



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) & Community Development Committee (CDC) Joint Meeting

Thursday, October 9, 2014 Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

LPAC:	Sam Rudman, Kurt Klebe, Sandra Lipsey, Erin Mancini
CDC:	Dave Goldberg, Claudia King
Other Councilors:	Karen Farber, Charlie McBrady
Planning Board:	Christopher Hickey, Tom McKeon, Jay Chase
Conservation Commission:	Jerry Goodall, Sarah Boudreau, Nancy Lightbody, Paul Burlin
Route 100 Committee:	Sarah Boudreau, Andrea Ferrante
Land Management & Acquisition Committee:	Dave Gagnon
Ad Hoc Zoning Committee:	Rachel Reed
Staff present:	Nathan Poore, Theo Holtwijk
Others present:	Colin Ellis, Matthew Ferrante

The special joint LPAC-CDC meeting was intended to be a discussion with invited Town Committee members to discuss tools that might be utilized to further the goals set forth in the Comprehensive Plan concerning encouraging growth in the Plan designated growth areas, and managing growth in the rural areas to best maintain its rural character.

The meeting commenced at 6:05 with introductory remarks from Councilor Claudia King.

Theo Holtwijk then led the meeting by referencing the handout and in particular the two topics of discussion highlighted at the bottom of the first page of the handout.

There were suggestions about how to assist people to avail themselves of currently existing tax programs for tree growth and conservation easements. Conversation also occurred regarding the potential to allow people to partner with abutters to create larger parcels that might be able to take advantage of tax breaks. A countervailing notion regarding the temporal nature of tax breaks was also discussed.

Mention was made of the fact that there are large parcels in the rural area where the next generation is not in a position to maintain the property because of, e.g. money and/or lack of interest. It was discussed that there is a generational shift and that consideration needed to be given to the ability of families to deal with their existing properties.

It was discussed that the Comprehensive Plan refers to the connectivity of future developments. A cautionary remark was made that increasing connectivity can sometimes increase the desire for more development because by adding a connection to the back of a lot might open up the development potential of an otherwise unconnected parcel.

Permit caps were discussed as a tool to address development in the rural area. It was suggested that if caps were in place, that different caps apply to large developments versus small, e.g. 5 lots or less. Mention was made that currently, most permits are being pulled for the rural area. It was suggested that if building caps were in place for the rural area, that this could have the unintended consequence of making market prices go higher because there is less, developable land.

Market forces in this regard were discussed. Mention was made that there is an upcoming meeting scheduled for individuals involved in real estate development in Falmouth. Insofar as growth in the growth area is concerned, there was discussion that LPAC was looking into changes in zoning to reflect the current reality of setbacks and lot size to potentially accommodate ADUs. Mention was made that lot size was looked at five years ago and there was a significant pushback about any zoning changes regarding lot size.

A question arose about the property tax ramifications of changing the zoning for lot sizes. It was suggested that LPAC meet with the assessor to discuss these issues.

Talk ensued about encouraging development in the growth area along the sewer lines. It was pointed out that not all of the designated growth area is served by sewer.

A suggestion was made that perhaps there are swap opportunities available, e.g. swapping development rights in the rural area for the ability to develop in the growth area. It was pointed out that land trusts have already done this sort of thing.

Discussion turned to what kind of density is desirable in the growth area. Various scenarios were discussed, and we need to be mindful of what development might look like in the growth area.

A suggestion was made that consideration be given to the ratio of growth to the burden on town infrastructure. Measurable data does not, yet exist to better define this ratio. The pace of growth was discussed. It was pointed out that Falmouth does not have a lot of commercial space to develop and does not have a lot of development possibilities in the growth area. It was stated that Falmouth's neighbors have desirable areas for building so it is not inevitable that there will be rapid growth in Falmouth anytime soon.

Much discussion ensued about impact fees: how to assess them; what they would be assessed for; and, why they are needed in the first place, if at all. A question arose about the nature of the impact to the Town. Possible impacts are to the schools, to infrastructure uses and to the protection of open space.

Transfer of development rights (TDR) was discussed and there was not a lot of enthusiasm for them as their efficacy as used in other Towns has yet to be proved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. by Theo.

Draft minutes prepared by Sam Rudman, October 16, 2014