



Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Attendance

MEMBERS

William Lunt, Chair
Dimitri Balatsos
Pam DiPietro-Hale ✓
Ethan Gamage ✓
Sandra Lipsey ✓
Mindy Schwartz
Chris Wasileski

COUNCIL LIAISONS

Karen Farber ✓
Charlie McBrady

STAFF

Nathan Poore
Theo Holtwijk ✓
Andrew Clark ✓

Theo began the meeting at 5:30 pm.

1. Review of draft minutes from the April 19 meeting

As there was no quorum, the committee could not move on the draft minutes.

2. Review of project updates

Theo led the committee through a handout summarizing various ongoing projects related to economic development.

ROUTE 1 NORTH The Route 1 North Committee has received a draft *Route 1 North Vision Plan*, detailing their work to present. Theo presented a map showing the major parcels in the area. Sites 4, 5, and 6 are vacant, and the committee's vision plan is setting the stage for development in the area. Theo noted that the owner of Site 5, Peter Kennedy, has suggested residential-type uses (senior housing, assisted living facilities, medical facilities, etc.). This contrasts with the current zoning designation of the site, Business Professional, and with the consultant's recommendations. Theo noted that while there are differences of opinion among the members, the committee as a whole believes that BP zoning is best for the site.

Pam asked whether Mr. Kennedy's site was zoned as BP when he bought it. Theo answered that indeed it was, and that business owners in the district have relied on that designation as they have made their investments in the area.

Sandra asked about the presence of ledge. Theo said that ledge was a factor, and that significant drop-offs could be a danger, rendering the site less conducive to residential use.

Sandra asked if Mr. Kennedy has a desire to develop his property quickly. Theo answered that that may be the case, but that there have been many differing plans over the years. In a recent letter to the town manager, Mr. Kennedy expressed that he felt ignored, and intends to move forward in developing offices and warehouses on the site.

Pam asked about the general jurisdiction of the decision making. Theo noted that the zoning as it exists today is separate from the committee's final vision plan. Zoning is a part of the recommendations of the final plan, along with

infrastructure improvements and trail connectivity. If the Town Council approves of the vision, the project will move to the preliminary planning phase.

Sandra commented that there are strong voices in the community envisioning Falmouth's future. She hopes the Route 1 North committee's recommendations will be taken seriously and adhered to.

Theo noted that staff will need to make final edits, including a section on costs and financing, to the report before it can go before the Town Council. The work will likely be presented before the new Town Council in July.

FALMOUTH SPUR RAMP REDEVELOPMENT Initial discussions surrounding this project remain in Executive Session. Theo will update the committee when the discussions go public.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT The Town has submitted a grant application to assist in the implementation of a comprehensive stormwater management plan for the Route 1 commercial area. The Town would like to be proactive in light of potential future development in close proximity to Norton Brook. The Town is working with CCSWCD and several other municipalities on a regional effort.

ZONING AMENDMENT: SMALL COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES The Town Council has passed a zoning amendment that could make expansion at the former Pratt-Abbott site more feasible. Karen pointed out that the amendment applies to all commercial properties with less than 2,000 square feet in building footprint. These smaller buildings can now be expanded without the need for a full site review.

ZONING AMENDMENT: PROHIBITING CAR WASHES IN THE VC-1 ZONE Five County Credit Union is relocating to Yarmouth, and its current Route 1 location is for lease. A potential leasee inquired about a car wash facility being placed there. Such a use was intended to be prohibited in the VC-1 zone. Staff are working to correct an oversight in the ordinance, and conversations with the potential leasee regarding the oversight have been cordial. Karen pointed out that a car wash would be permitted in the VC-2 zone.

The committee wondered why FCCU decided to move, and while no one can be certain, Theo surmised that with the Route 1 corridor serving Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, and Freeport, they may have desired to be in a more central location relative to the market they serve.

TOWN PROPERTY ACQUISITION The Town is in the process of acquiring a 50 foot strip of land adjacent to Falmouth Physical Therapy that may serve as a future means of access to Foreside Estates and Clearwater Dr.

COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT The owner of Falmouth Plaza is reviewing options for redevelopment of the former Wendy's and another building they own on Depot Rd. The Town owns the corner lot, and Theo said the parties are in dialog.

COMPLETE STREET STUDY The Town has contracted TYLin to lead an effort to make recommendations for multi-modal travel, especially bike/ped and transit, on the Route 1 and Route 88 corridors, in conjunction with Cumberland and Yarmouth. The Town is considering a roundabout at the Route 1 and Route 88 intersection. Theo pointed out that reconfiguring this intersection could yield a significant amount of Town-owned land for development.

ROUTE 100 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS Stantec has proposed a sewer design to the Wastewater Department.

WEST FALMOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD SKETCH PLAN The West Falmouth Neighborhood Sketch Plan, conceptualized by Stantec and reviewed by LPAC and the Route 100 Committee, will be presented at the next Town Council meeting.

WEST FALMOUTH CONTRACT ZONE Developer David Chase has filed a contract zone application for a residential development in West Falmouth. The conceptual plan for the area envisions mixed use development.

ZONING CHANGES: ROUTE 100 SOUTH Theo wanted the committee to be aware of potential zoning changes in the Route 100 South corridor, which will likely influence economic development in the area.

WEST FALMOUTH SEWER MASTER PLAN Theo said that staff have been working on a resolution to present to the Town Council in July. Staff are working to identify costs and financing options, and any impacts on sewer rates. A need for a new pump station on Route 100 raises concerns about downstream components and future capacity needs.

BUSINESS EXPANSION/RELOCATION Staff have been in discussions with a major Falmouth business looking to expand and perhaps relocate. It is the goal of the Town to keep the business here, but there is no further update at this time.

3. Other business

Theo had sent an email to the committee regarding changes to the signage ordinance. Karen said that the next focus of the Town Council will be temporary signs, or any signs that are in the right-of-way. These are generally not permitted by Town ordinance, but compliance has been difficult.

4. Next meeting

The next meeting of the committee was scheduled for Monday, June 21 at 5:30 pm. Theo stressed the need for communication and attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Andrew Clark on May 18, 2017.