

October 1, 2009

Damariscotta Heart & Soul meeting helps shape upcoming charrette

Everyone in Damariscotta knows the community is special, but the town is now one step closer to articulating why, and making sure it stays that way.

Nearly 60 people gathered at the Round Top Barn in Damariscotta last Tuesday evening to help the Damariscotta Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC) refine a draft vision statement for the town and plan for an upcoming townwide planning charrette.

Attendees represented a broad range of the town's population, from "gen-X-ers" to retirees, long time and new residents, all of whom were interested in helping design Damariscotta's future.

For the past year, DPAC has been collecting stories and opinions from citizens of the Damariscotta region as part of its Heart and Soul Community Planning process. DPAC chairman Steven Hufnagel summarized the efforts to date,



The charrette will be held Oct. 22-26.

such as the bicycle and pedestrian planning public meetings resulting in sidewalk grants from the state.

All data collected through Damariscotta's Heart and Soul program will be used to impact updates to the town's comprehensive plan, and to help the select board make decisions that better reflect the values and needs of the Damariscotta community.

A team from B. Dennis Town Design, the consulting firm hired to facilitate the charrette, described what the community can expect to happen at the event, scheduled for Oct. 22-26.

The charrette, an interactive

planning process, includes a series of discussions and planning sessions on specific issues such as transportation and community facilities; "drop in studios," where anyone can come and chat on a issue of concern to them; and daily public meetings, where the team will provide an update on their progress in designing alternatives for Damariscotta's future.

The session closed with a brief presentation on some of the tools that will be used in the charrette to help participants visualize and understand potential design and planning scenarios. Through drawings, maps, 3-D models and visualization technology, participants will better be able to see alternative designs that will enhance the core values of the community.

The data collected at the Sept. 22 meeting will refine the details for the charrette, its workshops, and design. For more information about the charrette and the outcome of Tuesday's meeting, contact DPAC at www.damariscottame.com or call 380-4802 or stop by the Heart & Soul office at the Chamber of Commerce, 2 Courtyard St., Damariscotta.

Be sure to come to the October 22-26 charrette to be a part of history and plan the town's future.