



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

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The **Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA)** is an organization of commercial real estate owners, developers and related service providers, whose mission is to promote an environment for responsible development and ownership of real estate throughout the State of Maine. **MEREDA** accomplishes its mission through legislative advocacy, regulatory oversight, sponsorship of programs and conferences, and by serving as a unified and proactive representative for real estate and economic development interests. **MEREDA** has developed into a widely respected and influential voice in Augusta on real estate issues and our objective is the same as it was when **MEREDA** was founded over 30 years ago.

MEREDA's officers and Board of Directors focus their efforts in three areas to help achieve our objective.

Advocacy. Our Public Policy Committee keeps a watchful eye on dozens of bills during every legislative session. This is a complicated and time consuming effort, but **MEREDA** has established itself as a voice of reason and an organization that can help Legislators understand the potential implications, both good and bad, of a particular piece of legislation or amendment.

Education. We host timely and informative events throughout the year that attract members and other professionals who have an interest in working with us. Our annual forecast conference and member showcase in January attracts 700+ attendees, and our spring conference has brought industry experts like noted Futurist and Wharton School Professor, Dr. Susan Wachter, land use strategist, teacher, developer, researcher and author, Christopher Leinberger of the Brookings Institute, and nationally renowned architect, Ellen Dunham-Jones to Maine. Our educational seminars around the state cover a wide range of topics from financing options to environmental due diligence and new urbanism.

Networking. As a member you have the opportunity to connect with a diverse network of real estate professionals and related service providers. Over the years, many beneficial business relationships have been established through networking opportunities like our annual fall social.

Upon receipt of your dues contribution, your company will be listed in our Membership Directory located within the **MEREDA** website at www.mereda.org and you will receive the password to the Members-Only Section of the website.

As a **MEREDA** Member, you will be eligible to participate on any of **MEREDA's** three standing committees – Public Policy, Conference & Seminar, and Membership & Marketing. This not only gives members an opportunity to raise their profile within Maine's real estate community, but also helps the Association meet its targeted goals. Committee work allows members to play an active role in the association's affairs and all members are encouraged to participate.

Thank you for your interest in **MEREDA**. We remain committed to maintaining our influence and effectively advocating on our members' behalf. Thanks to the generous support of our 300+ members, we are making a difference! If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at (207) 874-0801.

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JOIN MEREDA TODAY



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

Legislative advocacy

Educational programs

Networking opportunities

The **Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA)** is the state's leading organization of commercial real estate owners, developers and related service providers. Founded in 1985, MEREDA now has over 300 members who employ thousands of Maine citizens and invest millions of dollars in the Maine economy each year.

Our mission is to promote an environment for responsible development and ownership of real estate throughout the state of Maine. MEREDA achieves its mission through legislative advocacy, regulatory oversight, educational programs and conferences, and networking opportunities for members of the commercial real estate industry.

Our membership encompasses a wide array of companies and organizations, including developers, builders, property managers, brokers, attorneys, lenders, engineers, land use consultants, architects, appraisers, affordable housing advocates, housing authorities and municipalities.

In uncertain times like these it is more important than ever that we work together as real estate professionals. MEREDA makes sure our legislators understand the role of responsible real estate development in the overall health of our economy. We are a valuable business development and networking tool for our members. And our monthly educational seminars provide members with timely and useful information.

Join MEREDA today. Visit us at www.mereda.org or call Shelly Clark at (207) 874-0801.

www.mereda.org

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MEREDA MISSION



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

*MEREDA's Mission is the same
as it was at its founding in 1985.*

The Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA) is an organization whose mission is to promote an environment for responsible development and ownership of real estate throughout the State.

MEREDA accomplishes its mission through legislative advocacy, regulatory oversight, sponsorship of programs and conferences, and by serving as a unified and proactive representative for real estate and economic development interests.

MEREDA's Guiding Principle: Practicality, Predictability, and Clarity in Regulation

MEREDA is the *only* voice for the real estate development industry in Maine, and our success is dependent upon bringing together the many different trades that are vitally interested in promoting positive growth in our great state. MEREDA advocates for fair, consistent, predictable regulations to create a healthy economic climate. Our efforts to promote responsible growth through fair and predictable legislation and regulation are vital for a return to a healthy, thriving economy.

Our members, from large corporations to small, one-person consulting firms, have found membership invaluable. Our membership network provides an optimal forum for addressing the mutual concerns of our industry and provides you great access to the top experts in their field. MEREDA membership will connect you with this network and keep you informed of the issues and initiatives we are pursuing on your behalf.

Contact the MEREDA office at (207) 874-0801 to learn more about becoming part of Maine's leading organization of commercial real estate owners, developers and related service providers.

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MEREDA SERVICES & BENEFITS



Maine Real Estate &
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Supporting Responsible Development

Advocacy

Every day legislators and regulators make important decisions that impact Maine's real estate industry. That's why MEREDA makes such a commitment to advocacy on your behalf. We stay on top of the issues, build relationships with key policy-makers, and fight for laws and regulations that encourage responsible development and sensible planning.

