

## TOWN OF HARTFORD

### 2025-10-27 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE (Ad Hoc)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by chair Peggy Matthews.

Present: Peggy Matthews, Rebecca Elsman, Cathy Lowe, Aaron Harvey, Bim McNeil, Dan Larochelle, Lee Holman, Lennie Eichman

Minutes of the meeting 2025-10-08 were read by the Lennie-secretary, approved on motion by Peggy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Aaron, passed unanimously.

Guest presenter Greg LeClair, Municipal Planning Biologist at the Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife.

Mr. LeClair clarified that the department was responsible for approving or failing COMP plans. He stated that the point of the plan was to protect Natural Resources in planning for the future of the town and encouraged including positives rather than focusing solely on impediments.

Mr. LeClair shared a series of maps, the first being of aquatic life, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of High value plants/animal habitat, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of natural areas and the interconnection with conserved land.

He explained that the number one cause of loss of wildlife was habitat loss and fragmentation. He informed that Hartford had 36 known culverts, 8 of which have fully passable status, 15 may be passable, and 13 are sub passable for aquatic life.

He informed that animal/vehicle collisions cost Maine about 314 million annually and the cost is 3 billion across the U.S. There are an average of 100 vehicle/deer collisions in Hartford annually. Planning around these issues matters. Discussed how some states dealt with it, such as tunnels.

In terms of COMP planning the questions are: What do we have and what do we do with it? It's important to find a balance between growth and conservation.

Mr. LeClair stated that when he looks at a COMP plan he focuses on water, natural resources, and future land use planning.

There was discussion of critical natural and important natural resources, vernal pools and what they contain. Discussed the fact that Hartford has a Peregrine falcon pair in the Northwestern corner of town. Hartford also has the rare New England Bluet or Damsel Fly around Bunganock Pond.

60-70% of Brook trout habitat is in Maine and it is important to keep common species common.

Mr. LeClair explained that the most common errors were #1 inaccurate or missing information, #2 inadequate future land use plans, and #3 missing or inaccurate information regarding recreational/conservation lands.

Respectfully submitted,

Lennie Eichman, secretary