

Report to the Trustees of Monhegan Associates on Values, Issues, and Plans developed by the Vision Committee 2005-06

In its near-monthly meetings over the winter, the Vision Committee agreed upon the following primary values:

Values

- We believe that our support could be an important contribution towards preservation of some characteristics of island life, such as peace, safety, simplicity, and sense of community. We feel that we should work to sustain the environmental balance of the island with the least intervention practicable.
- We believe we need work together to help to preserve the ecosystem of the entire island – its natural habitat as well as that of the town, and keep it safe, its air, water, and soil unpolluted, and its commercial development limited; and to support the efforts of the Plantation for sensible land use.
- We believe we need to honor and support the tradition of creative, independent, and entrepreneurial spirit in the Monhegan community.

Having worked hard to come up with this language, we found that these values do indeed correlate closely with the original intents of Monhegan Associates as evidenced in the Certificate of Organization.

Topics of Concern

Our next task was to consider the topics that we could see to be of concern to the Associates and more broadly to the entire Monhegan community. **A primary concern was with the questions of protecting a balanced island ecology.**

It was felt that these were the *critical* issues to address:

- protecting the water supply and removing pollution from the harbor
- protecting the town – and the wild lands – from fire danger as much as possible
- protecting the wild lands for future generations by prudent trail and forest management with as little intervention as practicable, with an eye to educating visitors on the value of their natural surroundings.

The second pressing concern was preserving the “simple friendly way of life” [this phrase, from Edison, is intended to embrace all the “community” concerns together]. This could be fostered by:

- helping to sustain the year-round community, perhaps through donations to MISCA for housing or by helping the community to deal with sewage treatment
- fostering information, ideas, and general attitudes flowing between the Plantation and the Associates, and maintaining records of the wild lands and what is done in them, in an organized way
- protecting the island as a whole from too much traffic from the mainland, while recognizing that many businesses do depend upon tourism and endeavoring to educate the visitors about our very special place

Considering our values and the issues stated above, we came up with the following Priorities to address, how we can work to accomplish these goals, and a rough timeframe in which to see progress:

Priorities (PARTNER: MAI and Plantation working together; **SUPPORT:** MAI gives support to Plantation initiatives; **LEAD:** MAI takes the initiative)

Issue	Specific topics considered at meetings	How we can accomplish, what role Monhegan Associates can take, and	The role Monhegan Associates can take, and a time frame.
Fire safety issues	Equipment for fire dept Fire safety education Forest fire training Widening of fire trails; containment of barberry for more open access to woods from the trails. Pursuit of possibilities of logistical and tactical support with Maine Forestry Service, Air National Guard Exploration of emergency use of Ice Pond	Work with Fire Chief (Matt Schweier); and Chair of the Monhegan Associates' Fire and Safety Committee (Sherm Stanley)	PARTNER 2005
Water issues	Pollution of harbor creates risk to public health. State regulations on overboard discharge and septic systems need to be followed. Also: pollution of wildlands/water supply by use of pesticides.	Work with Assessors as they work with state people. MAI can't do much on our own. Associates: Investigate even further the ways to deal with barberry without pesticides. Help write grants if that would be useful.	SUPPORT 2005 onward
Tourism	Concern about large numbers of people and how they impact the ecology, the economic development, and the community of the island. Continuing trail management is needed to keep major fire trails clearly marked and easy to traverse – and thus to	Note that there's an impact on many aspects but we are postponing discussion until 2007 because no solutions appear to present themselves.	PARTNER 2007

	encourage trippers to use those trails over others.		
Housing	Investigate possibilities of land donations or other support to MISCA		PARTNER 2006 onward
Education programs	<p>First focus will be on giving support and assistance to the existing children's arts/ecology program, with hope of future development of a Junior Conservation Corps for older children.</p> <p>Also this summer, investigate led trail walks and a community resource list.</p> <p>In future years, produce inventory pamphlets on Monhegan flora and fauna with hopes that they may evolve into a field guide</p> <p>Details of the above will be in a separate subcommittee report</p> <p>Finally, recommend to Trustees that there be a permanent MAI Education Committee.</p>	Mostly Island-generated projects	PARTNER 2006 onward
Record Keeping	Develop a list of all reports on Monhegan (particularly those made by and for MAI) and pull them into one central place (library?). Identify records held at the Museum, and at the Library, and in the hands of individuals.	<p>Could start this summer; Clare can start a tentative list/database.</p> <p>Next step: someone to research fires, natural events, through these records.</p>	LEAD 2005-06
Community Arts Center	Assess demand, determine possible location.	Work with Assessors and Community	PARTNER. Progress by 2007
Ballfield renovation	Develop plan in consultation with community.	Work with Assessors if need be; could be an Associates project primarily since we own the land.	LEAD, 2005-06

Addendum:

Our experiences working with the Vision Committee members throughout the winter has shown us how important community has been in developing our ideas and how useful conversations among all segments of the Monhegan community – winter and summer – can be. The communication amongst us has been great. And this leads us to bring up another topic of interest: the question of full voting membership in Monhegan Associates. In this time of skyrocketing housing costs it seems wise to reexamine the question of permitting non-property holders to become Full Members of Monhegan Associates. This consideration did not arise until this spring, and since any action in this area would require a by-laws change and might be controversial, it has not been included as one of the goals of the Vision Committee. However, the Committee strongly recommends that the Trustees take up this question at the earliest possible meeting and begin a dialogue within its membership and with the community on how to approach this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

The Vision Committee
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Joanne Scott, President of Monhegan Associates
Clare Durst, Scribe

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Subcommittee**
Kole Lord, Chair
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**Ecological Sustainability
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Matt Weber, Scribe

Education Subcommittee
Kathie Iannicelli, Chair
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Members of one or more of the Subcommittees
Sarah Confrey, Ann Hughey, Jim McDonough, Bob Smith,
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CD - 5/05