



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Thursday, May 22, 2014 Minutes

Attendance:

| Name | Present | Name | Present | Name | Present |
|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| Paul Bergkamp | - | Kurt Klebe | √ | Jim Thibodeau | - |
| Sam Rudman | √ | Sandra Lipsey | √ | Erin Mancini | √ |
| Bill Benzing | √ | | | | |

Council Liaison: -
Staff present: Theo Holtwijk
Others present: -

The meeting was called to order by Sam at 6 PM. Everyone introduced themselves as Bill was a new member. Bill related some of his experiences with recent Planning Board applications in the Route One area.

Kurt asked who coordinates the rural and growth area recommendations. Theo replied that on a day-to-day basis he and Amanda coordinate, and that on a policy basis the CDC is the coordinating body. Kurt pointed out that the make-up of the CDC changes. It was noted that the LPAC Council Liaison has changed regularly as well.

1. Review of Draft Minutes

Upon a motion by Kurt, the draft minutes of February 27 and May 8, 2014 were unanimously approved by those present at each meeting.

2. Report on CDC Discussion

Sam and Sandra reported on their meeting with the CDC on May 12. Sam said that the meeting went well. LPAC’s work plan and next steps were reviewed by the CDC. He explained that the CDC will focus on the rural area, while LPAC will tackle the growth area. The CDC was interested to communicate with rural property owners, but was wondering about communication with people in the growth area. Sam said the CDC expected that LPAC will offer up specific parcels where such growth could occur. Sam saw it as a partnership with CDC to work on this.

Kurt noted that there may be pushback in the rural area if the Town were to institute, for example, a 50% requirement for open space preservation in the rural portion of the Resource Conservation Zoning District, even though that requirement was on the books in the past.

Similarly, Sam noted that there may be pushback in the growth areas when certain non-conformities are removed in the growth area. He felt that residents may be OK with it if it is explained that more growth in the growth area helps to preserve the character of the rural part of the community.

3. Discuss Next Steps in LPAC Work Plan Approach for Growth Area

Theo reviewed each of the actions in the Next Steps chart. He talked with Justin Brown, Code Enforcement Officer, about the BZA application data and learned that a good number of would-be applicants never apply to BZA because they are advised their odds are not good. Justin will supply the requested data, and Theo thought it would be good to have Justin talk directly with LPAC as he deals with the applicants as well as BZA and has a good feel for the issues that play. Justin confirmed that the existing zoning requirements are out of synch with existing building patterns.

Theo also reported that he had talked with the Town Manager about consulting assistance. The Town Manager had given the OK to obtain cost estimates for that. As next step, Theo will meet with the Town's mapping consultant, Judy Colby George, to see what kind of maps she could produce that would support the work plan. He suggested holding off on an architect or landscape architect to help with sketch plans for the pilot sites until such time as sites had been identified and specific work assignments could be better defined. Even though Falmouth has some excellent professionals that live here, he suggested pursuing an out of town person, so as to avoid the perception of a conflict of interest. The committee was in agreement with this approach.

Kurt asked if there were any specific recommended standards for, by way of example, minimum set backs. Theo did not think so, as that depends on many factors, but he will provide a reference to a general guide. He thought that the Traditional Neighborhood report that the State of Maine put out a few years ago may be helpful.

Bill stated that many developers seek to place as many units on a site as possible. Combined with environmental restrictions and set backs, that often does not leave much flexibility in the building envelope for the placement of a home on a lot.

Next, Theo reviewed the LPAC tasks. Sam wondered what size lots the committee should be looking for in the growth area. It was recognized that there are few large parcels left. Bill felt that there may be good potential with lots that are 3-4 acres. Kurt thought that all lots larger than 2 acres should be looked at. Bill noted that there will likely be neighborhood resistance. Sandra replied that it was the role of LPAC to be the voice of the future, and that there needs to be different dialogue in the community as the Town now has a different plan. Theo added that a community dialogue was very much needed to help build community understanding and support. Erin noted that she was living on the edge of the rural-growth area and that her family has enjoyed the rural environment. She would not like to sacrifice that for more growth. It was recognized that living in the growth area was not meant, or intended, for everyone.

The committee suggested various sites that potentially serve as pilot growth sites, where ideas of appropriate development could be tested. It was agreed that owners of these sites

would be contacted and permission sought, before any sketch plans would be developed. Half dozen sites were suggested. Theo will do some research on each them and bring that data back to the committee.

The committee also generated a list of built projects that should be studied by the committee for their density and design characteristics. Theo will do the same with that list.

Sam was wondering if there were examples from other places as what could be done with a property such as the Falmouth Shopping Center. Sandra said there many examples. Theo concurred and said that the Town and Mark Eyerman had researched a number of other sites as part of the 2009 public workshop on the FSC site. Sam noted that a lack of improvements to large commercial sites such as that could affect the overall image of the town. Bill was wondering if commercial areas such as Route 1 could ever become truly walkable. Sandra felt that the task of LPAC was to ask the community what might cause people to walk in that area. Erin confirmed that AARP, an organization that she has worked for, was also interested in promoting more walkable communities. Bill said he did recognize that Route 1 had undergone a tremendous amount of change, but felt there was a long way to go. He also noted that NIMBY issues would continue to play a role in most development projects. Sandra felt that LPAC was ready to have that dialogue with the community.

The group discussed who from the real estate community to ask for expert advice. Theo will distribute the list of people who participated in the LPAC discussion 3 or so years ago, as well as all who were invited. Bill felt that it was key to have the growth area maps in hand, so that group could help with pointing to areas where it felt growth could occur. Sam replied that the real estate group would also be asked for its insights into real estate trends. He noted that in the prior discussion, developers had said to the Town: Just be clear in stating what you want and what the Town's vision is. The timing of this discussion was reviewed. Sandra hoped it could happen in late June or early July. Key decisions regarding that would need to be made by the next meeting.

4. Other Business

Theo handed out a flyer regarding an upcoming workshop on Wayfinding Signage, invited the committee, and asked for tis help in distributing as many pamphlets as possible to others.

5. Next Meeting

Various people could not come on June 12 or June 5. Theo will send out a Doodle poll to inquire about availability for June. That will determine the next meeting date.

The meeting was adjourned around 8:00 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, May 23, 2014