



Town of Falmouth  
Community Development Committee (Council Sub-Committee)  
**DRAFT Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2014**  
Town Hall Conference Room

**Members Present:** Councilor Anderson, Councilor Pierce, Councilor Goldberg  
**Staff Present:** Nathan Poore, Amanda Stearns, Ethan Croce, Theo Holtwijk  
**Others Present:** Councilor King

Councilor Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:09 AM.

### **1. Review of Draft Minutes**

The draft minutes of December 23, 2013 meeting were approved as submitted.

### **2. Route One Communications Strategy**

The FEIC has discussed this topic several times with assistance from Councilor Goldberg who developed a communications brief after receiving input from committee members. The CDC has not reviewed this brief yet.

Councilor Goldberg commented that there was a schism at FEIC if the strategy should be focused on business owners or, instead, be aimed at a broader audience. There appeared to be a need to project regular construction project updates as well as to communicate the vision for Route One. He believed that this communication should be professional, consistent, and predictable, as these messages are likely to be scrutinized. This will require some funding in the order of \$50-60K.

Nathan stated that in that case the FEIC could continue to act as a sounding board and relay back what it hears in the business community. Councilor Anderson agreed and stated that he did not see the FEIC as having the lead responsibility for these communications, as some of them will require immediate action and cannot wait for committee meetings to be scheduled. Having feedback from the business community would be helpful.

Councilor Pierce asked to what extent this effort would tackle rebranding of Falmouth or Route One and if a visual component would be part of that. Councilor Goldberg responded that he recently met with Nathan and Theo to discuss wayfinding. He stated that the sense with that discussion was not to hold up the tactics of that effort, but instead run with it. He reiterated that he did not see the Route One communications taking place at the committee level. He envisioned that a plan would be defined and executed and that it could involve links to the Town's website, ads, signage, and other measures.

Councilor Pierce added that she also envisioned a relationship with the Clerk of the Works for the project. Councilor Goldberg stated that he envisioned CDC oversight of this effort. The committee discussed the good job the Maine Turnpike did with communicating about its widening project. Nathan stated that Carol Morris helped MDOT with Martin's Point Bridge project. He felt that the funding for this should come out of the \$11.7M project budget. He hoped for favorable bids to come back.

Councilor Goldberg suggested that the communications scope could be made part of the bid package. Contractors, if they do not have this expertise in-house, would likely team up with a subcontractor for that effort. Councilor Anderson stated that ultimately the Town needed to control the message, not the contractor. He also felt that the qualifications for this should not in any way be compromised, meaning that one might get a good bid with an average communications plan.

Councilor Goldberg suggested a plan B. Since there is no in-house communications professional in Town Hall, he suggested that for \$15-20K a vendor could be hired to help develop a communications plan, but that such a plan could be executed in-house. Councilor Pierce liked that approach and agreed that the Town needed help to develop the plan. She wondered how much staff time was available and who would execute the plan. Councilor Anderson wondered if student assistance from USM could be used. Councilor Goldberg stated that in his experience student interns need a lot of management. He suggested that for \$15K the Town could get 120-200 hours of professional time, which he felt was a lot.

Nathan envisioned an in-house team of himself, Jay Reynolds, Amy Lamontagne, and Theo, plus the project manager and clerk of the works. He also felt that Mike McDade could provide assistance. He noted that plan B would give more control of the message to the Town.

Councilor Anderson wondered about the timeline would be as he felt that communications should start this spring. Nathan replied that he expected construction to start by the end of April. If the expense is less than \$20K, less formal bid requirements apply. He expected that the communications effort could synch up with the construction effort. Bids are expected to come back by the end of March.

Councilor Goldberg mentioned that he and Councilor Anderson will meet soon with the incoming president of the Falmouth-Cumberland Community Chamber.

### **3. FEIC Updates**

#### **a. Economic Development Plan**

Councilor Anderson reported that the FEIC had a discussion about what role it could play in the development of an economic development plan for the Town. As the first step, the committee is proposing that it be charged with coming up with an approach for developing such a plan. This would include who should be involved, how would it be done, and what issues would be tackled. He expected that the FEIC could come back with an approach in March, and that a broader group would then be charged with developing the plan.

Councilor Pierce asked if this proposal needed Council approval. The sense was that it did not as it was a proposed approach that would be sent for review to the Council. The council can modify it as it sees fit. The committee liked the proposal from the FEIC.

#### **b. Business Association Feasibility Process**

Theo gave a brief introduction as the genesis of the proposed feasibility process. Councilor Anderson commented that other towns had associations that typically organized events, such as Shop Falmouth. He stated that the recent Shop Falmouth survey indicated that people felt that that effort should continue, but that the businesses should be more in charge of organizing it themselves.

Councilor Pierce wondered why the local businesses are not organizing the feasibility process as she felt there was a limit what the Town should do. She also wondered what the role of the Chamber was in this respect.

Councilor Goldberg felt that there was value in a public-private partnership and that it was worth to try and see if there was an organic demand for a business association. With the Route One project being in parallel, some businesses may be resistant. Nathan concurred that the effort was aimed to see if there is demand or not. Councilor Anderson felt that the Route One project could be spark to create an association. If there was no demand, he was OK with that too. Councilor Goldberg agreed that the Route 1 construction disruption could be the event to help establish an organization. The committee concurred with the proposed approach.

