

Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 22, 2019, 6 p.m.
2nd Floor Conference Room, Town Hall

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

Other Attendees: Susanne and Lee Hanchett

Becca Casey began the meeting at 6 p.m.

1. Quorum was established.
2. Review of Draft Minutes of July 25, 2019 meeting
 - Karen Farber added that staff member Maggie Fleming was present at the July 25 meeting but was not included on the attendance list.
 - Dimitri Balatsos moved to accept the minutes; John Winslow seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Review of Meeting Materials
 - Sam Rudman was not able to attend the meeting. He circulated an email with his comments.
 - I have read the minutes of the last two meetings and have been thinking about what data might be useful in going forward with the next comprehensive plan. Then yesterday I had a long discussion with a couple who have 2 children in elementary school, live a dead-end street and describe themselves as millennials. They told me that the community on their street is fairly close knit (my words) and that they share a lot of information with one another on that street. Regarding communication between the Town and residents, they shared the following:
 - More of their peers than not do not have cable.
 - More of their peers than not do not often read communications on paper. Instead, they get their information on a device. Paper communications from the Town therefore do not often get read. They did, however, take the survey.

- They were not aware that the Town has a Facebook page, and when I mentioned that it does they looked at it and thought that it looked pretty good except for the fact that it looks like the Town only posts once/week.
- They find the “Nextdoor” app very useful and like the way that it promotes a sense of community.
- They do not use twitter. I can’t remember whether we discussed snapchat.
- They have never received any communications from the Town council or the individual councilors. They do not know what the councilors stand for. It seemed important to them that they do.
- They receive weekly emails from the Harbor Master, the school principal and the superintendent. They appreciate these communications and do not find them burdensome.
- I have been thinking a lot about communication/education and from this small sample and my own thoughts. I believe that in order for our data accumulation to address the concerns of residents we need to know the nature of those concerns in order to accumulate data responsive to them. For instance, for these folks while zoning issues are very important, so are issues involving their desire to know what is going in their community and in other parts of Town. They are interested in having Falmouth be more of a community as a whole and their thought is that social media is one way to foster that.
- I agree with all the data points that committee members have asked for. In addition if we can find a way to have more dialogue with residents we might have a more robust plan.

4. Public Comment

- Lee Hanchett distributed a written copy of his remarks as well as a chart showing Falmouth School Projections from the Wendell Report (attached)
- Ms. Casey thanked Mr. Hanchett for his comments. Historical data is something that the committee can dive into in the process of compiling the data for the comprehensive plan.
- Mr. Winslow added that elementary school enrollment is down 27 students from the projection. The Committee needs to get a handle on demographic projections for the Town.
- Mr. Balatsos mentioned the idea of consolidating school districts
- Mr. Hanchett added that the reason the data related to the 2016 zoning is not valid is because the parameters have changed
 - Ms. Farber asked if the question of density is set aside, why does growth data prior to 2016 have no value? Where things have been built, how they can be built, and the economy have changed but the number of units that can be built has not changed.
 - Mr. Hanchett clarified that Ms. Wendell said in her report that growth caps should not be the only factor considered.

5. Continue to Discuss types and formats of data useful for analyzing effectiveness of current Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategies and useful for Informing a Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Mr. Poore suggested having Judy Colby-George review the Committee's data to be collected list and then present at the next meeting on what is feasible
 - Paul Bergkamp was concerned about trying to expand/clean up the list without a more specific charge from the Council. Ms. Farber agreed.
 - Mr. Winslow said that the Committee needs to build consensus around the data points that it needs as well as current data. Historical data and projections are based on methodology that is no longer valid. The Committee needs to consider and gather information on what the nucleus of Falmouth will look at ten years from now.
 - Ms. Casey added that the whole Southern Maine region is changing. Mr. Winslow said Falmouth is unique; a template cannot be used to examine different towns.
 - Mr. Poore said that Ms. Colby-George is a GIS and data expert who could help the Committee determine what types of data would be most useful in answering the questions the Committee is trying to ask and how best to ask the questions. Her guidance can help educate the Committee on what data is out there. The Council will need a report from the Committee at some point. The Committee will likely be in the data collection phase for a while.
 - Ms. Farber and Ms. Casey clarified that Ms. Colby-George would be assisting the Committee in refining its questions not in beginning collecting the data.
 - Mr. Balatsos said that the current charge is too broad. Mr. Bergkamp added that it would be helpful for the Committee to consider which metrics really matter (top 3 or 5 metrics).
 - Ms. Farber said that one of the things the committee did not do at the last meeting was to discuss what data can be used to make predictions about the future. It would be helpful to have advice from an expert on this.
 - Mr. Balatsos said that he does not currently have a sense of what the main drivers of growth are
 - Mr. Bergkamp wondered if a data expert could help the Committee look at how conditions in Falmouth compare with the rest of the country
 - Mr. Winslow summarized that he was hearing from Committee members' comments that the Committee needs direction on division on subjects from the Council. Ms. Farber added that she hopes the Council will be clear about whether it desires the Committee to conduct an assessment of the validity of the current plan or if it desires the Committee to step back and determine what the current public wants the future to look like (starting a new plan).
 - Mr. Poore and Mr. Bergkamp discussed Falmouth's uniqueness regarding impact of changes in the economy or housing market. Mr. Balatsos added that a profile of the community would help indicate that.