Education

The real estate industry is constantly changing, especially in these uncertain and challenging economic times. Our timely seminars and conferences keep you up to date on important trends and provide you with expert information on a wide range of topics such as financing options, tax policy, environmental issues and market forecasts.

Networking Opportunities

While members value our legislative advocacy and educational programs, they also tell us repeatedly that they really appreciate the networking opportunities we provide. Every committee meeting, conference, seminar and member social is an opportunity to renew friendships and develop valuable business relationships with industry professionals.

Other benefits

In addition to advocacy, education and networking, MEREDA members can take advantage of:

- Complimentary One-Year Subscription to Mainebiz Magazine
- Ability to provide content to the *Maine Real Estate Insider* e-Newsletter distributed by Mainebiz
- Online membership directory with links to your site & company profile
- Sponsorship opportunities to promote your business
- Speaking opportunities where you can share your expertise
- Awards program that recognize excellence in the industry
- Committee participation (*See Reverse Side*)
- Discount registration fees for all programs
- Continuing Education Credits for conferences and seminars

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Maine Real Estate Insider e-Newsletter



Maine Real Estate &
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Supporting Responsible Development



The [*Maine Real Estate Insider*](#) e-newsletter is distributed weekly by Mainebiz and covers the latest news in the real estate industry in Maine.

The Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA) provides weekly content to the *Maine Real Estate Insider*. As a MEREDA Member, your company would have the opportunity to provide content through MEREDA to this newsletter. With a distribution list in the thousands, it is a great opportunity for both MEREDA and our members to get exposure.

Articles are not intended to be promotional in nature, but rather informational / educational items, trends, etc. that would be useful to the membership or general reader. The articles should be around 500 – 750 words, along with a photo or two (*as appropriate*).

Feel free to take a look at the articles archived on our website located at <http://www.mereda.org/reiarchive.php>. If you are interested in providing content to the *Maine Real Estate Insider*, please send your submissions for consideration to Shelly R. Clark at the MEREDA office at info@mereda.org.

Questions: 207-874-0801

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COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION



Maine Real Estate &
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Supporting Responsible Development

Participation on any one of MEREDA's four standing committees – Public Policy, Conference & Seminar, Membership & Marketing and DevelopME - gives members yet another opportunity to raise their profile within Maine's real estate community, and help the association meet its goals.

Committee work allows members to play an active role in the association's affairs and all members are encouraged to participate. Committee work also provides an opportunity to work alongside others in the real estate industry and is a good networking opportunity in itself.

- ◆ Our **Public Policy Committee** meets bi-weekly during legislative sessions. This committee reviews pending bills and regulations, identifying those of interest to our members, and works to ensure the real estate industry's concerns are considered. The committee labors to influence and shape the final form of proposed laws and regulations, and initiates new ones when circumstances warrant.
- ◆ The **Conference & Seminar Committee** meets monthly to develop ideas for upcoming conferences, seminars, and social events, suggesting possible topics, guest speakers, sponsors, formats, venues, and so on.
- ◆ Our **Membership & Marketing Committee** meets monthly to review membership statistics and trends, develops ways to retain current and recruit new members, looks for ways to further enhance the effectiveness of MEREDA's publications and other communications media and entertains ideas for new products and services that could be offered to the membership.
- ◆ The **DevelopME** Committee meets monthly to engage membership and create professional development opportunities within MEREDA for the next generation of industry professionals.

Please contact the MEREDA office if you would like to become involved in one, or more, of our committees.

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LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

Legislative Update – Spring 2018

Supporting the Pine Tree Development Zones Program

The Pine Tree Development Zones Program (PTDZ), which has been a critically important economic development tool for Maine over the past fifteen years, is set to expire this year. To prevent that, Governor LePage submitted a bill earlier this year to extend the program to 2023. MEREDA has long been a supporter of the PTDZ program, and Andrea Maker testified in support of the bill to extend the program. Complicating the issue however, is last year's Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability report of the PTDZ program. In its report, OPEGA expressed doubt about the structure of the program, indicating that it is not designed to guarantee job creation. Over the past several weeks, the Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development (LCRED) Committee has been working on a compromise measure to enable extension of the program. On Wednesday, March 7, 11 of the 13 member Committee voted to adopt an amendment that will extend the program until 2021, while adding additional reporting requirements for participating businesses. The bill as amended will now be assessed for its fiscal impact to the State and returned to the Committee for final amendment review with the fiscal impact estimate. MEREDA will continue to advocate for the passage of this legislation to secure an extension of the PTDZ program as it moves out of committee to the full Legislature for consideration.

