what Maine should be like two decades in the future, the Commission may be facing an impossible task: 20-year scenarios are impossible to assemble because it's hard to look that far into the future. People are more concerned with the problems of today, he said.

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CMF

Public offers their concerns to Commission on Maine's Future

By Dan Austin

FARMINGTON There was no lack of opinions when the Commission on Maine's Future asked for public comment at a hearing held at the University of Maine at Farmington campus here Thursday night.

Established by the 113th Legislature to recommend a desirable and feasible description of the state's future, the commission has been holding a series of public hearings across the state to gather information for a report which is to be presented to Gov. John McKernan in January.

Mark Sullivan, executive director of the Western Maine Alliance, listed a number of items which concern his group, including: transportation needs; job training; tourism management; the potential that improved ties with Quebec and eastern Canada may bring; and attention to the legitimate concerns Western Maine people have about their future.

According to Sullivan quality health care, service to senior citizens, a clean and healthy environment, and affordable housing are only a few of the concerns of the people.

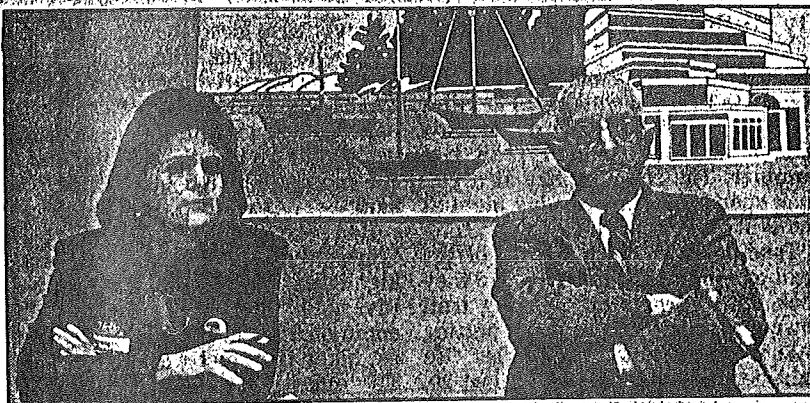
Sullivan and others at the hearing told commissioners that these concerns were the result of the state's rapid economic growth.

"Economic growth is fine, but look at what you may lose," said UMF student James Sturtevant who cautioned against uncontrolled economic growth. "Look what's happened to Portland; they've lost their woods."

Many in the audience agreed with Sturtevant when he said affordable housing was becoming hard for Maine residents to find because people "from away" were driving up real estate prices. He also blamed Maine land holders who he said were selling off their land for "the quick and big buck."

"We've got to stop making money off our brothers a priority. We've got to start caring about people. We live in a sick world," said Sturtevant.

"People from away have polluted and destroyed their land, and now they want to come to Maine and do it here," said Kenton Bailey, a member



Annette Anderson, chairwoman of the Commission on Maine's Future, and moderator Richard Morton listen to comments from the audience during a public hearing held Thursday at the University of Maine at Farmington. DAN AUSTIN photo

of the Farmington Planning Board.

Bailey is also a local Farmington farmer who is one of the last persons in the state delivering milk door to door.

"I'm what this society refers to as a dumb farmer," said Bailey, who asked the members of the commission how he could afford to continue his business. He said that he and other farmers are being forced out of business by high taxes. Bailey advocated a break for the farmer and warned if it doesn't come someday "people will be paying a day's salary for a loaf of bread."

Although quite a few problems were discussed, few people had answers.

However, Franklin County Commission member Lewis J. Maxwell said government, especially local government, may have some of the answers for Maine's future.

"The future of Maine depends upon its government, a government responsible to the needs of its citizens," he said. "If businesses are planning a move and they find a government that is responsive to them they will be more willing to move into the area."

While many talked about affordable housing, checks and balances for rapid economic growth and the great influx of those from out of the state, one of the main topics at the hearing was the future of education in Maine.

"There are many different types of intelligence," said Margaret Wescott, a physical education professor at the University of Maine at Farmington. Wescott pointed out to the commissioners that new tests are being developed that measure artistic, charismatic and physical intelligence.

Wescott called upon the commissioners to bring with them to the governor an understanding that Maine needs to recognize that besides there being many different ways to teach there are also many different students to teach.