#### **4. Comprehensive Plan – Land Use Discussion**

Councilor Anderson suggested to first look at the data that had been prepared. Amanda stated that the focus had been on residential activity. She noted that in 2013 there had been 127 permits issued by the codes office for new units. Sixty of those units are by OceanView, which is untypical for any given year. The growth cap is for 65 units per year, but it applies only to some single family units. The planning board approved in 2013 122 new units. Ninety-five of them are for OceanView. The committee reviewed the colored graph and Amanda explained that the peak in Planning Board approvals in 2005-6 played through in the following years as subsequent building permits were sought for projects such as Ridgewood and Tidewater. Two new permit applications in December were held over until January as the 65 unit cap had been reached. This is the first time in Amanda's tenure with the Town that that has happened.

Councilor Goldberg asked what the January indicators were. Amanda said she did not know yet as January numbers become available not until some time in February. She did note that a typical busy time for permit applications is the winter, so people can get ready for spring construction, but that lately it had been busy year-round and that a winter foundation start was not unusual. She noted that the Planning Board activity for 2013 was mostly in the growth area. Subdivision approvals do not expire as long as conditions of approval are maintained.

Amanda stated that three applications had been received in 2014 and that all of them are in the rural zone of the Town. Two of the three projects are in an area that has been targeted for zoning review as it is currently zoned RB. Amanda also stated that she had a lot of inquiries for additional development, but that those were confidential. Most of those are proposed to be located in the rural area. Councilor Goldberg stated that he could understand that as most of the available land for development was in the rural area. Councilor Pierce stated that she did not want to put a stop on the three applications, but that she felt the Town should not wait with taking measures to protect the rural area from overdevelopment. She asked how much of the rural area was currently protected, and where the growth boundary was located relative to the land that could potentially be developed. Theo gave a brief overview of the maps that had been prepared for the Comprehensive Plan and stated that the plan text discussed some of these issues and contained additional data.

Amanda noted that Route 1 allows upper story residential use as a tool to encourage growth in the growth area. Councilor Pierce wondered what other steps could be taken. Amanda reviewed the Comprehensive Plan worksheets. A discussion on action #21 followed. It was explained that the current zoning does not reflect the existing development pattern in some neighborhoods. Councilor Anderson wondered how infill development in established neighborhoods would help to address the issue of growth concerns in the rural area. Limiting development in the growth area may push development more into the rural area. Councilor Pierce felt it was a stepping stone and that other measures would be needed as well. Amanda gave the example of the Seaside subdivision where new lots are required to have 20,000 sf, but where adjacent lots are much smaller. More development could have occurred there

and still be in keeping with the neighborhood. Councilor Pierce felt that the character of existing neighborhoods could and should be preserved while more development on public sewer was encouraged. Councilor Anderson asked how much capacity that would free up. He wondered if this was a large staff effort and if it had a large payback or not.

Councilor Pierce suggested that LPAC focus on some growth-related actions and the CDC focus on some rural-related actions. The committee what a “significant majority” of growth in the growth area meant and agreed that at some point that needed to be more precisely defined. Councilor Anderson said that he felt this should be over a 10-year period, but wondered how often it should be measured, such as once a year? He noted the annual variations in the graph that the committee had reviewed. He also felt that a ratio, such as “2/3rds,” makes one developer in the rural area dependent upon a developed in the growth area moving forward or not.

Councilor Pierce was concerned that there currently is no limit to growth ion the rural area. She suggested that increasing lot size may be one measure to consider. Councilor Anderson state that he wondered if high rise development on Route One was the best way to balance that out. Amanda stated that one example of that already exists of that at Tidewater and stated the selling prices for those upper story units. The sense of the committee was that the focus should be on the map of potential areas for zoning review. Actions 44, 46, 50, and 21 were mentioned as possible next steps.

Councilor Anderson wondered if LPAC would work on development of incentives in the growth area, if that effort would slow that effort down. He felt it was important to have balanced approach. Councilor Pierce suggested that nothing had been done in the rural area, except for property acquisitions. That could continue, but was an expensive way to protect rural character.

Theo suggested that based on the committee’s feedback of a balanced, short list, staff could make some recommendations for CDC review. Amanda added that including an early accomplishment such as action 64 may also be helpful. Council Anderson liked the idea of some staff recommendations. Councilor Goldberg how long it would take for all applicable Comprehensive Plan actions to be implemented. Theo stated that the Plan has a targeted timeline of 10 years and that LPAC had worked with high, medium, and low priorities, suggesting in a very general way that the high priorities should be targeted for completion in year 1-3, the next set in year 4-6, and the low ones in year 7-10.

Councilor Goldberg noted that some of the measure seemed to be aimed to the rate of growth, where others affect the nature of that growth. He felt the focus should be on the rate of growth. Amanda stated that she could note which action might have what effect.

The committee requested to see a single sheet of recommended actions by its next meeting. Nathan requested that each councilor present submit their top two candidates for the growth area and the rural area.

## **5. Route 100 Vision**

The committee was OK with the proposed approach for Route 100, which was to be discussed by the full Council later that day.

## **6. Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **7. Next Meeting**

The Committee will meet next on February 3, 2014 at 8:00 AM.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.

Draft Minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, January 28, 2014