128th Legislature Second Regular Session Statutory Adjournment Date Looming Closer

The deadline for legislative committees to finalize work on all their bills is March 9, and the statutory adjournment date for the Second Regular Session is April 18. Yet even with these deadlines, many big policy issues remain unresolved at the State House. Chief among them are Maine's tax law conformity with recent federal tax reform and a regulatory framework for recreational marijuana sales. In addition to these matters, the Revenue Forecasting Committee recently adjusted their economic forecast to include a \$141 million general fund surplus by the end of FY '19, up from a forecast of \$12 million in December, 2017. This will likely generate a feeding frenzy of bills with fiscal impacts. Any money not appropriated this session will move as surplus into the next budget year commencing July 1; it will not automatically go into the Rainy Day fund. Despite all the challenging work ahead, legislators will be eager to finish this session and hit the campaign trail for primary elections in June. Though statutory adjournment is April 18, the Legislature is allowed to extend the Session by five legislative days, twice. With all of this in play, it's difficult to predict exactly when this Legislature will complete its work sine die.

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LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Successful People's Veto to Trigger Ranked Choice Primaries, Referendum Question

Supporters of ranked choice voting successfully submitted enough certified signatures on a petition to achieve a People's Veto of a law passed by the Legislature last fall to delay implementation of ranked choice voting. The success of the People's Veto means that the delay law is in suspension until June when it will appear on the ballot and voters will get a chance to weigh-in. Until then, Maine election law will be governed by the 2016 citizen-initiative law on ranked choice voting and voters can expect to use a ranked-choice method this June to select primary candidates for Governor, the US Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the state legislative races.

MEREDA Supports Legislation to Modify Citizen-Initiative Process

The MEREDA Public Policy Committee has been actively following legislation to amend Maine's citizen-initiative process. While several bills were submitted, there are only two that have risen to prominence. The first is L.D. 31, sponsored by Rep. Ellie Espling, which would require signatures on a citizen-initiated petition to come from the First and Second Congressional Districts in relation to the number of voters in the most recent gubernatorial election in the respective district. If this bill receives a 2/3rds majority vote or better in the House and Senate, it will be sent to the voters in a statewide election. This high threshold is required because this change would be an amendment to Maine's Constitution. The second bill was just recently printed as LD 1865, and would make several modifications to the laws governing signature gathering, petition notaries, and financial disclosure reporting for direct initiatives. LD 1865 had its public hearing on March 20, and MEREDA testified in support of the bill as a first step to improving transparency in the direct initiative process.

Public Policy Committee to Issue Member Survey on Legislative Priorities

MEREDA is looking to advance new legislation for the 129th Legislature, and we will be seeking your input! In the coming weeks, the Public Policy Committee will ask all MEREDA members to weigh in on policy issues they see as particularly important to the real estate and development community. The Public Policy Committee conducted a similar member survey in 2016, and it led to the successful enactment of a change to Maine's subdivision law and negotiation of fees to improve the timeliness in receiving fire plan approvals. MEREDA also passed legislation that clarifies a recent Law Court decision regarding municipal land use reviews. While land use and environmental issues often rise to the top for MEREDA members, we would encourage you to think broadly about what hurdles we could work to diminish or what opportunities we could seize to improve the climate for real estate ownership and development. Look for the survey in your inbox soon!

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DAILY REPORT

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PHOTO / PETER VAN ALLEN

The annual **Maine Real Estate & Development** forecast conference, which attracted 900 people to the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland on Thursday, featured presentations throughout the day highlighting 2017 trends seen in the various sectors of Maine's real estate and construction sectors.

MEREDA conference highlights demand, but lack of inventory

BY MAINEBIZ STAFF

Vacancy rates are at or near historic lows in some areas, but the rents landlords are charging do not yet justify the cost of new construction. That's one of the takeaway themes of the annual Maine Real Estate & Development forecast conference, which attracted 900 people to the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland on Thursday.

The following is a summary of the talks throughout the day:

Southern Maine industrial forecast, from Justin Lamontagne, NAI The Dunham Group: The industrial vacancy rate has plummeted from 8% to 1.25% in the last seven years, not only in Portland, but Cumberland County as a whole, Lamontagne said. With premier space

peaking at \$80 to \$125 a square foot, he said, "The situation is critical." Lease prices aren't high enough to fuel new construction, which adds to the tight market. He said speculative buying and financing, rather than building, could be a good move. Leasing will likely tick down, because many companies can't afford the high price — despite the fact it's a landlord's market, affordability still matters.

Central Maine market forecast, Kevin Fletcher, KW Commercial: The Lewiston-Auburn and Augusta-Waterville markets will continue at a steady pace across all sectors. The key, Fletcher said, is knowing the market and understanding that a development that may seem small can have a big impact in Androscoggin and Kennebec counties. For instance, 23 acres

being developed in the Libby Hill Business Park in Gardiner by Auburn Asphalt will make a difference in that city, just south of Augusta. In Lisbon, a mixed-use development on the site of a 49-acre former gravel pit will include both single family homes and apartments, a \$10 million development in that town. The Capitol Street project in Augusta on the site of the former state Department of Transportation fleet center is another development with impact — the two lots under development have a total of 134,000 square feet. Across the street from the State House, "That's a pretty big development right in the heart of Augusta." He also stressed that there is continued demand in the industrial market in Lewiston-Auburn, which is less than half an hour from downtown Portland.

