



# Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

## Meeting Minutes Wednesday, May 16, 2018

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 pm.

Theo said that Ethan Croce was not be able to attend the meeting. He suggested rescheduling the "Zoning 101" discussion to the committee's next meeting on June 6.

Theo reminded all committee members to let him know if they are unable to make it.

There was discussion as to whether the committee felt engaged in its work. Dimitri said the writing the 2015 Economic Development Plan was a project of substance, but that the subsequent work has not been. Mindy felt the committee was getting traction. Ethan said he would appreciate more guidance from the Town Council. Theo noted a turnover in committee membership over the years, and recent change in leadership. Andrea said that she is committed as Council Liaison and can be more proactive in encouraging the Council to develop assignments for the committee.

### 1. Review Draft Minutes of May 2, 2018 Meeting

The draft minutes of the May 2 meeting were accepted as written.

### 2. Discussion on Site Plan Process and Zoning Ordinances

Theo reiterated that Ethan could not be in attendance. The "Zoning 101" discussion will be rescheduled for the committee's next meeting, on June 6.

### 3. Discussion on Next Business Forum

Theo recounted the two ideas discussed at the committee's previous meeting. A forum focused on road projects and helping businesses through the associated disruption would likely be more successful in the fall, when more details of the projects are known.

A second idea focused on growth in the community, and how to frame growth in a way that highlights its benefits and it being an essential aspect of the community. Theo noted the current discussions surrounding Homestead Acres. Andrea said that she is involved in that project and has recused herself

from the Council's decision. She felt a Business Forum on growth could go beyond a particular project, and may help to address common misunderstandings associated with development in general. There was discussion of the history surrounding the area. Theo said that the West Falmouth Neighborhood Sketch Plan (WFNSP) had been developed by the Town in 2017 as a way to start a conversation on the future of the area. With an improved Route 100, new public sewer, and improved sidewalks, the Town hopes to maximize the opportunity in this Growth Area, rather than see development spread throughout Falmouth. The WFNSP called for mixed-use development, small, local businesses along Route 100, open space preservation, and multi-modal transportation. Dave Chase, as a private developer, has been working in parallel with most of this property, and has incorporated similar ideas into his Homestead Acres proposal. Theo noted that a large project can feel like a big change, and commented that while the project is a greenfield, it is not located in the Town's "Rural Area."

Theo added that a recent public forum on commercial redevelopment along Route 1 was a positive discussion of the growth opportunities in that area. A Business Forum on growth could highlight the importance of community buy-in to address opposition to growth and development.

Mindy asked about opportunities on Route 100. Theo said while there are no or few vacancies in the area, there is still one pad site available at West Falmouth Crossing. Mixing in residential uses in the area would create more customers for the businesses, and would allow for an efficient delivery of municipal services.

Andrea said the Forum series would be a good opportunity for facilitated conversations. Theo noted there had been two public sessions in developing the WFNSP. There was discussion of the committee creating marketing materials as a way to attract businesses to Falmouth. This topic is the focus of one of the subcommittees.

Dimitri suggested the committee reread the 2015 Economic Development Plan as a basis for future work. Theo said that the committee used the Plan and its matrix of recommended actions recently, which led to the creation of the current subcommittees and the second monthly meeting. He added that the committee will need to champion the Plan if it would like to see it implemented.

The committee agreed a Business Forum on Growth would make for an interesting topic. Mindy recommended such a Forum occur after the Council's vote on the Homestead Acres project. The committee did not want to move forward without more of the group present, and agreed not to hold a forum in June.

#### **4. Next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for June 6 at 4:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Andrew Clark on May 17, 2018.