



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Thursday, July 11, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Becca Casey <i>Chair</i>	✓	Rich Jordan <i>Planning Board</i>	✓	Karen Farber	✓
Breana Gersen <i>Vice Chair</i>	-	Sandra Lipsey <i>LPAC+</i>	✓	Ethan Croce <i>Staff</i>	-
Dimitri Balatsos	-	Sam Rudman <i>LPAC+</i>	-	Ted Asherman <i>Council Liaison</i>	✓
Paul Bergkamp	✓	John Winslow	✓	Theo Holtwijk <i>Staff</i>	✓

Others attending: Nathan Poore, Keith Noyes, Susanne and Lee Hanchett

Becca started the meeting at 6:00 pm.

1. Establish Quorum

It was observed that a quorum was established.

2. Review of Draft Minutes of June 27, 2019

Motion by Karen to approve the draft minutes, seconded by Sandra. The motion was approved unanimously.

John asked if LPAC+ members can vote on the leadership of LPAC. The answer to that was unclear. Nathan said that at the upcoming Council Retreat there would be a discussion about having a consistent way for all committees to do their business.

Sandra said that it was important to honor the voices of those who are putting time in on committee work. The committee concluded that the LPAC leadership would have been the same with or without LPAC+ votes.

John felt that each member should have a binder in which they could put the handouts, so that there would not be any redundant copying of the same materials between meetings. Some members commented that they appreciated getting printed handouts as they made notes on the handouts.

John and Ted requested to receive a printed copy of the Comprehensive Plan.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this time.

4. Discuss revised LPAC charge following 7/8/2019 Council meeting. Discuss types and formats of data useful for analyzing Comprehensive Plan implementation strategies and useful for informing a Comprehensive Plan update.

Becca stated that the Council felt that LPAC should complete its data collection for RB/RD and go out to the public yet as more discussion on that will be held by the Council at its August retreat. The Council also said that LPAC should list which other data topics may be useful to look back at the Comprehensive Plan.

Ted stated that gathering RB and RD data was useful to do. He said it was recognized that there was unfinished business in RA district, but that the committee should not wait on the Council for that. Since there was some momentum, he said, it was good for LPAC to some pre-work.

Nathan added that the Council committed to doing visioning that will inform the updated Comprehensive Plan. He said that the data gathering can come at same time and that one task will inform the other.

Karen mentioned that the 2013 Comprehensive Plan had a structure that listed State goal for topic, local policies for each, etc. She was wondering if the LPAC task was focused solely on residential zoning or covered all categories of the plan. Becca noted that covering the entire Comprehensive Plan topics was a big job.

John felt that first the pulse from the public should be taken on RB and RD zoning. He said that that would provide a base line to start from and that the committee otherwise would not know that. Becca replied that the Council instructed LPAC specifically not to go to the public yet.

Ted said that there are bigger issues to address than RB and RD. Some people who are not in RB and RD may say, how come I did not get anything from the Town. He felt that doing only RB/RD outreach now would create confusion. John felt it was a small sampling. Becca said that that effort would need to be tabled. John said that the committee should not lose its connection with the public.

Paul replied that the committee should not go forward with the wrong foot. Sandra added that commercial zoning was as big an issue as residential zoning. She liked the idea of holding back from doing public outreach for now. She felt that the satisfaction was with the whole. She also stated that it was important to know what feedback the committee wanted to have and be connected to that. Paul suggested that the committee determine what the big questions were that were relevant, and that the committee should review what was hot. He said that this could be done by asking the public its priorities on ten items.

Karen noted that the committee's task was to also analyze the effectiveness of strategy implementation. She said that it would be good to review the list of goals and understand what strategies were behind each one. She noted that people have talked about what did not work but did not talk about what did work. She cited the example of diversifying Falmouth's housing stock. She said it would be good to identify the discreet strategies for each goal, and not debate if a goal was a reasonable goal or not. Paul said that this was an intellectual exercise.

Karen said that the Council can figure out the larger questions as what balance should be struck or where the tradeoffs were.

Sandra commented that social attitudes have changed, and that data may not help. She said the need may not be about data, but instead it may be asking what are our higher values? How is the Town communicating with its citizens?

John stated that there is a goal to create more affordable housing stock. Data will show, he said, that this Comprehensive Plan goal was not met. He commented on land speculators and cited various asking prices for real estate.

Karen said that the plan did not call for affordable housing, but rather diversified housing.

Sandra added that accessory dwelling units needed to get approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals and that rules like that made it impossible for people to stay on their property. John asked how ADU's had been denied by the Town.

Theo said that in many cases prospective applicants did not file their applications after having met with the Code Enforcement Officer, and that it was hard to know how many cases were like that.

Karen said that a distinction should be made between the Comprehensive Plan and the strategies chosen to be implemented. She noted that there may be different ways to achieve a goal and that the strategies chosen may not necessarily be the best strategies.

Paul said that the question was, after the prep work was done, what do we want this Comprehensive Plan to do?

John suggested establishing five goals from the two public forums that had been held and use that as a starting point. He felt it was important not to throw that data out.

Becca said that the framework seemed to be the Comprehensive Plan goals and the implemented strategies.

