

Swans Island Planning Board
January 26, 2024
Meeting Minutes

In attendance; Caitlin Trafton, Jason Matthews, Terry Staples, David Lemoine, Seth Joy.

Marshal Walker, Shepard Walker, Bill Banks, Stephanie Williams,
Chris Emerick.

By Zoom; Ellen Dawson

1. October 24, 2023 meeting minutes were read and approved.

2. Fact finding and discussion for Short Term Rental Ordinance.

After fielding numerous inquiries from prospective investors regarding short term rental potentials on Swans Island. Caitlin asked the selectmen to consider adopting a Short Term Rental Ordinance. The selectmen having concerns over growing ferry traffic and solid waste disposal are in favor of such an ordinance and asked Caitlin to bring the matter to the Planning Board.

The Board reviewed Stonington's Short-term Rental Ordinance and Tremont's Short-term Rental Licensing Ordinance.

The Stonington Ordinance limited the number of Short-term rentals one could have. Also limiting the minimum length of stay.

Both Ordinances would have licensing fee set by the town's Selectmen.
The town of Mount Desert will charge a 650 dollar annual license fee.

The State of Maine charges a 9% tax on Rentals.

For the Town of Tremont, collection of money is not the goal.

Many attendees of the meeting expressed concerns over rising housing costs and year round housing availability. Also the lack of housing available for an island work force.

Genesis is a housing development program within the State of Maine. Jennifer Helman and Bob Pickup are both involved in this program.

Caitlin outlined the Town of Tremont's process they used for adopting their ordinance; first the selectmen, second a draft of the ordinance, third a public hearing and last a town meeting.

3. Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Concerns were voiced regarding property being removed from the tax base.

Terry does not think there is anything we can do.

It was asked how much does Maine Coast Heritage Trust pay in Swans Island taxes.

Bill Banks pointed out that Maine Coast Heritage Trust has a work force housing development project. Run by Bob Deforest.

4. Code Enforcement Officer Report

George and Barbara Brackin have a structure within the Shoreland Zone. Measuring 238 ft from the continuous vegetation. Constructed within the past two years.

Additional report attached.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:22 pm