



Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, July 19, 2017

William Lunt III <i>Chair</i>	✓	Sandra Lipsey	-	Andrea Ferrante <i>Council Liaison</i>	✓
Dimitri Balatsos	✓	Mindy Schwartz	-	Nathan Poore <i>Staff</i>	✓
Pam DiPietro-Hale	✓	Chris Wasileski	✓	Theo Holtwijk <i>Staff</i>	✓
Ethan Gamage	✓			Andrew Clark <i>Staff</i>	✓

Theo began the meeting at 5:30 pm. The committee welcomed Andrea Ferrante, who will be serving as the new Council Liaison to the committee.

1. Review Draft Minutes of June 21, 2017 Meeting

The draft minutes of the June 21 meeting were approved as written.

2. Review Project Updates

Theo led the committee through a handout outlining the status of various economic improvement and development projects.

The Route 1 North Vision Plan was accepted by the Town Council at its July 10 meeting. The Council and staff are working on the timing of the next steps, including preliminary engineering work. Dimitri said that recent work in Cumberland looked nice. Theo said that there had been discussion by the Route 1 North committee whether or not to follow Cumberland's 3-lane pattern. Chris, chair of that committee, said that 3 lanes would have involved potential bridge widenings, and that the committee stayed with 2 lanes, except at the approaches to the Johnson Road intersection where there is a dedicated left turn lane. He added that the committee also felt that this approach suited traffic calming, and bike/ped improvements better. Chris further explained that the \$9M project can be done in two phases. Theo said that by extending the TIF district another seven years, staff estimated that \$6 million will likely be available to fund a first phase.

Theo said that Peter Kennedy, owner of a large parcel in the Route 1 North study area, notified the Town that he was pursuing zoning changes independently of the committee, as he does not agree with the committee's use recommendations for his property. Pam asked about the timeline for that process. Nathan said that it was unknown. Staff and the Council are working on balancing the workload of the

Route 1 North project with other major roadwork projects. Andrea confirmed that the Council would like more time to focus on its workload.

Regarding the Route 100 project, staff met recently with the Maine DOT to discuss right-of-way work. There are 94 properties that will be affected to varying degrees during construction. As Route 100 is a State road and the side streets local roads, ROW efforts are being coordinated. Theo said the project may be ready to go out to bid by the end of June 2018. Nathan said that the State is impressed with the coordination efforts from the Town. Theo added that the Route 100 Vision Plan and past public outreach efforts will hopefully help move the ROW portion of the project along. Andrea asked whether ROW communications were done through mailings. Theo said that mailings will be done, but that they also typically are done in-person. With 94 properties, this can require a significant time commitment.

Staff is also investigating adding a sidewalk opposite Hannaford. The two property owners on that side of the road are amenable, and design options are being explored by staff and engineering consultants.

The CDC has almost completed its review of the Chase contract zone application. Upon review of a sketch plan by the planning board, the application will advance to the Council for final approval of the contract zone. Pam asked whether the plan was for mostly single-family homes. Nathan said there would be a mix of housing types, plus commercial space on Route 100 with access and parking in the rear. Theo mentioned that a portion of the property is owned by Andrea.

There is a potential buyer for the North Portland Business Park (NPBP) property. Nathan said key challenges of that site include traffic and Route 100 northbound left-turn queuing space (as the access drive is close to the two-lane bridge crossing the Presumpscot River), lack of sewer and the high cost of such a connection, and the purchase price, all of which suggest that a significant redevelopment opportunity would be required. Bill sought clarification on the existing sewer in the area. Nathan and Theo said that properties closer to the Leighton Rd intersection are on sewer, but to extend to the NPBP property would require a pump station.

Nathan is in contact with Casco Bay Hockey regarding a business visitation.

Two Falmouth food businesses participated in the Portland Food Launch, an event focused on helping businesses scale up local food operations. Feedback from one of them found it to be a worthwhile event.

Planning has begun for the upcoming Very Merry Falmouth. Staff has met with the Community Chamber to discuss potential changes to this year's event. A key goal is increasing attendance, while backing off on marketing expenses to lower overall costs to the Town. The soup-chili-chowder cookoff may be free to encourage greater attendance. Six o'clock fireworks on Friday will immediately precede a beer and wine happy hour and a home hockey game, if the schedule for that can be worked out.

3. Discuss Falmouth Business Owners' Forum

Theo turned the committee's attention to the proposed Business Forum, which will provide an opportunity for dialogue between the Town and its business community. Nathan suggested it may be possible to coordinate with the Community Chamber and piggyback on a *Business After 5*-style event. Dimitri suggested a keynote speaker. There was much discussion, but no final decisions were made. Nathan summarized that the event could include a keynote speaker, an interactive Q&A session for the

committee to collect some data on local business opinions, and a chance for the committee to highlight key economic development projects. Theo asked for one or two committee members to further work on program details.

4. Other Business

Nathan said that the Council would like the committee's input on its charge. Theo will provide an electronic copy and invited committee members to edit it and provide feedback. Andrea encouraged the group to be targeted and focused in its efforts.

5. Next Meeting

The group agreed to move the meeting time to 4:30 beginning in August in response to Dimitri's request at the June meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for August 16 at 4:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Andrew Clark on July 20, 2017.