



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee + (LPAC+)

Saturday, January 21, 2017 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, Town staff	√	Bob Shafto, Open Space Ombudsman	√	Dave Gagnon, LMAC representative	√
Theo Holtwijk, Town Staff	√				

Open Space Tour

LPAC made a van tour of conservation properties. The tour started at 9:00 AM.

Bob Shafto prepared the tour information below.

The Town of Falmouth currently owns over 1,700 acres of public land. It also assisted in the purchase of an additional 381 acres of protected land.

<i>Italics:</i>	Properties visited
<u>Underline:</u>	Properties observed

Town-owned conservation properties that were seen on the tour included:

1. Woods Road Community Forest: This property encompasses one of the oldest forests in this part of the state. It also contains several miles of scenic trails popular with hikers. It is closed to the public in winter months in keeping with its status as a Maine Dept. IF&W designated deer wintering area. Periodic wood harvests are also conducted to maintain its value as a deer wintering area. A parking

lot was added to the site in 2013. It was acquired to mitigate the impact on a deer wintering area when the Woodlands County Club was developed in the late 1980s. It is protected by a DEP order.

2. East Branch Conservation Area: This 55-acre parcel includes over a mile of shoreline along the East Branch of the Piscataqua River, beginning at Woodville Road, and many vernal pools. Much of it is a hardwood terraced floodplain forest, a relative rare forest type. It was acquired in 2010 and entirely paid for by a Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program grant. There are no trails on the property, or as yet no easy public access, but there is a canoe/kayak launching area. When water levels are high enough, this is an excellent water trail, with take-outs at both Field and Falmouth Roads. The town is negotiating the purchase of an additional three acres that would allow for public access and a trail.

3. Town Forest: Acquired by the town in 1941 for back taxes and connected by a trail to **Community Park North**. Easement protected.

4. Suckfish Brook Conservation Area: Suckfish Brook Conservation Area is a 94-acre parcel that includes extensive wetlands, including portions of Falmouth's only northern peat bog, ±1,500 feet of frontage on Suckfish Brook, and 40 acres of upland hardwood forest. An additional 38-acres on the southern end have been conserved by the City of Westbrook. There is a mile of woodland trails on the northern portion of the property, with connections to additional trails on private and Land Trust parcels. On the southern end, a ¼-mile long trail that provides access to an elevated walkway into the bog. The Falmouth property was acquired in 2012 with funding from the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program and the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership. Most of the property was part of the original ±500 acre Huston farm, a prominent early Falmouth family. A memorial gravestone for the Huston family is located on the northern edge of the parcel, just off the loop trail. The Westbrook portion was acquired in 2013 through Falmouth's efforts and is managed by Falmouth. The town will soon add another 43-acres of land on the west side of Mast Road that will protect over 2,200 feet of shoreline on Suckfish Brook, 400 feet of lake frontage, and 15-acres of wetlands. The entire cost of this parcel was paid from Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program and DEP grants. The Falmouth Land Trust holds or will hold, an easement on all three sections of the property.

5. North Falmouth Community Forest: North Falmouth Community Forest includes ±373 acres of the most remote property in town. As the name suggests, the property is entirely wooded with a mix of hard and softwood species. The property includes a key snowmobile trail and over 4-miles of hiking trails. The Forest is entirely wooded and home to a variety of woodland species of wildlife, especially whitetail deer. Several vernal pools are also located on the property. Land for Maine Future and US Forest Service grants paid for much of this acreage. It is protected with a combination of easements and funder project agreements.

6. Blackstrap Hill Community Forest: Most of this property was acquired in 1995 as part of the Wilshore Farm conservation project, in part with Land for Maine's Future funds. Its 234-acres includes over eight miles of trails that connect with trails on the adjacent Land Trust owned Blackstrap Hill Preserve. Those trails also connect to both N. Falmouth and Hadlock Community Forests. The property encompasses nearly a mile of shoreline along the West Branch of the Piscataqua River. It is popular with mountain bikers, hunters and fishermen. It is permanently protected with a conservation easement held by the Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Dept.

7. Hadlock Community Forest: Located between Hadlock Road and Winn Road, and almost 300 acres in size, Hadlock Community Forest (HCF) is one of the largest contiguous open space areas in Falmouth. Over four miles of marked hiking trails lead to Winn Road, Blackstrap Hill Community Forest, and Range Road and the Rines Forest in Cumberland. There are also snowmobile trails on the

property. The HCF forest is managed to improve its wildlife habitat value and the overall health of the forest. Ninety-six (96) of its 292-acres is easement protected.

8. High Meadows Property

This property is a 15-acre subdivision parcel abutting Route 100. Access is very limited and it remains unmanaged.

The tour was concluded at 1:30 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, January 23, 2017