Code

Continued from page 3

cautioned against "looseness" and unintended consequences of zoning, such as adding sidewalks in a way that degrades. Sorlein said adopting codes is a long process and the town might need moratoriums on new projects until the code is adopted.

Jamestown is under a state mandate to update its zoning ordinance. "The focus is downtown because it is under the highest risk for change," the town planner said some months ago.

The town's zoning ordinance "is not a strong enough document to protect what you want to protect," according to planning consultant and architect Donald Powers. His comment in October was part of feedback to the Jamestown Vision Charette for community planning, including the probability of state mandated affordable housing in the downtown area.

A coalition of experts, hired by the town to recommend design guidelines for development, criticized the town's zoning policies. Traditional ideas of zoning from a century ago allowed development to accommodate vehicles and land use became the focus of zoning laws, creating ordinances not able to respond well in a complex ecosystem, Powers said.

Island residents have a strong sense of conservation and care for preservation, according to the consultants, who said they would work to offset fears about loss of affordability and diversity. Powers predicted village development unless property laws are changed.

The state has praised the local charette process, which is an intensive effort joining residents ideas with consultants' explanations. The status of work here is detailed on the web site, www.jamestownvision.org. It shows representation of opinions of 72 residents who completed surveys, and comments of about 90 residents at workshops. Many residents called for no further village or island development. Representatives of about 170 artists who live on the island spoke about their group and its economic role.

The town planner described the consultants as responsible for using form-based zoning for: downtown zoning, affordable housing, and for impacts on the entire island. Bryer identified the existing zones on the island, which are open space, public, residential, and commercial districts. The current zoning system used by the town is Euclidian or traditional, zoning. Traditional zoning divides the municipality into a series of mapped districts, and then assigns permitted uses to each zone. Bryer said, "Zoning by use generally ignores how much difference design can make." She also said traditional zoning has failed to adapt to special situations, such as historic districts or downtown needs and new waves of construction.

Residents also have been referred for more information to websites, www.formbasedcodes.org and www.placemakers.com.

Group to hold coastal cleanup

Clean Ocean Access, an environmental group concerned with safety, cleanliness and open access of the ocean and coastlines will be hosting a Fall Coastal Cleanup on Saturday, Dec. 1, from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., at Hull Cove.

Participants are asked to car pool to the event if possible, bring their own gloves and wear sturdy shoes or boots. The event is rain or shine, unless it is "a total washout."

Parking will be available at the Hull Cove parking area on Beavertail Road with shuttle service also provided from Mackerel Cove.

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