



**MAKING HEADWAY**  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Milbridge, Maine

Movie Night Report  
January 26, 2016



## Purpose

Milbridge Movie Night was the first public meeting held in Milbridge, Maine as part of the Making Headway In Your Community (MHYC) program being undertaken by the community. The purpose of the evening was to introduce MHYC to those in attendance, view the film, "Reviving the Freedom Mill", discuss the film, identify things people are passionate about in Milbridge and discuss next steps for the local community in preparation for the next public meeting. Prior to the Movie Night a group of 4 local stakeholders met via SKYPE with GrowSmart Maine and Maine Downtown Center staff to review the MHYC process and to identify local community leaders and residents that should participate in MHYC.

## Summary

The Movie night was held at the Milbridge Library located at the Milbridge Town Offices in downtown Milbridge on January 26, 2016. 23 community members including a few individuals whose primary language was Spanish attended the evening. Staff at Mano en Mano assisted with translation. Also in attendance were: business owners, community leaders, young adults, advocates and municipal employees.

While the group was enjoying dinner, Nancy Smith and Andrew Zarro, GrowSmart Maine and Lorain Francis, Maine Downtown Center, Maine Development Foundation began with introductions. A summary of MHYC was presented and then the movie was shown. Following the movie 20-30 minutes was devoted to participants throwing out their reactions to the movie followed by questions and answers. Andrew and Lorain then guided the conversation into deeper thoughts about what matters most in Milbridge and what people are passionate about. Finally the program wrapped up with a discussion of next steps for Milbridge including identifying educational opportunities to send representatives to and prepping up projects for the February 16, 2016 Community Conversation.



## Movie Night Notes

### I. Reactions to “Reviving the Freedom Mill”

How was it funded? Funded by Tony Grassi- individual

Did the Community get what it wanted? Yes- Tony Grassi said at the end the project was all about the community.

Combination school and restaurant

“Kids bring life”

It made me think of Milbridge Theater

Build to involve kids and schools

Build on what was

Multi-generational connections

Passing on of a community asset

Diverse concepts and traditions shared

Achieve revitalization with work from organizations like Gateway Milbridge

Importance of supporting and shopping locally

Didn't hear skepticism in film

Who had access to the community meals in Freedom? Was it all income levels or just those that could pay?

## II. Milbridge is:

Major fishing community

Has a rich history

Town of Milbridge is growing and there are great opportunities.

Agricultural heritage in Milbridge, dairy and local production

Milbridge is not just a pass-through

Milbridge has commercial and natural

Milbridge is the gateway to Western Washington County.

## III. What is Milbridge passionate about? Potential Projects:

Movie Theater (said many times)- involves families and is locally owned

Milbridge needs places to gather, place to send families and children to

Need spot for families, youth and elderly together

Rec Center for all seasons

Movie Theater with Recreation in the same place

Family oriented community environment

A place to bring people together

Theater is uniquely positioned to be a community space

Young and old together

Historical significance and a real useful resource

Expand on what is already in Milbridge- fishing, historical society

Rich history exists of the theater- it was for young and old

Create Milbridge film for MHYC-(local connections with HBO and film makers)

Opportunities with student projects and film making

Children in Milbridge need access to film and theater and the arts

Traditional and New- Community, people and environment

Need more for children to be involved in and to learn- get out and be active

Community Space, coffee shop

Playground- (said a few times)- Milbridge needs new playground where young and old can gather

Destination- welcome center to Downeast to the Bold Coast Scenic Byway

Milbridge is the center to Western Washington County

Milbridge has been working for 10-15 years to upgrade infrastructure and doing a good job at it. (i.e. library, new town hall, piers, marinas, leaders & citizens looking forward to the future, moving forward)

Healthy Maine Streets like Eastport and Machias- Milbridge can be healthy

Walking Trails, walk don't drive, it is social to walk, promote walking not driving

Incredible Edible Milbridge, just installed 10,00 sq ft PYO garden in town

30 people/day picking during harvest season- no food wasted, people meet and socialize in garden, garden will be expanded by 50%

Educational opportunities with gardens- collaboration, sense of pride

### Conclusion

The evening was a great success. People left energized and positive about the process and the next steps. The Community Conversation with live key-pad polling/voting is scheduled for February 16, 2016 from 5:00-7:00pm at Mano en Mano in downtown Milbridge. MHYC will send out an additional press release and share the flyer with the local stakeholder group. The local group is prepared to generate project ideas that will be presented at the February 16th event.

### Included with this report are:

- Milbridge Movie Night Flyer
- Downeast Movie Night Press Release
- Milbridge Movie Night Agenda

If you have any additional questions on this report please contact:  
Anne Ball, Maine Downtown Center, [aball@mdf.org](mailto:aball@mdf.org)  
Nancy Smith, GrowSmart Maine, [nsmith@growsmartmaine.org](mailto:nsmith@growsmartmaine.org)