

**Town of Unity Comprehensive Plan Committee**

**Minutes February 6, 2014 @ Koons Hall #201**

**Minutes for previous meetings were approved (Jan 16, Jan 23, Jan 30)**

**The group was presented with the transcribed responses for each topic at the visioning session from the participant worksheets and the group discussion flipcharts. With those the group identified the major themes of each topic of what we are hearing. Those summaries are enclosed below**

Unity Comp Plan 2013-2015  
Visioning Session – Major Themes

This information is a compilation of the “positives” and “areas of concern” identified during the January 25, 2014 Community Visioning Session. Nearly 100 citizens discussed these six specific topic areas. The information gathered in the small group discussions as well as individual comments/thought were recorded verbatim in a separate document. These Positives and Areas of Concern/Improvement are the next step in drafting a Vision Statement for Unity.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **Positives**

- Trails
- Access to Lake
- Respect for SRLT/MFT/UBR
- Being able to see stars
- MOFGA
- Visual appeal of town
- Open land – especially for wildlife
- Farmland and forest availability

### **Areas of Concern/Improvement**

- Water quality of lake
- Septic system degradation
- Access to lake
- Additional code enforcement
- Drinking water (arsenic)
- Sandy Stream blockage
- Visual impact of tall structures (i.e., cell towers, windmills)

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## **RELATIONSHIP WITH UNITY COLLEGE**

### **Positives**

- Library
- Volunteers
- Field of Dreams
- Unity Center for Performing Arts
- Large employer

### **Areas of Concern/Improvement**

- Citizen use of facilities
- Citizen use of courses
- College/Town connections
- Information to students about Unity
- Lack of communication from UC
- Local jobs based on courses of study
- Handicapped access in library
- Town input/control over Field of Dreams

General: Town/College relationship could/should be part of vision and comp plan

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## **COMMUNITY SPIRIT**

### **Positives**

- Unity Barn Raisers
  - Newsletter
  - Community events/meals
  - Community center
- Field of Dreams
- Trail system
- Visual appeal – town
- Visual appeal – fields and forests
- Friendly people
- Historical society
- Town clerk

### **Areas of Concern/Improvement**

- Activities for teens
- Welcome signs
- Public transportation
  - alternatives: walk/bike/ride sharing
- Run down buildings
- More trees on Main Street
- Activities for seniors
- Sidewalks
  - More in town
  - Winter maintenance
- More connection among groups
- Dog park/walking area for dogs

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## **GOVERNANCE**

### **Positives**

- Fire department
- Ambulance corps
- Town Clerk
- Town meeting form of government
- Transparency in town activities
- People being involved
- Multiple forms of communication
- Safety

### **Areas of Concern/Improvement**

- More selectmen (up to 5)
- Road commissioner
- Road improvements
- Town manager
- Repeater system
- Better animal control
- Better code enforcement
- Single-source recycling

General: Visioning session lacked 18-35 demographic as well as representatives of the Amish community

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## **FARMING & AGRICULTURE**

### **Positives**

- Farmer’s Market
- Local produce
- MOFGA
- Maine Farmland Trust (MFT)
- Amish community
- Young farmers
- Unity is a farming community
- Forever Farms
- Volunteer Regional Food Pantry – service and classes

### **Areas of Concern/Improvement**

- Farmer’s Market
  - location
  - year round
  - accessibility
  - hours
  - additional diversity of products
  - prices seen as high
- Environmental concerns about farming
- Lack of local products in grocery store
- Continuity of farming knowledge
- Farmer co-op (education opportunity)

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## **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES & BUSINESS**

### **Positives**

- Can get most goods/services locally
- MOFGA
- Unity College
- Unity as a regional service hub
- Nice downtown
- Diversity in creativity and talent
- Locally owned businesses
- Shopping/services in proximity to each other
- Friendly merchants
- Franchises

### **Areas of Concern/Improvement**

- Franchises
- Businesses don't pay a living wage
- Buying locally – between businesses
- Diversity of food
- Empty buildings
- Signage – specifically size and lighting concerns
- Need a veterinarian
- Need a lumber yard
- More than one business providing the same goods/services