



# Long Range Planning Advisory Committee + (LPAC+)

## Thursday, January 12, 2017 Minutes

**Attendance:**

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Paul Bergkamp	-	Kurt Klebe	√	Breana Gersen	√
Sam Rudman	√	Sandra Lipsey	√	Becca Casey	-
Tom McKeon, PB representative	√	Ned Kitchel, Council Liaison to LPAC	√	Sarah Boudreau, Conservation Commission representative	√
Caleb Hemphill, Council Liaison to LMAC	√	Ted Asherman, LMAC representative	√	Jenny Grimm, Falmouth Land Trust	√
Lucky D'Ascanio	-	Bob Shafto, Open Space Ombudsman	√	Dave Gagnon, LMAC representative	√
Theo Holtwijk	√				

Sam started the meeting around 6:00 PM.

**1. Review of Minutes**

The draft minutes of the December 8, 2016 were approved with the revision of “potentially” in section 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, and 4<sup>th</sup> line.

**2. Logistics for 1/21 Open Space Tour**

Theo handed out the latest Tour Schedule and Map. The purpose of the tour was discussed. Among reasons for the tour, Bob said, was to observe the resource values that are present in conserved open spaces and to assess potential additional acquisition opportunities that might help to address the “how much is enough” question. The tour will also address management issues and why a particular site is deemed important, and trail improvements that have been made. The committee reviewed the logistics for the 1/21 event.

**3. Continued Discussion of Approach to 2017 Falmouth Open Space Plan**

Sam asked if the vision concept map of 2008 has changed. Bob said it had not and that it showed much congruity with the properties that since had been protected.

Theo gave a brief recap of the direction of last meeting and asked the members that were present at that time to comment. Sandra stated that it was important to think differently

from 2006 with the rural-growth area distinction, that recreational areas were part of the whole and that access to these areas was important, especially in the growth area. David stated that we need to define what we are doing. He was wondering what term or phrase may best capture that. He felt the distinction between active and passive (recreation) may get at that. He agreed that these areas needed to work together, but felt that “reasonable” access to these areas was a better approach than “total” access. Jenny mentioned the conservation approach where nature is protected for nature’s sake. She asked if the committee had discussed that. Caleb recalled the 2006 work. Kurt felt that “community conservation” may be a good term. He cautioned the committee to be careful and not risk the alteration of important resources. Tom stated that both recreation and conservation lands should be included in the category of “public lands.” He felt that there needs to be an explanation of the different types of open spaces. The public lands map already includes both and Ned suggested color coding that map to show the various categories.

Sandra felt that a broadening of the definition of open space was also educational, as it might explain how conservation is of value to the community and that citizens should take pride in it. Breana suggested that the two different types of open spaces should be defined separately. She recounted her work on Portland’s Land Bank Commission, which originally focused on natural areas, but where the Council expanded it later to include more recreation-oriented spaces. She felt that that intermingling of spaces diminished the regulatory aspect concerning the natural spaces. Theo made reference to the current thinking about whether to have different regulations concerning dogs depending on the type of space involved. Ted commented that it was important to think about the rest of the community and suggested that the distinction between active and passive open spaces is not always that clear. He said that access to some sensitive properties was on purpose not actively promoted.

Tom asked if all public open spaces have trails. Bob said that not all properties have trails as some properties are difficult to access. Jenny felt that there was an opportunity to educate the public on the spectrum of open spaces. She felt that was an exciting piece to work on, but that that message should not be oversimplified. That work may help the community to better appreciate the ecological values involved. Sam wondered if all open space have current regulations pertaining to use. Bob said that there are some general rules, such as no motorized vehicles and for people to pick up after their dog. Kurt commented on the enforcement of such rules and regarding the enforcement of easements said that the land trust sometimes was a back-up enforcer of restrictions on a particular site. Ted stated that some sites do have easement restrictions, but others do not. Those that do not are sometimes kept that way to preserve their economic value as future open space grant matches. There are some management plans, he added, but they direct the purpose of a site and its activities, and do not focus on regulations. Bob stated that he is worried about the growing population pressure on conservation properties in Falmouth. He mentioned a site in Bangor that has now become a virtual dog park. He felt that the pressures in Falmouth will only grow. He noted the impact of dogs on a site such as the Nature Preserve. He thought that the dog rules that are currently being worked on could become a template for moving forward on how to best preserve the ecological values of open spaces, otherwise they might be lost. Ned wondered if it was primarily a dog problem. Bob stated that dogs are predators, but that humans also have impact. He stated that there are studies available on the impacts on wildlife. He gave an example of a recent incident that he observed with a dog harming wildlife. Ted added that most open space properties do not experience intense user

