



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Thursday, November 24, 2015 Minutes

Attendance:

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Paul Bergkamp	-	Kurt Klebe	√	Jim Thibodeau	-
Sam Rudman	√	Sandra Lipsey	√	Erin Mancini	-
Tom McKeon	√	Karen Farber, Council Liaison	-	Theo Holtwijk, Staff	√

Others attending: Ethan Croce

Sam started the meeting at 6:00 PM

New member Tom McKeon was introduced. Tom is the liaison from the Planning Board and replaces Bill Benzing as such on LPAC.

1. Review of Draft Minutes of October 22, 2015 Meeting

The draft minutes of October 22, 2015 meeting were approved as written.

2. Review of Resource Conservation Zoning Overlay (RCZO) District

Theo gave a quick overview of the work by LPAC last year and this year. Its current focus is on reviewing the Resource Conservation Zoning Overlay (RCZO) District and the forthcoming West Falmouth Sewer Master Plan. Forthcoming is a review of the Town's street standards. The major guide to this work is the Comprehensive Plan's direction to encourage growth in the growth area, and preserve the character of the rural area.

Following the last meeting, Ethan drafted a memo with four conceptual ideas for the RCZO District. These are intended for discussion and are not endorsed by staff. Sam wondered if these ideas discourage growth in the growth area and encourage it in the rural area, or the other way around.

Kurt asked how the Planning Board handles dead end road waivers and if "hardship" is a criteria for approving them. Ethan explained the two waiver provisions that are possible. There is a general waiver provision that requires a finding of "unique circumstances" and cannot negatively affect the public's health and safety, and there is a newer RCZO waiver provision that can be applied without the "unique circumstances" finding. Ethan acknowledged that the approval of such waiver requests depends a lot of who is serving on the Planning Board at any given moment. Kurt wondered if the RCZO road waiver provision

should be repealed. The committee discussed how road waivers can allow for development and how environmental resources may be impacted.

Tom stated that the Planning Board's application of road waivers has typically met the intent of the ordinance of preserving the environmental resources to the greatest extent possible. He felt that having the ordinance's current flexibility helps the board. It was recognized that sometimes there are competing values when road connections are pursued and there are unavoidable impacts on environmental resources. Kurt asked to what extent economic factors get factored in by the Planning Board. Tom responded that they do not.

Kurt wondered what would be accomplished by changing the amount of open space that is set aside in RCZO projects. If the required percentage is greater, then greater open space areas can be created. He also stated that the ordinance allows various improvements to be placed in these open space areas and wondered how appropriate that was. He said that his initial inclination was to eliminate the RCZO rules in the growth area, but now felt that that was not a good idea. He did think that a different open space percentage should be set for the growth area, but that there should otherwise be a single set of RCZO rules.

The committee discussed the two charges it was dealing with for RCZO. On the one hand it saw the RCZO as a tool to help direct growth, and on the other hand it saw it as a tool to help improve resource conservation.

The committee discussed the first concept. Kurt suggested changing the open space percentage from 30 to 50% in the rural area and from 30 to 20% in the growth area. It was recognized that this would not affect density in the rural area, but could lead to a higher quality of open space. The committee agreed to review all concepts before making any decisions on each one. The committee was interested to learn more about Freeport's tiered open space percentages.

Sam raised a cautionary note on the second concept - eliminating the dead end road waiver provision. Sandra was wondering if no dead end waivers were available, would this lead to different behavior by developers who now may be seeking road connectivity. It was recognized that without a dead end road waiver certain land would become undevelopable. Sandra suggested that this would have a greater impact on the rural area than the growth area. Ethan noted that currently there is a 15 house lot maximum on a dead end road in the Residential C and Farm and Forest area.

The committee saw merit in applying changes to the dimensional requirements to the growth area. Sandra suggested that a table be created that shows the impact of each of the concepts to the rural and the growth area.

The committee saw benefits to expanding the RCZO rules to all forms of housing.

3. West Falmouth Sewer Master Plan

Theo said that staff needed more time to review the draft West Falmouth Sewer Master Plan and that a joint review by LPAC and CDC that was scheduled for December 10 had been postponed until a date TBD.

4. Other Business

There was no other business.

5. Next Meeting

The committee agreed to meet next on January 14, 2016.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, November 30, 2015