- Ms. Farber discussed the perception that growth is inevitable. How does one test the theory that growth is inevitable? Ms. Casey clarified that Falmouth does not have the option to shrink but it could manage to stagnation. The question is what that kind of management does to the community, economy, etc. Mr. Bergkamp said that the Committee could model scenarios such as commercial growth vs. residential growth.
- Committee members discussed the impact of Falmouth's closeness to Portland
- Committee members discussed the importance of having a discussion of what the town values
- Committee members discussed having FEIC review and provide suggestions on its list of data surrounding the economy and workforce.
- Mr. Poore added that the town is currently at about 10% commercial tax base. There is not a lot of geographic space left to expand. Mr. Winslow added that Oceanview is the largest residential tax base.
- Mr. Poore suggested that the Committee consider how the data it collects could be used again in the next five to ten years. He felt that Falmouth might have a higher than average resident turnover rate.
- Mr. Winslow felt that an annual realtor survey was a good idea. Councilor Asherman said this would provide anecdotal information that wouldn't be available through a list of sales transactions.
- Mr. Balatsos suggested adding check in targets to the comprehensive plan. Mr. Poore added that Ms. Colby-George might be able to help determine the check-in points.
- Committee members agreed that the minutes from the last two meetings should be shared with Ms. Colby-George and that she should be invited to the next meeting.
- Mr. Winslow suggested that, as homework, committee members should come up with a list of topic areas that are most important to prioritize gathering data on.
- Mr. Bergkamp added another homework task that committee members should come up with lists of what data they think the public would most want it to gather.
- Ms. Farber reminded committee members of idea from last meeting of creating a glossary of terms that will need to be defined in the comprehensive plan (minutes pg. 4).

6. Other Business

7. Set Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be held on September 12.
- The committee expects a council update.
- Staff will send Ms. Colby-George the last two meeting minutes and will invite her to attend the meeting.
- An outcome of the next meeting will be to try to inform some priorities of the task
- The Committee will re-look at the meeting format in terms of the sequence of the agenda and public comment time and response. The Committee will also review whether members desire to have one or two meetings a month.

- The Committee will re-appoint a vice chair

8. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned by consensus at 7:32pm

Draft minutes prepared by Marguerite Fleming

LPAC Meeting August 22, 2019

- 1) More clarity is needed by the public. What does the Council expect this committee to do?
- 2) Can anyone here explain the meaning of agenda item 5.

“Continue to discuss types and formats of data useful for analyzing Comprehensive Plan implementation strategies and useful for informing a Comprehensive Plan update.”

The Comprehensive Plan itself has been brought into question. Why do we need to find data concerning the implementation, much less the strategy for implementation?

- 3) There are two types of data-historical and projected. This committee seems to be trying to figure out which of the historical data sets to use while ignoring potential future consequences.

