



Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 5, 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>	-
Brian Bakke	-				

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm.

1. Review of Draft Minutes

Sandra moved and Dimitri seconded to approve the draft minutes of the August 15 meeting as written. The motion passed 4-0.

2. Project Updates

Nathan offered an update on the Route 100 project. He stated that the project has recently gained better momentum. A recent cost estimate is showing the project will likely be on budget. The Right-of-Way (ROW) process is well under way and the project is scheduled to go out to bid in late October.

Nathan also reported on the West Falmouth Crossing feasibility study to look at park and ride options and infill development options there. Andrea mentioned that it will be important to also keep in mind current thinking about Route 100 zoning amendments and that the timing of the projects (zoning amendments and master planning efforts) is a unique opportunity. Andrea also suggested that the FEIC should consider providing input on CDC efforts with Route 100 area rezoning task.

Committee members spoke about the importance of having a voice in the public, at Council meetings, and with the press regarding the need for balanced business and economic development. Sandra felt that the press needed to be educated.

Nathan indicated that he thinks there are four consistent concerns raised by the public about development – schools, traffic, environment, and general changes in community character. He further stated that the school impact could be planned and managed and that there are usually engineering solutions for traffic and environment. Andrea mentioned that reactions to development proposals can be fear-based and that some people hang on to inaccurate assumptions

about negative impacts. Sandra said the community concerns used to be about big boxes. She also said that some current fear about more development could be based on past experience regarding some out of state landlords who do not adequately invest in their properties. Andrea stated that the most recent development proposals have been coming from Falmouth residents or former Falmouth residents.

Dimitri commented that the economy has fluctuated over the past 20 years and that attitudes change. He thinks it is important to speak to the press and invite them to future business forums. Pam stated that the committee needed to finalize its position paper and suggested to invite the press to a future FEIC meeting to discuss growth areas, local economy and how development can work. The committee also asked staff to invite members of the Falmouth Economic Development Commission (FEDC) to attend a future meeting to learn about the FEDC's position on the local economy when it was active. Overall, the committee felt the need to offer advocacy for development in the growth areas.

3. Business Forum

The committee listed the following options for guest speakers at future business forums: Eric Anton (Anton LeMieux Financial Group), John Wasileski (OceanView at Falmouth), Chris Emmons (Gorham Savings Bank), Sean Gorman (LL Bean), Brian McNamara (Southworth Products), and John Marr (Tyler Technologies). The committee also considered conducting a panel of small businesses people, and a panel with business practitioners (on leadership, finance, health/wellness, leadership, etc.).

The committee decided to invite John Wasileski to be the guest speaker at its next business forum. The committee felt the forum should be held in late October or early November as a breakfast forum. The committee wanted the guest speaker to focus on the following:

- a. Story of his business and business model,
- b. Why Falmouth was chosen as location for its business?
- c. What does he see for the future for his Falmouth business?
- d. How does he stay informed about his specific business model? Where does he get his ongoing professional development? Does he have or did he have mentors?
- e. What have been his biggest challenges?
- f. How can the Town of Falmouth help local businesses be successful?

4. Next meetings

The next two meetings will be on September 19 and October 3 at 4:30 PM. The committee will begin planning for a panel of practitioners for the winter business forum and will finish the position paper.

All committee members should get back to Pam one more time via individual e-mail with their comments on the draft paper. Pam will report out suggestions at the next meeting. She mentioned that Chris Wasileski made specific suggestions via email today and that his suggestions were that the statement might mention the Route 1 Falmouth Shopping Center and West Falmouth projects (such as Homestead Acres at Gray / Mountain Rd.) as examples of projects that require support from the Falmouth area business community. Mindy asked what the goal of issuing the paper was. Pam said it was to tell the FEIC story and take a pro-business stance.

Andrea mentioned that there also needs to be advocacy for individual business requests, for example if there is a drive through request in West Falmouth.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Nathan Poore, September 5, 2018