Bangor-area market forecast, Bev Uhlenhake, Epstein Commercial Real Estate: Bangor's industrial real estate vacancy stands at 4.5%, down from 10% the last time the survey was taken, in 2010. "Prices for leases do not justify new construction," Uhlenhake said. The downtown office market, which has 2.2 million square feet, has a vacancy rate of 9.7%, though the majority of that vacant space is in three buildings, including former University of Maine System offices. For the area, the elephant in the room is the Bangor Mall area, which has 3.2 million square feet of retail space (the mall itself is about half of that). The mall, which is owned by Simon Property Group and faces foreclosure, lost a 120,000-square-foot Macy's and will lose another anchor, Sears, this spring. A number of in-line retailers within the mall have left, replaced by local operations like a day care, fitness center and even a church. Elsewhere, Bangor Savings Bank is building a waterfront headquarters, which will have 370 employees and capacity for 480. Overall in Bangor, "the mall is struggling, but we still have our mojo," Uhlenhake said.

Economic overview, James Marple, TD Bank Group: The national economy performed well on the national level and exceeded expectations on the global level, said Marple, a senior economist with TD Bank. It was also a very good year for the Maine economy. Marple projected the recently signed federal tax bill will help the economy grow, with the expectation of increased spending by consumers and business. A major sticking point, though, is the unemployment rate, which is sinking to new lows — 4.1% nationwide. Marple predicted the national unemployment rate will dip below 3.5% in the short-term. "What that means in Maine, where the unemployment rate is lower than the

national average, is that we could see the rate pushing to the twos," he said. "That's a pretty tight labor market. And you look at Portland, there's virtually no one unemployed, at least by the official measure."

Southern Maine residential forecast, Brit Vitalius, Vitalius Real Estate (multi-family), and Dava Davin, Portside Real Estate Group (single family): "We're in a very exciting time," said Vitalius. "We're in a very healthy market, but we're limited by supply." From 2015-16, Portland's sales volume had nearly flattened, with a mere 1% rise. Vitalius said he had expected that trend to continue, and was surprised when 2016-17 volume rose by 16%. Saco/Biddeford saw a 53% increase and Lewiston/Auburn volume rose by 27%. South Portland rose by 8%, and Westbrook dipped by 12%. That was due to lack of supply, rather than lack of interest among buyers. Median sales prices are up across the board, ranging from 1% in Saco/Biddeford to 20% in South Portland. Vitalius expects further price increases. Median sales prices range from \$428,000 in Portland to \$117,000 in Lewiston/Auburn. Inventory is at a record low. New units continue to come online in Portland — about 300 in 2017 — and they fill quickly. Current and planned development elsewhere in the region number over 1,000 units. Buyers are gravitating to those other markets because they're finding Portland to be too challenging.

Among single-family homes, Davin said volume increased from \$4.1 billion to \$4.4 billion from 2016 to 2017. In southern Maine, "It was a great year for sellers," with home prices in Cumberland County up. "For buyers, it wasn't necessarily a great year." Buyers faced low inventory and competing offers for houses, with properties quickly getting snatched up.

Southern Maine retail forecast, Karen Rich, Cardente Real Estate: The biggest project coming on the market is a 550,000-square-foot shopping center on Route 25, which will have Market Basket as an anchor. Bricks-and-mortar stores continue to play a key role, despite a shift toward "omnichannel" shopping, with consumers increasingly using apps, websites, social media and email marketing. Shoppers are increasingly using "click and connect" tactics, either figuring out what they want online and going to a store to purchase it, or simply ordering products online and picking them up at the store.

Southern Maine office forecast: Nate Stevens, CBRE | The Boulos Co.: A lack of demand is combining with the lack of inventory in greater Portland to keep movement on office space slow, Stevens said. Much of the movement in office space in the past year was local companies changing space. He said the number of office space leases in greater Portland was the lowest he's seen since he's been tracking those numbers, and the vacancy rate has declined since 2012. A few large transactions shaped the market in 2017, including WEX's planned move from its South Portland space to 100,000 square feet of new construction on Hancock Street on the Portland waterfront. The biggest drop in Portland downtown inventory was in Class A space, with Class B remaining flat. There were bigger drops in both in suburban space. He said when demand increases, landlords will have to get creative in the city to meet the growth, and older, unimproved buildings, with both Class A and B space, will continue to struggle. "I think we'll continue to see new construction in downtown Portland," he said. "But it really depends on the demand level." 

Unraveling red tape

MEREDA scores legislative successes for developers

BY CAROL COULTAS

Attorney Gary Vogel of Drummond Woodsum has served on the legislative committee of the Maine Real Estate and Development Association for about a dozen years, the last eight as chairman. So when he says there's been a significant change in attitudes around development issues in Augusta, he speaks with experience.

"In a typical legislative session, we are mostly playing defense," says Vogel. "We review proposed bills and find those with a detrimental impact on development, most of which are well-intentioned but can have a detrimental impact, almost as an unintended consequence. This time around, we put in two bills of our own and advocated for two others and have more to show for it. They passed on a bi-partisan basis."

