



Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, May 2, 2018

Pamela DiPietro-Hale <i>Chair</i>	-	Sandra Lipsey	✓	Andrea Ferrante <i>Council Liaison</i>	✓
Chris Wasileski <i>Vice Chair</i>	✓	William Lunt III	✓	Nathan Poore <i>Staff</i>	-
Dimitri Balatsos	-	Mindy Schwartz	✓	Theo Holtwijk <i>Staff</i>	✓
Ethan Gamage	✓			Andrew Clark <i>Staff</i>	✓

Others in attendance: Steve Caminiti

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm.

1. Review Draft Minutes of April 18, 2018 Meeting

The draft minutes of the April 18 meeting were accepted as written.

Andrea received feedback from the Town Council on the proposed edits to the committee charge. There is a desire by Councilor Karen Farber and Councilor Claudia King that the charge better reflect the FEIC's advisory role to the Council, rather than an unintentionally implied role in drafting policy and specific ordinance language, and an advisory role to Town staff in addition to the Council. Andrea suggested striking the reference to Town staff, and finding language that would underscore the committee's advisory nature.

Chris and Bill disagreed with making the ordinance and policy changes and felt that the proposed language was adequate. They also expressed concern that Karen and Claudia's feedback may not be representative of the Council as a whole. Sandra recommended finding acceptable language, so that the committee could move on from this issue. Ethan and Mindy felt that the committee was splitting hairs. Andrea suggested the following change:

Provide advisory assistance to ~~Town staff and~~ Town Council on economic development matters, including but not limited to, ~~policy and ordinance development~~ Town policies, ordinances, strategic planning, business attraction, and land use.

The committee agreed to submit this language to the Council, with the acknowledgement that the members were split on the issue.

2. Subcommittee Discussion

The committee discussed the speaker/forum series. Theo reported that the Developers' Forum on Route 1 commercial redevelopment was a success. Staff created a resource page on the website, with

links to case studies and a summary of the evening's discussion. Theo said that the main goal of the forum was to facilitate a conversation between developers, property owners, and other interested parties, which would hopefully lead to new project proposals in the future.

For a third Business Forum, Sandra suggested a June lunch meeting to bring in new people and voices to the conversation, perhaps in the Route 100 area to try a new location. Theo recommended the forum focus on a specific topic of interest, rather than Q&A with Town officials. Andrea asked the committee what topics might be of interest. Chris felt a conversation related to housing, density, and rate of growth would be reflective of an important issue in Falmouth right now.

Sandra noted the current and upcoming construction projects, and suggested a forum on helping businesses deal with the associated disruption. Andrea asked about the timing of the projects, and hesitated to have that conversation too far in advance of the work being done. Theo said Route 100 work could begin as early as this fall. Specific timelines and traffic management plans have not yet been finalized. He recommended that that topic wait until more information is available.

The committee returned to the topic of growth. Steve asked about the connection between residential and commercial development, the latter of which is typically more associated with business interests. Chris said that housing was important for workforce development. Sandra added that new projects along the Route 1 and Route 100 corridors have a strong potential to be mixed use. Steve asked about the level of interest in the Village Center zoning requirements. Sandra said that at the time of their adoption, there was significant community buy-in. There are currently vacancies that present an opportunity for redevelopment in the style of the Village Center vision. Andrea added that the ordinance is pushing developers in that direction.

Steve asked about perceived impediments to redevelopment. Chris felt it boiled down to economics and property acquisition costs. Sandra added NIMBY-ism. She imagined a forum highlighting positive opportunities for collaboration between the Town, developers, and residents. Andrea suggested this be a topic for a June forum.

Bill recounted his experience with the development of the Farm Gate neighborhood. As an abutter and longtime resident, he saw the value in working together with the developer and property owners to create a compromise. There was discussion about the nature of support and opposition for development projects. The committee saw a challenge in identifying and strengthening the voices of support for projects, when most who speak at public hearings are typically in opposition.

As a final item, Theo referenced an email he had received in response to the Developers' Forum. The author had provided a number of creative ideas to help stimulate Falmouth businesses and sense of community. Theo suggested the committee review the list in advance of "Fun and Interesting Events" subcommittee discussion.

3. Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 16 at 4:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Andrew Clark on May 2, 2018.