Jack McKee, an educator and a member of the Kingfield Planning Board also spoke about education in Maine's future.

"Perhaps it's time we were facing up to the fact that we need to redefine the mission of our schools," said McKee, explaining that schools are doing a multitude of things that aren't reflected by taxes. "Schools are keeping medical records for students. Guidance counselors for grades K-12 are mandatory. Problems with drugs, child abuse, and problems at home are also being addressed in the schools. Those are social problems and ought to be handled as such. If the state wants us to continue to handle them in the school the financial help coming from the state ought to reflect that," said McKee.

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CMP

Commission on Maine's Future to hold public hearing Nov. 10

2007-1119188-100
FARMINGTON — The Western Mountains Alliance will host a public hearing of the Commission on Maine's Future from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10 in the North Dining Hall of the Olsen Student Center at the University of Maine at Farmington.

The Thursday hearing is one of a series the commission has conducted or will hold around the state, but it is the only session scheduled in western Maine.

The 113th Legislature established

the 40-member Commission on Maine's Future in 1987, to "recommend a desirable and feasible description of the state's future, including an integrated and progressive plan for reaching the goals contained in that description."

Members of the Commission from Western Maine include Barbara Knox of Farmington and Dori Corliss of Dover-Foxcroft. The commission is scheduled to submit a formal report to the governor and the Legislature in January 1989.

Commission on Maine's Future informed of concerns from western Maine officials

By John A. Messeder
Special to the NEWS

FARMINGTON — State assistance, not state mandates, is needed to solve the state's problems.

That was the message given to the Commission on Maine's Future as more than 20 western Maine town managers, politicians, educators and business leaders met Thursday at the University of Maine at Farmington. The discussion was the seventh in a series of meetings to "identify the forces shaping Maine's future during the next 20 years," said chairman Annette Ross Anderson.

Anderson said the commission was created in 1987 by the Legislature "to work with Maine people in developing a vision for the state."

Among the concerns discussed at the meeting were transportation, inadequate downtown parking, solid waste disposal, greater demands on the public school system, potentially inadequate hospital facilities, and increased property taxes.

Dana Bradley, Farmington town manager, said solutions to the problems created by development must be reconciled with "quality of life...good home with affordable taxes, good transportation, good hospital care, and good schools."

He said that affordable housing is becoming a "bigger and bigger issue." Homes that now cost \$50,000 will soon cost \$150,000, he said.

But Carrabassett Valley Town Manager Preston Jordan said, "What people think is affordable housing in Portland is not affordable to people in Carrabassett Valley."

Superintendent Lawson A. Rutherford of SAD 9 also was concerned with rapidly rising costs and limited funding resources.

"My issues are...the ability to cope with changing society, a changing set of values, and changing demands on education," he said.

The state needs to provide school districts with the ability to find ways other than taxes and bond issues to finance rapidly rising costs of educa-

tion, Rutherford said.

According to James Browse, administrator of Franklin Memorial Hospital, hospital care also is feeling the pressure of development, along with an increasing population of elderly people.

"Baby-boomers are going to be old people. The nursing shortage is not from not fewer nurses, but from a tremendous number of elderly needing services. We are not going to have the people ready, either in numbers or training, to provide those services," said Browse.

Town Manager Charles Noonan of Jay said his greatest concern was pressure on property taxes brought about by unfunded legislative mandates.

Noonan said solid waste disposal was predicted to cost as much as education in the near future. He said hearings about solid waste disposal would result only in "legislation which will cost municipalities and businesses more money."

"We need more than that, we need

help," he said. "Perhaps there could be tax exemptions to recycling centers in Maine rather than the cost of transporting the waste to Massachusetts."

Noonan said state government should assist in developing various recycling efforts, and perhaps develop markets within Maine for the waste.

John Jaworski, executive director of the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, agreed that state mandates were not sufficient to solve local problems.

"As you go farther up in government, each issue becomes more diluted," he said.

Jaworski said that state and federal mandates are a result of a consensus that attempts to offer a common solution for diverse problems.

"Before mandating the solutions, (state and federal government should) mandate resolutions, and let municipalities do it in their own fashion," Jaworski said.

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