Downtown Dispatch

Published By: *Eastport for Pride*
November/December 2002

CITIZEN SURVEY INDICATES STRONG SUPPORT FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS DOWNTOWN

Initial citizen survey results indicate broad support for improving downtown Eastport with new sidewalks, better lighting, public gathering spots and landscaping.

The survey, called Common Ground, is being conducted by Eastport for Pride. During the first phase, 105 city residents were asked to describe what a "perfect Eastport" would look like. Their responses have been compiled into a written survey for distribution citywide.

"Our goal is to gather responses from a minimum of 400 residents," said Survey Leader David Addison.

Final survey results will be used to select projects for inclusion in an application for a $400,000 downtown revitalization grant.

Survey respondents also indicated a strong desire for a mix of retail shops and entertainment venues. A clothing store topped the retail list by a wide margin, as did a movie theater on the entertainment side.

Survey Leader David Addison, right, reviews results with Roland Mitchell, one of 13 volunteers who interviewed Eastport residents.

"I'd like downtown to be more like it was when I was younger. Stores again, with benches and flowers. A fountain would be nice."
Survey Respondent

Special thanks to Roger and Merrill Conti for providing the IGA as a survey polling place.

Eastport for Pride

- New Trustees: David Addison, Chris Brown, John Cook and Roberta Thompson join Board. Alice Cates, John Grady, Don Sutherland and Sarah Talbot continue as Trustees.
- New Committee Chairs: David Addison for Organization; John Cook for Design; and Janet Toth for Promotions. In order, former chairs Sarah Talbot, Don Sutherland and Alice Cates will remain active on their respective committees.

DOWNEAST MAGAZINE TO FEATURE EASTPORT IN STORY ON MAIN STREET MAINE PROGRAM

Local Photographers Submit Pictures

Four local photographers have submitted pictures of Eastport for publication with an article on Main Street Maine slated for publication in the January issue of Downeast Magazine.

The four are: David Addison, Don Dunbar, Jim Lowe and Neil Teachout. Final selections will be made by Downeast editors.

Besides Eastport, the story will also feature the five other Main Street Maine cities: Norway, selected with Eastport this year; Bath, Gardiner, Saco and Waterville chosen in 2001.

The story, by former Eastporter and Downeast writer Wayne Curtis, reportedly will also cover emerging downtown trends and progress to date for the six Main Street cities.

Gathering spots, mixed retail high on citizen want list

Downtown Revitalization Plan Near Completion

Downtown gathering spots and mixed retail shops seem slated for inclusion in the upcoming Downtown Revitalization Plan, based on a citywide citizen survey and a public meeting in August with Cityscape Architect Victor Rydlizky.

Rydlizky's concept drawings include two gathering areas – one on the north side of Bank Square, the other located at the foot of Fish Pier. The dominant feature of the Bank Square area would be the old horse-water trough once located downtown, presently in Hillside Cemetery and owned by Eastport's VFW.

Old trough, which once watered horses in downtown Eastport, is under consideration as historic centerpiece for Bank Square gathering place.

"The water trough is a genuine Eastport artifact, and could provide a true sense of history to communal space downtown" said City Manager Bud Finch.

For the Fish Pier area, Rydlizky recommends a plaza concept based on combining plantings, parking and pedestrian space.

Mixed retail translates to a variety of shops appealing to both visitors and residents – shops that could satisfy an expressed desire by survey respondents to "do more shopping in Eastport."

The Revitalization Plan, funded by a state grant, is a joint effort of Eastport for Pride and Eastern Maine Development Corporation. It is an application requirement for a $400,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for downtown revitalization.

Eastport for Pride is preparing the CDBG application for the city. A Public Hearing on the grant is scheduled for Monday, Dec. 9, 7:00 p.m., at Shead High School.

Picnic Supper Hosts National and State Main Street Officials

Some 40 people attended a free picnic supper, sponsored by Eastport for Pride at Christ Church Institute on Nov. 25, to welcome visiting officials from the national and state Main Street Centers.

While here, the three officials – Teresa Lynch, National Downtown Center; Darcy Rollins and Barbara Hagar, Maine Downtown Center – met with Eastport for Pride volunteers and city officials to see how the national and state centers can best contribute to local revitalization efforts.

Food, associated costs and labor for the supper were donated generously by: Diana Boone; Alice Cates; Ann Cornelson; Brenda French; Larkin McGarvey; Ruth McInnis; Eleanor Norton; Marie Orrell; Audrey Patterson; Don Sutherland; Sarah Talbot; Roberta Thompson; Laura Turner; and Jean Wadman.

ONLY YOU CAN MAKE HOPES AND DREAMS COME TRUE

Despite some early fears, our survey takers discovered it's not hard to get Eastport residents to share their hopes and dreams – all the things that would help our city retain its character and prosper at the same time.

What is hard right now is getting more people to help, to contribute to making their own hopes and dreams come true.

As the record shows, we've come a long way – thanks to some 3,650 hours contributed by too few volunteers.

Those volunteers are not quitting – but they need some help. Simply put, there's not enough of them to take on all the projects that lie ahead.

Hopes are good, dreams are good. When they come true, they're even better.

If you haven't been helping, we need you. Just a few hours a month can make the difference.

If you're asked for help, please say yes. Or beat us to the punch by phoning 853-0911.

Eastport needs you.

There are only two choices. Act to make your hopes reality, or give up your hopes.

Anonymous