Keep in mind---

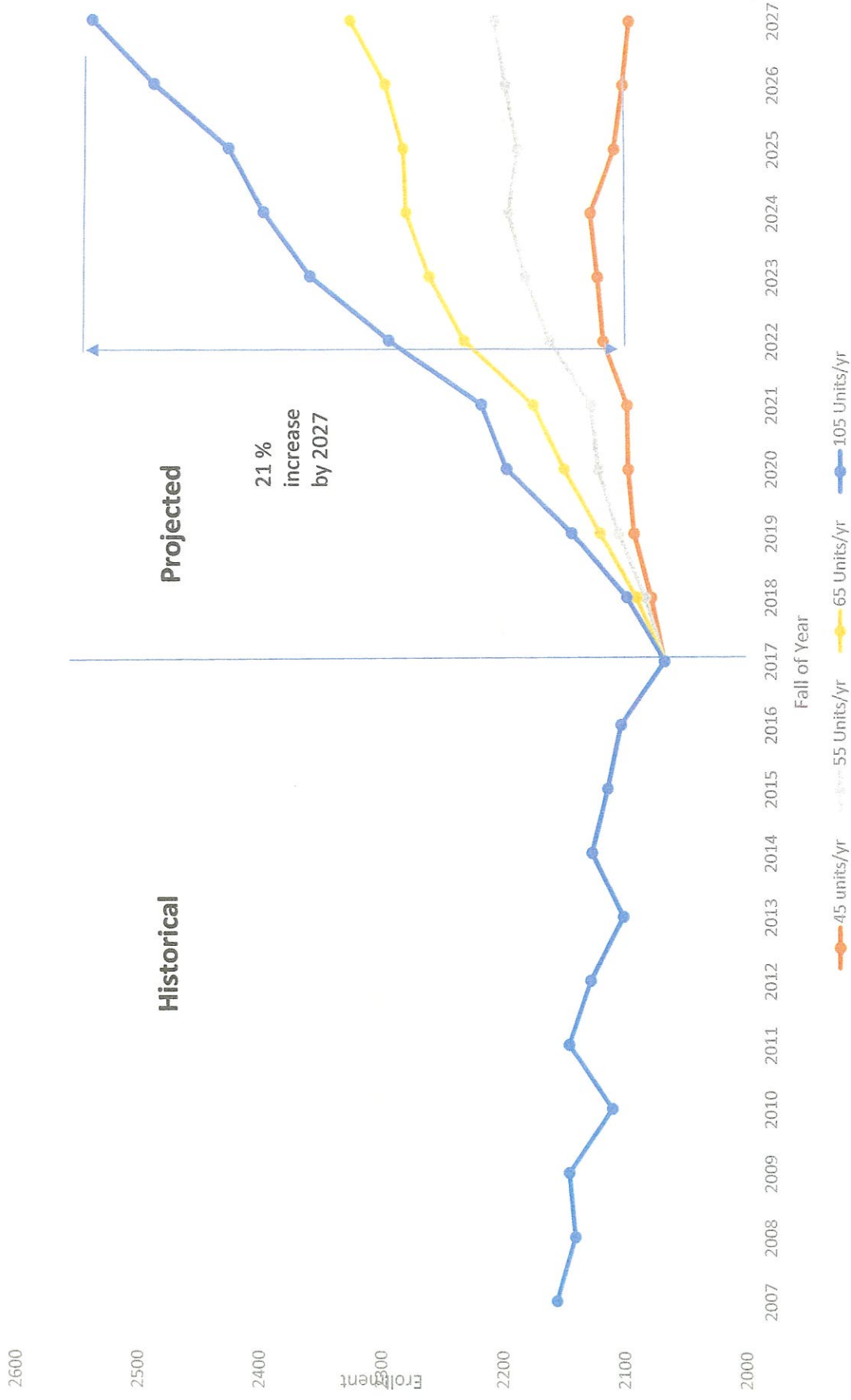
Since the zoning changes, three years ago, historical data under the new changes has been sparse and, in some cases, inaccurate. It took at least one year to see any changes. At that point the public and the developers figured out the fantastic economic opportunities made available by the zoning changes. It took even longer and a large public outcry before the Council could see the negative impacts.

Historical data prior to 2016 can be ignored as it does not represent the current situation. Data since 2016 is not a sufficient sample size but does show significant adverse effects to Falmouth's future existence.

As an example of documented projections, let's look at schools. There, the Wendell Report was completed using growth caps of 49, 55 and 65 dwelling units. Using the same techniques, a growth rate of 105 was added to Wendell's results. At 49 units, school growth is negligible, at 55 still reasonable but at 65, our advertised cap, it is cause for concern. At a possible growth of 105 dwelling units (which still does not include currently excepted dwellings) we could experience a 21% increase by 2027. (See attached chart on reverse side.)

This committee needs to realize that there is no significant historical data to use which could lead to any reasonable conclusions. It is incumbent on this group to make logical common-sense projections as to what could happen with the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and 2016 zoning changes. The RA zone has been rolled back but we have a long way to go especially in RD where nine condominiums (Tuscan Way) are under construction in spite of the lack of infrastructure.

Falmouth School Projections from Wendell Report and Adding the Case for the Actual Cap of 105 Dwelling Units per Year



Lee Hanchett

August 21, 2019