



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

Thursday, November 13, 2014 Minutes

ATTENDANCE

LPAC:	Sam Rudman, Sandra Lipsey, Erin Mancini, Paul Bergkamp, Bill Benzing
CDC:	Dave Goldberg, Claudia King, Russ Anderson
Other Councilors:	Karen Farber, Charlie McBrady, Caleb Hemphill
Staff present:	Amanda Stearns, Theo Holtwijk
Others Present:	Anne Theriault, Andy Jackson, Syllas Hatch, Colin Ellis, Rachel Reed, Beth Franklin, Mike Payson, David Banks, Chris Wasileski, Matt Teare, Steve Blais, Michael Jacobson, Andy Berube

The special joint LPAC-CDC meeting was intended to be a discussion with members of the real estate development community 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 was called to order by Theo at 6 p.m.

Sam and Claudia gave brief opening remarks and the discussion began.

Theo presented the issues for the group to consider: What tools would the group consider to encourage growth in the growth area, consistent with already existing neighborhood characteristics, and to manage growth in the rural area to preserve the rural characteristics that the Town indicated in the Comprehensive Plan that it wanted preserved?

Building trends were discussed. It was stated by David Banks that the Tidewater project that was completed in 2005 is an example of housing stock that was attractive to buyers at the beginning of a trend towards good design, small lots, convenience of location and small square footage. Other developments mentioned were Eastern Village in Scarborough, Cumberland Village, Gorham Crossing, Ridgewood in Falmouth, and McKearney Village in Yarmouth.

Bill Benzing asked the group to describe the typical buyer for these kinds of developments. David Banks stated that the typical buyer was not solely a baby boomer. Buyers were also young people with families and retirees.

It was mentioned that Dunstan Crossing in Scarborough has a lot of young families in it. Beth Franklin mentioned that walkability was a feature that people desire. Access to amenities such as a grocery store was a desired feature.

Mike Payson thought that certain demographics, such as the 50 plus age group, were driving the market. Originally, Ridgewood was designed for larger homes than most of the stock that is built currently, and this resulted from a change in market design from larger to smaller homes. Mike mentioned also that there is a project in South Portland where a school is being renovated for apartments. The project is doing well. He asked the question, "who do you want to provide housing for?"

Andy Jackson stated that his company is involved in developing low income projects. He suggested that Route 1 in Falmouth, near the Shaw's shopping center, might qualify for funding for building but that there were impediments to obtaining the funding due to the proximity of woods to the plaza. He suggested looking at getting certified as business friendly by the State, and also looking at TIFs.

Mike Jacobson raised the issue that the Town needs to understand the desires of its population, and the impact that growth would have on current infrastructure such as schools. He talked about the need for zoning on Route 1 to encourage business development.

Amanda noted that Route 1 has been rezoned to encourage mixed use development, and some of the attendees expressed surprise that they had not known about the zoning, sooner.

Matt Teare noted that the Ocean View development was a precursor to the Tidewater project and was an example of how neighborhoods can be created to cater to both young and old.

A question was raised about high rise development along Route 1, and how "high" the development should be, if it was encouraged. Mike Payson noted that his project in South Portland is three stories, and the apartment units are 1,000 to 1,600 square feet. That project provides amenities such as air conditioning and has walkability, and he thought that something like this project would work well on Route 1.

Theo then addressed a question to the attendees about accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Mike Jacobson stated that the formula for determining the size of ADUs was too restrictive and therefore not worth the effort of planning an ADU.

David Banks stated that there are neighborhoods that he has seen, e.g. East Beach in Norfolk, Virginia, and Naples Florida, where ADUs are built successfully, designed well and encourage spaces such as those for an au pair. These are also neighborhoods that are integrated successfully with commercial development.

Mike Jacobson stated that there is a project in Wells that has commercial development on the first floor and apartments on the second floor. He thought that this could be a template for development of the Shaw's plaza.

Andy Jackson stated that his company had studied the VC-1 district regulations requiring non-residential uses on the ground floor. He stated that this could work right on Route 1 or in other marketable locations for commercial spaces, such as in or near the Falmouth Shopping Center, but that other sites off Route 1 that do not have good frontage (such as sites off Clearwater or

Hat Trick Drive) are handicapped by that requirement to have non-residential uses on the ground floor.

Mike Payson stated that the Town was schizophrenic regarding contract zoning, and that the unpredictable nature of the makeup of the Town Council was sometimes discouraging to developers. Payson stressed the need for consistency. This need was seconded by Mike Jacobson.

Discussion ensued about developing around the school area, and Theo discussed why the school area was included in the growth area as opposed to being in the rural area. He stated that the State of Maine had encouraged that the school be listed in the growth area, even though during the Comprehensive process it appeared to LPAC that the school area should be in the rural area.

The notion of "affordability" was raised by Claudia King. She queried the group about the definition.

David Banks stated that in Cumberland, the Town directed people to the Village Green where it had encouraged affordable housing. Banks also proposed that Falmouth's public works department be relocated and that this land be developed. He stressed that in the Cumberland project there was no limit on dwelling size, the implication being that there was no limit on how small the house could be.

The group consensus was that \$300,000 was at the lower end of what would be affordable for a developer to be able to build.

David Banks thought that there would be a market for condominiums in the 1,500 to 1,800 square foot range.

Mike Payson thought that the building costs for these would be in the \$120 to \$150 square foot range.

Mike Jacobson reiterated that the impact of growth on Town infrastructure should be kept in mind. Theo responded that that growth was inevitable, and that what LPAC and CDC were about was thinking of ways to manage the growth.

Mike Jacobson stressed that commercial growth was important, as opposed to residential growth. He cited the Friends school locating to Cumberland instead of Falmouth, as an example.

Russ Anderson asked the group for tools to promote growth in the blue, and to restrain growth in the green.

Mike Jacobson stated that large estates in the green were a tool.

David Banks stated that Cumberland had let it be known that it would be very aggressive in promoting growth along Route 1.

Beth Franklin stated that Freeport had developments that were densely congregated with a lot of open space.

Steve Blais mentioned transfer of development rights (TDRs) as a tool.

Chris Wasileski liked TDRs and thought that this was a tool for the future.

Mike Payson said that there were 2 ways to approach growth in the rural area: large estates and cluster development.

Connectivity was then discussed, and Theo stated that the Falmouth council, in purchasing open space, had connectivity in mind, both for animals as well as humans.

Mike Payson noted that there are now lots of open space. He queried at what point do large estate lots become attractive? He stated that the Town needs to determine whether it wants to look like, e.g. Greenwich Connecticut or another community with cluster housing.

Matt Teare stated that the Comprehensive Plan is meaningless unless it is bolstered with tools such as TIFs, altered zoning, and infrastructure, i.e. sewer and water. If such options are available, he postulated, development would come.

Sandra Lipsey stated that as a Town, we need to be specific and clear in our messaging so that people could react to it.

Chris Wasileski noted that Tidewater was a good example of what messaging could look like. He said that the Town should not make development in the green area prohibitive, but supported development restrictions.

Mike Jacobson talked about restrictive setback issues. As an example, he stated that there was a 980 square foot lot on Andrews Avenue that was not buildable because of setback restrictions.

Paul Bergkamp asked the group to point us to other Towns that do development more predictably.

Mike Jacobson stated that proper zoning is a statement of what the Town wants to have built, and where. He advocated getting rid of complex overlay zones. He liked targeted zoning.

Rachel Reed talked about the unified development code as a means of streamlining.

Theo, Sam and Claudia thanked the group for coming.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Sam Rudman, November 18, 2014 [Rev 1 December 1, 2014](#)