Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Thursday, June 26, 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 6:28 PM.

1. **Review of Draft Minutes**

The draft minutes of May 22, 2014 meeting were approved as written.

2. **Report on Discussion with Board of Zoning Appeals**

Theo reported that Claudia and he had met with the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and Justin Brown on June 24 to discuss the Comprehensive Plan and the implementation work that LPAC is currently engaged in. The BZA was very supportive of that. It recognized that there was a disconnect in the growth area between the ordinance and what exists on the ground.

Issues that had been brought up were the concept of "positive zoning" (i.e. telling owners what they can do with their property, instead of what they cannot do), retrofitting homes to make them more environmentally-friendly, the notion that there may be too many exceptions to the rules in the ordinance, the fact that many projects get tabled to allow applicants to make changes so their projects fit the ordinance and the BZA can approve them, and the caution to look out for unintended consequences when a fix of one thing, may cause another problem. The BZA said that the biggest fix was needed on setback issues, but that frontage issues are also sometimes problematic.

Theo suggested that there is more research to be done, but that LPAC may benefit from a direct discussion with BZA members and Justin Brown about the specifics. The main focus of LPAC may be on accessory dwelling applications as the charge is to look at encouraging more new units in the growth area. Theo had prepared a draft spreadsheet of such applications in

last five years. He also included in the packet excerpts from the zoning ordinance that addressed accessory dwellings, accessory apartments, and accessory cottages. Accessory dwellings are permitted only as conditional uses, and he included that section as well because it described the review criteria the BZA uses. It may be helpful to better understand how those criteria are applied.

A discussion followed as to what kind of projects may or may not warrant a review by the BZA, and how impacts on neighbors could be minimized. The pros and cons of a neighbor "sign off" were discussed. Such an option would get neighbors talking to each other. The idea of varying setbacks with the size of a proposed house (larger setbacks for a larger house) was also discussed. The research and mapping will give more insight as the actual dimensional issues that are in play.

3. **Growth Area Implementation Work**

   a. **Review of mapping proposal**

The committee reviewed the mapping proposal from Spatial Alternatives. The group agreed that in task 1 it was not necessary to map building coverage and development pattern over time, but that, instead, it would be good to know the house sizes (livable floor area) involved and the approximate time when certain neighborhoods were built. Theo explained that in task 2, the consultant proposes to meet with the committee to display the result of variable inputs, rather than creating a set of static maps. Theo mentioned that the need may not be for a build-out analysis, i.e. how many total units can be built if certain assumptions are made, but rather that the committee gets a sense where the most likely opportunities for future development in the growth area lie. The committee agreed with that. It was recalled that CDC was very interested to see locations for future growth, as that group was charged with reducing growth in the rural area and wanted to have other opportunities for developers to do their work.

Theo suggested that some tweaks get made to the scope of services and the Town engage Spatial Alternatives on a time and materials basis with a price not to exceed. The estimated total cost was $8,000. The committee thought this was a reasonable cost for the work described and very helpful in its assignment. Theo will discuss this with the consultant and Town Manager.

The committee asked if Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) was being considered. That is one of the tools the CDC is exploring for the rural area. TDR's come with a "sending" area and "receiving" area for new units. Those could be the rural and growth area of Falmouth, respectively. The committee felt that TDR may be a complicated mechanism and that the simpler the ordinance amendments were to encourage growth the better. The committee will wait and see if the CDC wants to pursue TDR or not.

It was recognized that the CDC may want to do mapping work in rural area, but the committee felt it was important to take the lead on this work, so the CDC could have the benefit of seeing that. There was also a sense that there was some urgency to get this work completed and to avoid delays where possible.

b. Review of BZA application record

This was discussed in item 2.

c. Real Estate Contact List

Theo explained that this was the invitation list from 2012, with additional names at the bottom. He asked if there were any names that should be added to this list. Some additional names were suggested. The timing of the real estate discussion is to be determined. The committee agreed that first the research, mapping, and BZA/CEO discussions needed to be completed. The committee found the notes from the 2012 discussion informative.

The committee also recognized that communication with the community was important, so all had a chance to weigh in. Before that is done, the committee wanted to complete some of its work and be better prepared for that discussion. Channel 2 may be deployed for that purpose.

d. Pilot Site and Study Site List

The committee corrected the site reference for one of the potential pilot sites. Committee members had reviewed some of the built project links and found those interesting. The key question is what elements of these projects committee members find that can apply to Falmouth's growth area. These could be aspects of architecture, site design, subdivision layout, street width, set back, etc. It was recognized that architectural style is less critical if the main focus is to encourage more units in the growth area, although it was noted that compatibility may sometimes be determined, not just by bulk and space, but also by style. This is to be further explored.

4. Next Steps

As next steps, the committee wanted to:

- embark on Task 1 of the mapping proposal,
- have staff do more research on the BZA applications, and
- have a discussion with BZA members/CEO on what issues they typically encounter.

Theo will work on those items.

5. Other Business

Theo reviewed the handouts for the other items. The CDC handout had already been reviewed. He showed the handout for the first meeting of the Route 100 committee, the poster of the next Wayfinding Signage forum, and the RFP for the economic development plan.

6. Next Meeting

The committee decided to meet next on July 10, but will explore starting at 5:00 PM. Theo will also inquire about people's availability for July and August, so that quorums can be obtained.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, June 27, 2014