



## Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Thursday, July 25, 2019  
Meeting Minutes

### Attendance

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

Others attending: Suzanne and Lee Hanchett

Breana started the meeting at 6:00 pm.

### 1. Establish Quorum

It was observed that a quorum was established.

### 2. Review of Draft Minutes of July 11, 2019

Page 5 was proposed to be edited to correct a typo (Change “wat” to “wait” at top of page.) LPAC unanimously approved the 7/11/19 minutes as amended.

### 3. Public Comment

Lee Hanchett provided comments to the committee. *(Note: On August 2, 2019 Mr. Hanchett emailed staff with a request to include certain written comments into the LPAC record. Those comments provided by Mr. Hanchett are included below. While it cannot be verified that these comments are a verbatim version of the oral comments Mr. Hanchett provided at the meeting, they seem generally reflective of the comments made at the meeting.)* Mr. Hanchett’s emailed comments follow:

I did my homework. I read the Comprehensive Plan and found many unsettling aspects. Please consider the following as you move forward: 1) It reads like a marketing tool. I was expecting information not a sales pitch. 2) In trying to find a source for the 2016 zoning changes, I finally discovered on page 69 that Theme 5: “Clarification of Ordinances and Process” contained the marching orders for those changes. The dictionary definition of clarification is: “the action of making a statement or situation less confused and more comprehensible.” I found no attempt to clarify existing ordinances as one would expect but rather directions for wholesale changes to those ordinances. Nine of the suggested actions use the word “Amend,” “Update,” “Develop,” or “Create.” The true title should have been Significantly Alter the Ordinances and thereby the Character of Falmouth. 3) I searched the Comprehensive Plan for the term

“Impact study” and found zero use of the term. Impacts on schools, traffic, emergency services, etc. does not seem to have been considered. The Comprehensive plan was not comprehensive. 4) A quote from page 25: “The reason for the distinction between designated ‘growth’ and ‘rural’ areas is that less infrastructure is required to accommodate new development in the growth area. More services are available in the growth area compared to the rural area (with exception of the Falmouth school campus). These aspects mean new development can be more efficiently accommodated in the designated growth area, with less impact on Falmouth taxpayers.” I live on Stone Ridge Rd in the Stone Ridge Farm Subdivision. To my knowledge, our subdivision cost the town \$0 in infrastructure expense. We paid for the roads, septic systems and wells. The town has never plowed our streets in 10 years. On the other hand, to provide a good road, and sewer and water services for Homestead Acres, the only significant project proposed for that growth area, carried a price tag to the taxpayers of >10 million dollars. 5) Under Housing, page 51, “Proposed Policies” states “Promote consistency of housing types and densities within each neighborhood.” The 2016 zoning changes did the opposite. It permitted duplexes next to single family homes and reduced all of RA, RB and RD to a lowest common lot size for each zone. Worse yet, it made duplex and multifamily residences permitted instead of conditional. These are but a few examples. Please think about being consistent, coherent and comprehensive as you modify the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Also, generous amounts of Foresight are needed.

John wondered how the decision got made to take a large section of RB off Falmouth Road and make it Farm and Forest. Breana recalled that section of Falmouth Road being described as an iconic section of roadway with a defined rural character that people felt was worthy of greater protection than the RB zoning provided. Additionally, that section of Falmouth Road contains a lot of buildable land that could be developed and result in a large change of character for that area. LPAC heard a lot of input from the public suggesting that those types of areas should be preserved. Karen recalled that the rural/growth boundary decision was ultimately made by the CDC and not LPAC. She thinks there was some additional intent to create more wildlife connectivity with the other open space parcels in that area and a belief that it would be costly to serve this area with sewer. She also mentioned that the school campus was not originally intended to be included into what became an adjacent growth area but the State required that the schools be put in the growth area during its review of the plan for consistency with State requirements.

#### **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.**

The committee thought it would be helpful to review each theme under the “Implementation Strategies” section of the comp plan (starting on page 62) to try to identify relevant/desired data. Paul suggested that the committee not feel restrained or limited by the themes in the comp plan as the committee may have learned lessons over the last year that could expand the idea of what data might be relevant. (Note: The following lists represent types of information that individual committee members thought could be useful and are not necessarily reflective of any universal consensus by the committee.)