More importantly, the changes collectively position Maine in a more favorable development light — an important shift that Vogel hopes will send a message.

"Maine has been dealing with an image that it is too risky for development investments, at a time when the market is risky enough," says Vogel. "Many Maine developers have been doing developments out of state, where they can do much better with less risk. My hope is these folks and others like them — as the economic climate improves — will decide they want to come back and do developments in Maine."

Mainebiz sat down with Vogel to talk about how recent legislative changes will affect the Maine's development landscape. The following is an edited transcript of that conversation.

Mainebiz: What drove MEREDA's success with this legislative session?

Vogel: First, the economy, and the recognition by the Legislature (regardless of party affiliation for the most part) that legislative changes that promote investment in Maine — usually represented by investment capital coming in from out of state on large projects — and the elimination of laws that severely discourage investment capital coming into Maine are vitally needed to create an environment for job creation.

Secondly, and this is likely related to the first reason, was the change in the Legislature



PHOTO/TIM GREENWAY

Attorney Gary Vogel says Maine is shedding its anti-development image

and the governor's office, although they were often not necessarily in sync, with the Republican-led Legislature providing a check on some of the governor's most aggressive initiatives.

Third, and related to the second reason, was the pent-up demand for changes now that the Republicans control the State House and the Blaine House, resulting in many individual legislators submitting bills that have been submitted in the past, or addressing issues that have been the subject of legislation in the past.

What were the most significant changes from this last legislative session?

That's a little hard to say. There are two that are similar and significant — not perhaps in actual impact as much as the message they send that Maine is less hostile and more positive toward development — and they are the retroactive referendum bill and the Informed Growth Act. The first, because it eliminates a key, unfair tactic available to development opponents who could get zoning changed retroactively, and the Informed Growth Act because of the message it sends.

Can you elaborate on the retroactive referendum law change?

When we're dealing with an out-of-state developer, we have to warn them that despite getting all their permits and approvals, if there are opponents of a project, those opponents could seek to change zoning retroactively and undo all the permits they've obtained. Most developers are, No. 1, shocked by that possibility, and No. 2, saying, "Why would I want to come to Maine, spend all that money and take that risk only to have that effort undone after several years and what could be millions of dollars of investment?" What we hear, is, "I'm not coming to Maine; it's not worth it."

The change created by LD 86 prohibits any referenda to have a retroactive effect unless it is adopted within 45 days after a project receives its permits. Under current law, the retroactive referendum can kill any project that has not begun construction. So changing this is, in my view, a big deal. It sends a message that you can't unfairly oppose a project. Everybody has their right to appear before the planning board on a project and argue that it doesn't meet the standards, there ought to be greater buffers or whatever, all of that is a good part of the process. But to change the process after the fact, after they've played by the rules and received all their permits,

that's something that is really very unfair, and what most developers won't tolerate.

Do you have an example of a project that had its permits reversed after the fact?

There are three I'm aware of. The original Fisherman's Wharf case in Portland, which was the development on the DiMillo's marina parking lot; a retail development in Kittery; and the Dunstan Corner Great American Neighborhood project in Scarborough.

Have you heard any buzz about this change in the development community?

No, we're trying to get the word out. Of course, it's happening at the time when there's a real downturn in development. I think developers are waiting for a lot of things to come together before moving forward, including financing, but this is obviously a very positive thing.

And the Informed Growth Act?

We are aware of some things happening that may not have happened if that law had remained unchanged. It only affects big-box stores, but I think the impact of the IGA change is really much broader in terms of the message it sends about not restricting development.

What are the changes to the Informed Growth Act?

It's now optional. [A 2007 law required a \$40,000 economic impact study of retail developments 75,000 square feet and larger before a municipality could issue permits.] A municipality can have a local referendum and put it back on the books if residents want, or they can do what Damariscotta did and change their municipal zoning to restrict that kind of retail development.

What are other significant changes from this session?

Some procedural things that were part of LD 1, the regulatory reform bill, having to do with some of the ways permits are handled at the DEP; some are timing issues, such as how long permits are good for and the process for granting extensions. Another important change is the continuation of the state historic tax credit for another 10 years. That has been a very useful tool in revitalizing downtown areas.

What about the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code rules passed last year? It caused a lot of discussion in development circles when it passed. What's the impact of the modifications from this legislative session?

When MUBEC was passed, it created a uniform building code for all of Maine. Unfortunately, many towns didn't have

staff with the required training, and part of the law required code enforcement officers to implement the law. It took effect and many towns weren't ready. As a result, building permits were held up.

There were a number of bills related to MUBEC, and what ultimately got passed was a compromise. The law now provides that the only building code we're going to have is the MUBEC code, and for towns under 4,000 [people], they can elect not to have a building code and have the code enforcement officer review and approve permits. Or if they do have a code, it has to be the MUBEC code. MEREDA has taken the position that having six or eight different building codes applied

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throughout the state has not been good for development; we've always been a strong proponent of uniformity. I believe the current legislation is a step toward greater uniformity and eventually we'll get there, but it will be a process.

