



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee + (LPAC+)

Thursday, December 8, 2016 Minutes

Attendance:

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Paul Bergkamp	√	Kurt Klebe	-	Breana Gersen	-
Sam Rudman	-	Sandra Lipsey	√	Becca Casey	√
Tom McKeon, PB representative	-	Ned Kitchel, Council Liaison to LPAC	√	Sarah Boudreau, Conservation Commission representative	√
Caleb Hemphill, Council Liaison to LMAC	-	Ted Asherman, LMAC representative	√	Jenny Grimm, Falmouth Land Trust	-
Lucky D'Ascanio	-	Bob Shafto, Open Space Ombudsman	√ via phone	Dave Gagnon, LMAC representative	√
Theo Holtwijk	√				

Sandra started the meeting around 6:00 PM. Introductions were made.

1. Review of Minutes

The draft minutes of the September 8, 2016 and November 10, 2016 meetings were unanimously approved as written.

2. Continued Discussion of Approach to 2017 Falmouth Open Space Plan

The committee reviewed the various background materials that Bob and Lucky had provided. Ted and Bob commented on the approach of putting easements on conservation properties when there is an opportunity to leverage grant funds.

Bob clarified that the Public Lands and Trails map includes parks. Paul wondered what the risk was for including parks as part of open space. David explained that Community Park was part open space and part athletic fields and that it was acquired with some general fund money, making it potentially not as protected as one might imagine. Sarah asked how Community Park was managed. It is managed in two parts. Bob added that the eastern 20 acres is protected through an easement.

Bob noted that the summary chart contained some incorrect data and that he would supply a corrected chart.

The committee discussed the importance and value of easements. Bob stated that some grants require easements. It was noted that the Town needed to be strategic where to place any future easements. Ned gave a history of the Zacharias farm. That site had been considered for a school. There was a discussion which buildings remained on the site and which part of the site was under a conservation easement.

Next the committee reviewed the two maps. One was a 2008 conceptual map of where to pursue contiguous open space. The other showed what open spaces exist today. Ted reviewed the maps. The contiguous aspect was intended to serve people as well as wildlife. Bob added that the group looked where open space blocks that were greater than 250 acres were available. The concept map was a working document. Bob noted that the current public lands map shows a high degree of congruence with the concept map.

The committee reviewed the two rating forms. These are used to determine whether or not to recommend open space acquisitions or trail improvements and to provide a basis for property owners and the Town Council to understand the committee's rationale. Paul asked if all open spaces in town had been rated according to these forms. Only the new acquisitions have been rated. Ted explained that weighting of various factors was also incorporated. There was a discussion if the two forms could be integrated into a single one. It was explained why that was difficult and also how the forms are typically used. LMAC members visit a prospective site and then provide individual ratings of the same site. These are then discussed; ratings are possibly adjusted, and then averaged. Bob felt that this rubric worked well, but could perhaps be strengthened by better explaining the natural function descriptors. There was a question on section 7c how a property gets 6 points. It gets that if it is located in the Rural Area, but it could also be less than 6 points. It was stressed that the rating forms were not precise and were only a guide whether or not to recommend a property. Ted added that a goal was to relate the forms to the current open space plan.

There was a discussion if there was a threshold below which properties would not be recommended. Bob said that typically all recommended properties got 70+ points. Properties with less than 70 points have typically not been pursued, but Bob added that it was not an exact science. Ted said that the forms provided property background and were an informational tool. Paul felt that the forms made sense as they clarified the acquisitions strategy. Dave added that connectivity has become more important. Becca felt that the Comprehensive Plan could help weigh the various factors. Paul thought that the forms were a great tool.

There was a discussion about the jewel properties as few such acquisitions had been made. Bob stated that those properties were not rated and had been back-burnered due to limited funding. It was felt that they were still a priority. Becca added that those properties could do a lot to help maintain the rural feel of Falmouth.

Next, the committee discussed what should be included in the definition of "open space." Sandra stated that she had always felt that parks and recreation sites were part of open space. Ted stated that those sites were typically more developed. Sandra stated that the parks and recreation sites could help to have one move from one open space to another and therefore should not be discounted. Connectivity to recreation areas was important and had

a high value to people from a living perspective. She felt the committee needed to invest some strategic thinking into this. Becca concurred from a practical managerial standpoint. Paul felt that this would leverage an opportunity to bring together “natural living” in Falmouth with “natural spaces.” Dave said that this reflected the distinction between active and passive spaces.

Bob stated that preserving the natural functions of the land had been most important, not satisfying the immediate needs of people. Sandra felt that there had been a cultural shift which included respect for the land but also a desire to get transported through the community. As the planning for open space is done, other properties should be included, she stated. The Comprehensive Plan had identified a rural part of the community as well as an active part with accessibility to open space. Dave felt that pristine areas should be guarded. The need for separate dog parks was mentioned. Ted gave a personal history as to how he has seen the town change. Dave added that the history of pocket parks has been controversial. A careful review of easements was necessary as well as some prevented topographic changes, which meant that some good changes just could not be pursued. Dave did not want to lose the focus on the pristine natural areas. Becca felt that those were a great building block for the broader open space plan. Paul felt that a larger scope would help to better integrate the existence with other spaces in the open space framework.

There was a discussion on terminology. Ted said that the terminology reflected the broader land management approach. Sandra said that sharing the same vocabulary represented shared values and concluded that the committee should do so more ruminating on this. Ted said that he was comfortable with the broader open space direction the committee had taken.

3. Next Meeting

The committee decided not to meet on December 22. The next LPAC meeting will be January 12, 2017. Open space tour dates will be explored through a Doodle poll that Theo will send out.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, December 16, 2016 Rev. 1