- Theme 1: Commercial Hubs and Economic Development
  - Send surveys to realtor companies
    - To access turnover of businesses/homes and growth

- How much business growth has been organic vs by design? Were incentives provided?
    - To access realtor group forecasting reports
  - Tax data (Cumberland County Assessing). What percentage of tax base is commercial vs residential. Has that shifted over time?
  - See if there is data in the FEIC's Economic Development Plan that is relevant since this plan was developed subsequent to the comp plan
  - Survey residents about what kinds of businesses residents want vs what the town has been getting
  - Economic development always creates concerns about traffic. Obtain traffic data.
    - Help assess whether traffic is local or thru traffic
    - Is the vehicle ownership rate increasing above rate of population growth? (Excise tax data?)
    - Conduct parking study to show where cars park in town
    - Parking/speeding ticket data
    - Obtain PACTS growth estimates, MDOT data from counting strips, and data at certain fixed locations like Exit 53
  - Demographics of home buyers and sellers
  - Where do residents work? How many people work in Falmouth who live here?
  - Correlation between strength of economy and development activity
- Theme 2: Conservation, Protection, and Connectivity
  - Get data from 2018 Open Space Plan
    - Chart-percent change in open space
  - Can you measure the impact of the rural area growth cap enacted in 2016 and the impact of land conservation efforts?
    - Document effect of comp plan's goals to shift growth from the rural areas to the growth areas
    - Track land acquisition in Farm & Forest District
  - Track bike trail and sidewalk connections
- Theme 3: Diverse Residential Opportunities
  - Trends re: ADUs, Single/two-family/multi-family developments
    - How has housing mix/unit type changed
    - Is there realtor data that could indicate what percentage of new purchases are resident relocations vs investments?
  - Home value growth vs tax rate growth
  - Building permits
  - School population study as data reference
  - Housing value comparisons with other towns
    - Census quick facts
    - GPCOG
  - Aggregate tax rate comparisons with other towns

- Analyze all dwelling growth (including senior dwellings and condo growth) in all districts not just “standard” (RA, RB, RC, RD, FF) residential districts
- Data showing why or why not it is more expensive to live in Falmouth
  - Amenities, oceanfront, services offered, close to Portland, good schools
- Review rate of growth
  - Update growth permit calculations
  - Look at growth overall and not just dwellings regulated by growth cap
  - Pg. 20 comp plan chart has good info
- Theme 4: Communication and Coordination
  - Data points can be hard to gather in this category
  - Survey participation data/meeting attendance numbers
  - Measure Website/social media traffic
  - What’s going on in surrounding towns? (e.g. rapid growth on Route One in Cumberland) and how does that impact Falmouth?
  - What’s going on with regional coordination efforts?
    - Ex. Development on Route 1 in Cumberland
    - Pedestrians walking on Route 1
- Theme 5: Clarification of Ordinances and Process
  - Data points can be hard to gather in this category
  - BP Rezoning requests vs Route 1 North Plan recommendations
  - How, if at all, have ordinance changes affected process?
    - One comp plan goal was to reduce nonconformities
    - Implications of 2016 zoning amendments on permitting processes (e.g. Reduction in nonconformities, expedited permitting process, no BZA review and no water view review, did buildings get taller) It is noted that the current zoning status in RA has since largely reverted to pre-2016 standards
- Other items to consider moving forward
  - Underlying assumptions surrounding inevitability of growth and benefits of commercial development as it relates to tax impact
  - What changed between 2011 survey data and now?
    - (Re)ask “Would you recommend Falmouth as a place to live, work?” And “What would change your recommendation?”
    - Need more specific survey questions about idea of open space and rural character and support for this distinction
      - Difference between capital Open Space and “lowercase” open space
      - What is rural Falmouth? What does keeping Falmouth rural look like? How much growth has taken place and what kind of growth has taken place?
- Terms that could be better defined
  - Open space (e.g. Protected land vs a neighbor’s large back yard vs other)

- Rural
- Great schools
- Character
- Where can growth happen under existing regulations? (Scenarios)
- Key issues
  - Traffic
  - Stormwater management
  - Fiscal constraints (e.g. How do you pay for growth?)
  - Public education
  - Implications and costs of suburban sprawl vs density

The committee acknowledged comments submitted by Becca prior to the meeting and in a separate chart that was printed out and distributed. In addition, Rich submitted the following comment via email prior to the meeting: *“I’ve been looking through the homework stuff again but I have no specific data items to request at this time (we saw a lot of the relevant growth data during the RA review and prior to that during the buildup to the Open Space Plan reboot). The town seems to have hit the mark on achieving several of the goals established in the Comp Plan, so if I had to request something, it would likely more information on what the majority of the town really wants/desires/dreams for new goals (or revisions to our old goals) as we head into the next decade. Perhaps after showing them what we have learned (i.e. the data on where and how density increases and/or growth have occurred).”*

## **5. Other Business**

Karen suggested it would be appropriate to send a quick response to Peter Kennedy, who distributed comments related to his property on upper Route One at a recent LPAC meeting, acknowledging receipt of the comments and clarifying that LPAC’s work is dictated by the Town Council and that LPAC is not authorized to propose ordinance amendments, such as those requested by Mr. Kennedy, unless directed to do so by the Council. Ethan offered to communicate this message to Mr. Kennedy on behalf of LPAC.

## **6. Set Date and Agenda for Next Meeting**

LPAC decided to meet next on Thursday, August 22 at 6:00 pm.

## **7. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm

Minutes prepared by Maggie Fleming and Ethan Croce