There were changes to vernal pool legislation this session, as well. Can you tell us a little about that?

MEREDA had a bill that ultimately got passed that made a few minor, but important, changes in the way vernal pool laws were implemented. Vernal pools can only be measured during a few weeks in the spring when biologists take samples and count egg masses for various species. There had been a policy, incorporated into the original legislation, that if the vernal pool dries up by June 15 in the southern half of the state and July 31 in the northern half of the state, then the DEP has the authority to deem it as a non-significant vernal pool; the restrictions only apply to significant vernal pools. That was negotiated when the original legislation was implemented so projects wouldn't all be held up if you can reach a decision, based on a reasonable determination, that there is not a significant vernal pool on the property. Although DEP had that authority, it virtually never utilized it and, instead, made every project go out and test the vernal pool in the

spring. Our legislation makes it easier to enable the hydro period rules and assess non-significant vernal pools.

The other vernal pool change affects when a vernal pool straddles two property lines. The bill changes the rule so a developer only has to deal with a vernal pool on his property. The more controversial piece of the vernal pool legislation involved reducing the setback around a vernal pool from 250 to 75 feet. That's being carried over and looked at by a study group and will be revisited in the next session of the Legislature.

Anything else from this session?

One of things MEREDA is also focused on is the modernization of the site location of development law, the primary DEP permitting law for larger developments. MEREDA is seeking to increase the jurisdictional thresholds so fewer projects will have to get both municipal and state review. Things have changed a lot since 1971 when the law was originally implemented; many Maine municipalities have qualified planning staffs to evaluate larger projects. Developers complain, legitimately, I think, about differing standards between state and municipal reviews, and, for many communities with adequate municipal planning staff, the state review seems unnecessary. So we had a bill that would increase the size of projects requiring state review.

What are the specifics?

Right now, the standard is if you have a project with more than three acres of impervious surface, or over 20 acres, [30 acres for residential subdivisions], it will require review under the site location law and DEP. We are seeking to make that 10 acres of impervious surface — your parking lots, building roofs and so on — and 40 acres for non-residential subdivisions and 60 acres for residential subdivisions.

The Natural Resources Committee had some concerns about that, the environmental community had some concerns about that, so that one is the subject of a stakeholders study group that is meeting over the summer and fall, which MEREDA is participating in. I'm not sure whether 10 and 60 are the right measures, but the group will be looking at that and hopefully coming forward with legislation that modernizes the law and enables fewer projects to require both state and municipal review, especially where the municipality is able to apply municipal laws that protect the environment and ensure good development. We're very encouraged about that.

Carol Coultas, *Mainebiz* editor, can be reached at ccoultas@mainebiz.biz.

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TESTIMONIALS



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

"There is a ton of benefits to becoming a member of MEREDA. MEREDA is an advocate so it's helping the industry. I'm on the commercial lending side so to the extent we're able to develop; I'm able to finance those things, so that's good. The educational piece, and this is an example of it [the 2011 Spring Conference], you learn an awful lot from the best people in the industry through what MEREDA does. There's also a very good networking capability here. Again you take a look at the breaks here, they have breakfast sessions as well, and social gatherings and anybody really who's involved in the commercial real estate business, it's not just the developers, it's the brokers, it's the bankers, it's the architects, it's everybody, they're all there, all in one spot and so that's a huge benefit."

Noel Graydon, Regional Vice President and Commercial Lender at Norway Savings Bank
Saco, ME

"Being outsiders, MEREDA has been a great introduction to the real estate community in Maine. It's been a very good thing for us."

Robert Gordon, Managing Director of City North Development
Haverill, MA

"The thing I liked most about the (2011) Spring Conference so far was listening to former Governor King and listening to Gunnar (Hubbard) talk about sustainability and talk about in a very thoughtful way the trends that are facing us, and not just recycling another presentation but really engaging with the audience and really putting some thought behind what they were doing.

The thing I like best about being a member of MEREDA is it's an organization that's looking out for me in Augusta and other places while I'm out doing what I do. I can go be a developer and still a lot of the stuff that I would advocate for if I had more time, I can rest easy knowing that MEREDA is advocating for it, for me. "

Kevin Bunker, Founding Principal of Developers Collaborative
Portland, ME

www.mereda.org

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MEREDA's Upcoming Events

February 7, 2018 - 7:30 - 9:30 AM

Portland Area Breakfast Seminar

Portland Moratorium and Zoning Amendments Forum

Clarion Hotel
1230 Congress Street
Portland, ME



February 13, 2018 - 7:30 - 9:00 AM

Bangor Area Breakfast Seminar

A Presentation by FocusMaine

Cross Insurance Center
515 Main Street
Bangor, ME



March 14, 2018 - 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

DevelopME "Lunch & Learn" Seminar

Breaking into Development, Part 3 of 3:
"Managing Assets for Maximum Value"

Portland Public Library
Rines Auditorium
5 Monument Square
Portland, ME



March 22, 2018 - 5:00 - 7:00 PM

MEREDA's Annual Spring Networking Social

Join us for Hors d' oeuvres, Spirits, and
Great Conversation with Colleagues & Friends.