pressure, but with continued population growth that might be different in 20 or 30 years. Bob commented on the impact on trails as well by overuse or misuse and that there is a danger to love a place to death. Ned felt that education of clear rules was important. Kurt saw the need for overarching stewardship and wondered about the need for physical presence to enforce the rules. Theo mentioned the pressures of overuse at places such as Acadia National Park and the need for park managers to steer people to lesser used portions of the park. Kurt agreed and said that an understanding is needed about which sites can withstand more use than others. Bob said that this was where the Greening of Falmouth 2.0 can come in.

Theo suggested that the next step could be to develop an issues list that the plan should tackle. Dave wanted to make sure that all committee members had read the original plan. Bob said that the plan should have a vision and goals, which could be carried over from the 2006 plan. There was discussion about a vision statement. Jenny felt the vision should contain a well-articulated rationale.

Tom reported that the Planning Board has been dealing with three duplex development projects in the growth area. There was a mention about the need for more affordable housing. There was agreement that LPAC should watch the development projects to assess if it is the kind of development that was desired. It may come with the demolition of existing buildings, impacts to traffic and on schools. There was mention that the development should be tracked, if it was rental or ownership development, and to what extent it allowed people to age in place. Caleb said that the Town should keep thinking about this. Tom felt it showed the need for sidewalks and pocket parks. Dave commented that the growth is partly due to the fact that Falmouth is a very attractive community. Ned added that the Town was very well managed as well. Dave noted that in the late 1980's pocket parks had been much resisted by residents, but that this was now different.

The committee discussed coming up with an issues list and gathering public input. Ted felt that education was important. Sandra mentioned the importance of survey feedback and that the Town should perhaps have some non-accessible public properties. Theo mentioned that in Brunswick the Open Space Committee conducted a series of televised lectures to learn about the state-of-the-art of various aspects of open space. Sandra said that the Comprehensive Plan effort included three surveys and added to what LPAC looked at for issues. She felt that these had been key tools to invite membership by residents in the community and that it made them more invested in their community. Theo briefly explained the nature of the first 3-question survey that provided a trove of valuable information highlighting the appreciation of residents of the community's open spaces and quality of its school education. Theo will dig up the old surveys and make them available to the committee.

Sam wondered if the Town should spend money on open space that the public cannot access, or if it is assumed that that is a good thing for other reasons. Kurt felt it was important to articulate the reasons for that. Jenny added that access could be created on even the most sensitive of sites and could address issues such as what type of access, how much access, and when access may or may not be appropriate. Ned agreed that some sites may need more limited access. Sam asked if LMAC is the manager of the Town's open spaces. Bob stated that there are no Town parcels that have "no people" as a policy. He said

that the reality is that some sites are more difficult to access. Caleb added that access to some Land Trust parcels is not encouraged and that they therefore do not show up on the map. Dave suggested that the committee learn more about the make-up of LMAC. Ted gave an overview of LMAC and who served on that committee. It includes residents, Town staff, open space ombudsman, land trust, and council representation. Bob added that the Town staff and Council needed to be involved to help address policy matters.

#### **4. Next Meeting**

The committee's next meeting is the 1/21 Open Space Tour. It was decided to invite the Town Council to come on that as well. The committee agreed not to meet on 1/26, but instead reconvene on 2/9.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Draft minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, February 1, 2017