Paul suggested selecting the goals and strategies to focus on based on the public forum feedback. He said that growth did not appear to be a big concern. Sandra said that where that growth occurred was a big concern for people. Rich said that the committee assumed that growth would continue forever, but he wondered if that was the correct assumption.

Sandra recalled that the committee did not change the growth ceiling. Karen noted that the exempt category was in addition to the 65 allowed units. Sandra said that there was a lot of discussion on the topic of growth, but that ultimately no change was recommended. Karen said that sorting these issues out will take some time and will not be done by September 1.

Paul wondered if LPAC's viewpoint should be fed to the Council. Such as what should the first public outreach be? Should it be a survey on accessory dwelling units?

Nathan said that it should be on the community's values and be aimed high up.

Ted said that LPAC guidance was always helpful. He reminded the group that there was a new council. He wondered if the committee might have feedback prior to the Council's retreat.

Nathan said that the retreat tries to answer the questions what needs to get done and who needs to get it done. He said the Town was sending out a mailer to all residents that was a survey on communication.

John suggested conducting a round table and start with ideas.

Becca felt that delineation of topics was important. John stated that forums could help answer the question what Comprehensive Plan goals had been achieved.

Theo suggested that the committee familiarize itself with the key documents that led to the Comprehensive Plan.

Karen requested URL links to some of the documents. She was interested in the original Comp Plan survey instrument to see what questions were asked and the tabulation of the survey results.

Sandra noted that the survey showed the different values that people had and that it would provide a common base of knowledge.

5. Public Comment

Becca asked if the public had any comments at this time.

Susanne Hanchett said she was going to put her thoughts in a letter.

Keith Noyes asked where the RB and RD building permit data was that had been promised. He said that Falmouth had changed and that attitudes had changed because building has changed. He noted the Tuscan Way project, and developments on Middle Road, Ledgewood Drive, and Pleasant Hill Road. He felt that this development should not be done all over town but be done in one section of town. He said he was disappointed in the committee as it had not listened to the public. He counseled the committee to take its time and not make rash decisions. He said that the committee was getting it now. He said that there was valuable input from the public. He wondered how many ADU's are actually occupied by parents and are not vacation rentals. He said that there was nothing wrong with the pre-2016 zoning.

The committee said that it had received word from Ethan that the building data would be available at the next meeting.

Rich commented that VRBO's were a new phenomenon that had not been considered during the 2013 Com Plan.

John gave various examples and noted that none had any parking. He said that there are 65 vacation rentals east of Interstate 95 in Falmouth. Paul said that that was not a topic that the Comp Plan had addressed.

Rich commented on the length of time that it takes before the public starts questioning development. He said that now there was a momentum of concern, because of other duplex projects, the Chase development, and the proposal for Route 1.

Ted said that the committee should not waste any time.

Becca stated that the Council resolution felt comforting.

Nathan said that that was just the first piece. He said the lessons learned from Route 100 was not to wait too long for a public update, and create more touch points.

Ted added that one approach does not fit all scenarios.

Sandra said she wanted to offer a counter perspective. First, she said, there was the issue of sanitary sewer. The location of sewers has a huge impact on where development can occur. Second, she said, was the role of the schools as they relate to the resale of homes. One cannot say let's have no more homes because we want no more kids, as homes of a senior couple can sell to a family with kids. Third, the committee infrastructure such as the BZA. Committees can be backed up and an ease for BZA and other committees can be useful. Fourth, transportation. Complaints will always be there regarding traffic, she noted. Sandra wondered how to educate the population on these issues and how to get people to catch up.

Karen stated that there are municipal implications if one builds further from highways and from services. The rural area will get busier, which will come with pressure to build sidewalks and shoulders in those areas as people want safety.

Sandra said that it is beyond values, as there is an education piece that is needed. What do people want if they do not know the cost of that?

Becca stated that other towns face similar issues. She felt the information is out there and one can learn about it.

John suggested that a community info fair may be good. He said that Cumberland does something for new residents. He felt that if the opportunity was created (for a fair) that people would come to that.

Nathan said that Falmouth does not control any outside forces. He noted that Falmouth is closest to Portland. That may come with lower population growth, but also higher traffic.

Paul said that traffic may be one of the hot topics where education is needed. He said that the foundational values were important. Are people willing to pay for whatever, or do they not want to spend that money?

Rich commented that Blackstrap Road is a through way. Nathan said that people see it as a local issue.

Ted said that he was interested in data on residential turnover. John said that the multiple listings service provides data on transactions. Becca said there was a report that she would try to track down on that. People also relocate because of work.

Nathan mentioned that traffic in cape Elizabeth is much less of an issue.

Karen said that the school enrollment study may provide insights on the rate of turnover.

John said that there was a study in Cumberland that showed there was a high adoption rate. Population growth is not just driven by births.

Becca suggested that all reread the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and the two forum reports, and that each member come back to next meeting with a list of data that they feel should be collected.

6. Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Set Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 25. Becca, Sandra, and Nathan said that they were unable to attend on that date. The agenda is to continue to discuss possible data needs for analyzing the effectiveness of Comp Plan strategies and informing a Comp Plan update.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Minutes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, July 18, 2019