Ri Ra Irish Pub
72 Commercial Street
Portland, ME



April 10, 2018 - 7:30 - 9:00 AM

Lewiston/Auburn Breakfast Seminar

A Presentation by FocusMaine

DaVinci's Eatery
150 Mill Street
Lewiston, ME



April 26, 2018 - 7:30 - 9:00 AM

Portland Area Breakfast Seminar

148 Years in the Making....Maine Medical Center's
\$512 Million Expansion Project

Clarion Hotel
1230 Congress Street
Portland, ME



May 3, 2018 - 5:00 - 7:00 PM

6th Annual "Strikes for Scholars" Bowl-a-Thon Fundraising Event

Bayside Bowl
58 Alder Street
Portland, ME



May 16, 2018 - 12:00 - 6:00 PM

MEREDA's Annual Real Estate Spring Conference

Workforce Challenges: How Innovation Can Help

Holiday Inn By the Bay
88 Spring Street
Portland, ME



June 12, 2018 - 7:30 - 9:00 AM

Bangor Area Breakfast Seminar

Topic to be Determined

Hollywood Casino Bangor
500 Main Street
Bangor, ME



June 21, 2018 - 7:30 - 9:00 AM

Portland Area Breakfast Seminar

Federal Tax Reform and Implications
for Real Estate

Holiday Inn By the Bay
88 Spring Street, Portland, ME



Dates Subject to Change - Please visit www.mereda.org for the latest updates.

MEREDA - 6 City Center, 3rd Floor - Portland, ME 04101 | Tel: (207) 874-0801 | Fax: (207) 899-4870
www.mereda.org | info@mereda.org

Our Members are Invested in What We Do



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

MEREDA's strength has always come from the support and participation of its valued members. Thanks to their continued support, we have become the leading voice for responsible real estate development in Maine, representing hundreds of commercial real estate owners, developers and related businesses, from architects and engineers to property managers.

We are pleased to give special recognition to our Cornerstone and Sustainer Level Members. If you are interested in learning more about these levels of membership, please contact the MEREDA office.

Cornerstone Level Members:



America's Most Convenient Bank®

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Sustainer Level Members:

AAA Energy Service Co.

Androscoggin Bank

Baker Newman Noyes

Bangor Savings Bank

Bank of New Hampshire

Bar Harbor Bank & Trust

BerryDunn

Camden National Bank

Drummond Woodsum

East Brown Cow

Eaton Peabody

Epstein Commercial Real Estate

Gorham Savings Bank

Lovell & Paris, LLC

NBT Bank

Norway Savings Bank

Pierce Atwood, LLP

Saco & Biddeford Savings

Stantec

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Maine Real Estate &
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Supporting Responsible Development

Membership Benefit Levels



Cornerstone \$5,000+

MEREDA's Cornerstone membership level includes exclusive benefits to member organizations that contribute significant amounts of both time and money to support MEREDA and its mission. For more information on the Cornerstone membership, please contact the MEREDA office at (207) 874-0801.



Sustainer \$2,500

Members at this level receive
Advocate benefits, **PLUS:**

- Up to 2 attendees FREE per annual conference
- Logo displayed at all MEREDA events
- Forecast Conference Exhibitor booth at a reduced price of \$300 (regularly \$750)
- Logo on website / social media promotion
- Name listed on MEREDA letterhead



Advocate \$1,200

Members at this level receive
Supporter benefits, **PLUS:**

- Forecast Conference Exhibitor booth at a reduced price of \$600 (regularly \$750)
- Eligibility to be considered for the MEREDA Board of Directors
- Logo on website
- Unlimited attendees at the member rate for MEREDA events



Supporter

Corporate \$550 (includes up to 5 individual members at the member rate)
Individual \$385 | **Municipal / Government \$300** | **Full-Time Student \$50**

All members at the **Supporter level and above receive:**

- Advocacy – Legislative and regulatory lobbying efforts
- Education & Insight – Breakfast events and annual conference, *Mainebiz* Real Estate Insider newsletter and MEREDA Index
- Networking – Breakfast events, annual conferences and socials
- Inclusion in members-only events
- Opportunity to submit and place an article for consideration in the *Mainebiz* Real Estate Insider newsletter
- Opportunity to reserve a Forecast Conference Exhibitor booth at \$750

[See over for details.](#)



