



Town of Falmouth  
Community Development Committee (Council Sub-Committee)  
**approved Meeting Minutes – June 9, 2014**  
Town Hall Large Conference Room

**Members present:** Councilor Anderson, Councilor Goldberg

**Staff present:** None

**Others present:** Councilor King

[Note: The June 2 meeting was postponed and held on June 9, 2014.]

Councilor Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

1. **Approve Minutes** – April 10, May 5 and May 12 - Unanimously approved were the minutes to CDC meetings held on April 10, May 5, and May 12, 2014.

## 2. **Comprehensive Plan Implementation**

Russ indicated today's meeting objectives are to discuss and attempt to prioritize or narrow the range of options available to us as well as discuss how best to engage the public and stakeholders in this process. Also to set some kind of target timeframe for bringing something forward to the Council. Since this is a two-pronged effort, with LPAC working on the growth area incentives and CDC on rural areas, they need to come together through the CDC and then to the Council. Russ suggested a target date of the end of this calendar year. LPAC has indicated it needs several months to do its work. Dave agreed with this goal but mentioned that this would need to have at least a half dozen touch points with the public and stakeholders.

Russ referred to the articles that Amanda had provided. Discussion on each followed:

a. Discuss Communication Strategy including stakeholder group and possible types of members

Dave suggested a school board member or senior member of the school staff would be important to engage in this since the primary impact of residential development can be on the schools. It was agreed that a stakeholders group should include:

- School board member or school senior staff member
- Property owners
- Developers
- Residents
- Other experts

It was agreed that the next CDC meeting should further flesh out the growth permit/building permit issue, impact fees and density, while getting more specific about the composition and role of a stakeholders group and a broader public communications strategy about this work.

b. Discuss prioritization of possible zoning tools

1) Growth permits for new residential lots and building permits

Russ mentioned that currently we have an annual cap on residential building permits of 65, without distinction between growth and rural areas. He suggested one tool could be to apply the cap just to the rural areas and lower the annual number. Dave brought up the growth permit, or as we discussed it, a new annual limit on approved building lots or sub-divisions. Claudia suggested a limit on the size of any one sub-division in the rural areas, and thought that some neighboring towns had such a limit. Questions were raised as to whether we need both building permit limits and approved lot limits, or would one or the other be sufficient. There was uncertainty about the downstream impacts of each, and agreement that we need more information from staff and stakeholders.

2) Purchase of development rights

With regard to Purchase of Development Rights, Russ mentioned several advantages, including its simplicity (relative to Transfer of Dev. Rights), the fact that it is voluntary and permanent and costs less than outright land acquisition. Claudia added that it gives the town flexibility to treat properties uniquely as opposed to zoning which is more "one size fits all". The principal drawback in the article was that it requires public funding approval, but Russ referred to the pre-authorized open space referendum of \$5 million. Dave mentioned that this hasn't been tapped at all, and suggested we look at the referendum wording to be sure it can be used for purchase of development rights as opposed to outright land acquisitions. Dave indicated this could be a good tool if coupled with a "stick" approach that would restrict development in some way if the owner retained the purchase rights.

3) Transfer of development rights

Russ said this seemed more complicated especially for a town of our size. It would require three parties per transaction, with the town "making the market" and finding buyers and sellers of development rights. Dave questioned whether this was an appropriate role for the town to play. There was agreement that this was less desirable as a tool than the Purchase of Development Rights and should be put on the back burner.

Russ suggested that an overall approach that included purchasing development rights, coupled with new annual permit caps (of some kind) focused on the rural areas, and LPAC generated recommendations on how to increase incentives for growth in the growth areas, could form a good framework for a CDC recommendation to the Council. Dave agreed.

Claudia pointed out that there were other tools in the information Amanda provided that we hadn't discussed, such as reduced density and impact fees. Russ and Dave agreed we need to discuss those more. Russ pointed out that reduced density (larger lot sizes) might not give us the result we want; that the property in question could still be developed with large estates of 10+ acres. Impact fees could be viewed as ineffective in that they change the economic picture, and could raise housing prices in the area in question, but might not reduce unwanted development. Claudia mentioned that they could be a source of revenue to fund future open space acquisitions. Dave commented that what is at stake here is what kind of town we want to be in 10 or 20 years.

3. Other Business - none
4. Next Meeting – TBD
5. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 am.