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

Membership Benefits

Cornerstone \$5,000+	Sustainer \$2,500	Advocate \$1,200	Supporter \$50-\$550*	Benefits
✓				Thanks/mention at all MEREDA events
✓				Exclusive invitation to "Cornerstone Circle" events
✓				Legislative monitoring and updates on real estate-related bills
✓				First right of refusal for sponsorship opportunities
5	2			Number of attendees FREE per annual conference
✓	✓			Logo displayed at all MEREDA events
✓	✓			Social media promotion
✓	✓			Logo or name listed on letterhead
✓	✓	✓		Logo on website
✓	✓	✓		Eligibility for consideration for MEREDA Board of Directors
FREE	\$300	\$600	\$750	Opportunity to reserve a Forecast Conference Exhibitor Booth (\$750 value)
✓	✓	✓	✓	Advocacy – Legislative and regulatory lobbying efforts
✓	✓	✓	✓	Education – Breakfast events and annual conferences
✓	✓	✓	✓	Industry Insight – <i>Mainebiz</i> Real Estate Insider newsletter and MEREDA Index
✓	✓	✓	✓	Inclusion in members-only events
UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED	UNLIMITED	5	Networking – Member rate for attendees to MEREDA events
✓	✓	✓	✓	Opportunity to submit an article for consideration in the <i>Mainebiz</i> Real Estate Insider newsletter

**See over for details.*



Maine Real Estate &
Development Association

Supporting Responsible Development

Membership Application

Date / /

Name of Company or Organization

Mailing Address City State Zip

Street Address City State Zip

() -- () --

Telephone Fax

Type of Business (See Key to Business Type Categories) Number of Employees

Contact Person / Title Authorized By

Contact Person Email Address Web Site Address / Twitter Handle

Feel free to list others in your company (with email addresses) interested in receiving MEREDA Mailings

Business Type Categories:

AC Accountants / **AD** Advertising & Marketing / **AP** Appraisers / **AR** Architects / **AR / CM** Architects / Construction Management / **AR / EN** Architects / Engineers / **AU** Auction Companies / **BA** Banks/Mortgage/Finance Companies / **BR** Brokers / **BR / DE** Brokers / Developers / **CB** Contractors/Builders / **CLN** Cleaning Services / **CM** Construction Management / **CO** Consultants / **DE** Developers / **EN** Engineers / **ENV** Environmental / **ENV / CO** Environmental / Consulting Services / **GH** Gasoline & Heating Products Distribution / **INS** Insurance/Securities / **LA** Law Firms / **LSA** Landscape Architects / **ME** Media / **MO** Membership Organizations / **MU** Municipalities / **NPD** Non-Profit & Economic Development Corp. / **PC** Paper Companies / **PMG** Property Management / **PMT** Property Maintenance / **REI** Real Estate Investment/Management / **RSE** Research/Education / **RET** Retailers / **SP** Suppliers / **ST** State / **SUR** Surveyors / **SVC** Service Companies / **TTL** Title Companies / **TTL / INS** Title / Insurance Companies / **UTIL** Utilities / **WD** Wholesale Distributors / **WM** Waste Management/Recycling / **Other:** Please Describe

New Member Interests Please state your reasons for joining MEREDA and emphasize any issues that are of particular concern to you and your company. *Attach additional sheet if necessary.*

(please complete reverse side)

Membership Directory Active member companies will be featured in our Membership Directory located on the MEREDA web site at www.mereda.org, with a brief description of the company's products and services. There is no additional fee for this listing. (Only member companies with current dues are eligible to be featured in our Membership Directory.) Please use the space below for your company's profile. *Attach additional sheet if necessary.*

MEREDA Dues Structure: MEREDA has four levels of membership: Supporter, Advocate, Sustainer and Cornerstone. All members will receive the same foundational benefits of a MEREDA membership: Advocacy, Networking, and Education & Insight, however, this structure rewards members for their support of the organization with added benefits at each level. *Please see attached for details.*

<i>2018 Membership Benefit Levels</i>	<i>Minimum Annual Dues</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> I = Full Time Student	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> II = Municipal / Government	\$300
<input type="checkbox"/> III = Individual	\$385
<input type="checkbox"/> IV = Corporate <i>(Includes up to 5 individual members)</i>	\$550
<input type="checkbox"/> V = Advocate	\$1200
<input type="checkbox"/> VI = Sustainer	\$2500
<input type="checkbox"/> VII = Cornerstone	\$5000+

☐ *Check Here to Request an Invoice be Emailed to the Address Provided on Front*

For Your Convenience, we also Accept Visa or MasterCard

Card # _____ Exp. _____

Committee Participation Committee work allows members to play an active role in the association's affairs. I *(and / or one of my colleagues)* would like to join one or more committee.

☐ Conference & Seminar ☐ Membership & Marketing ☐ Public Policy ☐ DevelopME

Name(s) & Email(s) _____

MEREDA expects members to adhere to its mission of developing Maine responsibly. Application is subject to review of MEREDA Board and/or executive committee. MEREDA is organized under IRS Section 501 (c) (6) rules.

For federal income tax purposes, dues paid to the Maine Real Estate & Development Association (MEREDA) are deductible as a business expense, not as a charitable contribution. A portion of dues, however, is not deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense to the extent that MEREDA engages in lobbying. The non-deductible portion of dues is 30 percent. MEREDA is tax exempt under IRS Section 501(c)(6).