

Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 12, 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: Judy Colby-George (Spatial Alternatives), Valentine Sheldon and Keith Noyes

Becca Casey began the meeting at 6 p.m.

1. Quorum was established.
2. Review of Draft Minutes of August 22, 2019 meeting
 - Karen Farber moved to accept the minutes; John Winslow seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Review of Meeting Materials
4. Update on Council Work Plan Retreat
 - Councilor Asherman provided an update on the Council Work Plan Retreat. The comprehensive plan is a high priority item. The Council did not come out of the retreat with a plan for how to update the comprehensive plan. The Council desires for the committee working on the comprehensive plan update to be diverse and knowledgeable. The Council has a second retreat planned to further discuss the comprehensive plan update process on October 17.
 - Karen Farber asked about the discussion of the RB and RD zones at the 9/12 Council Meeting. Councilor Asherman and Nathan Poore said that the Council desires more data and did not take action at the meeting.
 - Committee members expressed concern that the Committee's charge is still not very well defined and that it was not assigned items on the work plan. Committee members discussed possibly taking a recess until the Council can provide further direction. Councilor Asherman and Mr. Poore added that there are not a lot of land use items on this year's work plan.
5. Public Comment

- Keith Noyes expressed concern that LPAC was not assigned work plan items. He also asked if LPAC received the updated building permit data for RB and RD. Ms. Casey responded that LPAC had not reviewed that data yet. Councilor Asherman added that some data was presented at the September 9 Council Meeting. Valentine Sheldon said that he is interested in seeing more data than just post-2016. John Winslow presented data that he had received from Code Enforcement. He also presented data on home sale prices in Falmouth. Sam Rudman asked what happens if the growth caps are reached in RB/RD?
- Valentine Sheldon expressed concern that the Council did not take action RB and RD. He asked about which staff members would be staffing the committee. Mr. Poore said that he and Marguerite Fleming would be staffing the committee while LPAC is gathering data. The Council will be working to start the public engagement and visioning process.

6. Continue to Discuss types and formats of data useful for Informing a Comprehensive Plan Update with Guest Judy Colby-George, Principal at Spatial Alternatives

- Mr. Poore said that the Town is looking to employ robust data and GIS in the comprehensive plan update so hiring a consultant will be crucial. Ms. Colby-George's educational background is in geography and special planning. She has been working with Maine municipalities since 1991 and has been running her own company for 20 years. Most of her clients are municipalities.
- Ms. Colby-George said, when thinking about data, a good place to start is to think about what kinds of questions you want to answer. Another method is to think about where you are now and where you want to be in ten years. She commented that models are not perfect and the Committee would have to form opinions about the data.
- Committee members discussed data that could inform questions about growth in the town and whether growth is inevitable
 - Mr. Winslow suggested mapping where children in the school system are living as a way of answering which neighborhoods are attractive to families with children enrolled in the school system. He also desired to look at traffic patterns and road usage to answer questions about how many commuters are driving through the town. Councilor Asherman added that the question could be phrased as where is the available housing stock? Ms. Colby-George added that mapping where school children live would be a privacy concern. She said that the Town might be able to obtain aggregate data but that subdivisions go through cycles in regard to the age of who lives there. She added that there is a lot of data about students entering and leaving the school district in the School Department enrollment projection study.
- Ms. Colby-George asked what questions the Committee was looking to answer regarding housing.
 - Did the Town meet the goal in the 2013 comprehensive plan of diversifying the housing stock? What have been the impacts of achieving this goal (ex. traffic, businesses, burden on town staff, schools, allowing people to age in place, taxes)?
- Ms. Colby-George asked how the Committee would identify the impacts of diverse housing units vs. traditional single-family homes?

- Paul Bergkamp said that he is most interested in changes in traffic patterns. Ms. Colby-George said that she could work with a traffic engineer. She said that placing counters at intersections can help answer some questions about who is coming out and who is coming in. Ms. Farber added that Metro Bus ridership data could be useful. Ms. Casey added that when the Committee collects the traffic data, they need to be careful not to analyze it in silos. Mr. Rudman added the question, does increased residential unit growth equal increased growth in traffic in a way that is significant? Ms. Casey added what is the impact of growth on transportation use? Mr. Poore added that GPCOG has regional traffic data.
 - Sandra Lipsey brought up how many new jobs have been created in Falmouth?
- Ms. Colby-George asked if part of what the Committee wants to know is how much potential development there is in certain areas? Mr. Poore added that type of business is also important. The Council gave FEIC the work plan item of looking at what is the right balance of different types of businesses is in the community.
 - Committee members discussed the issue that people who work in Falmouth cannot afford to live in town. Committee members discussed looking at housing values in town and how those compare with surrounding towns. Ms. Colby-George described different ways of analyzing that data.
- Ms. Farber brought up analyzing the effectiveness of the 2013 comprehensive plan policies. Mr. Poore added that the Committee should consider open space acquisition.
- Committee members discussed being wary of correlation vs. causation.
- Mr. Bergkamp asked Ms. Colby-George if she could provide best practice examples of the types of data that other towns are using to answer these questions. Ms. Colby-George said that many surrounding towns are in similar situations as Falmouth of wanting to collect data in advance of a comprehensive plan update.
- Ms. Farber said it will be important to consider what has happened in both the growth capped areas and the growth cap exempt areas. The 2013 comprehensive plan does not say much about exempt housing. The 2013 comprehensive plan was created after the State began requiring towns with comprehensive plans to have growth areas and nongrowth areas.
- Ms. Colby-George asked for clarification on the Committee's interest in rental properties. It is not easy data to access. What is the overarching question?
 - Mr. Poore added that the Ordinance Committee will be working on short-term rental regulations.
 - Ms. Casey added that the larger question is how short-term rentals and accessory dwelling units are impacting neighborhood character.
- Mr. Rudman asked if the Committee was missing a topic that other towns are focused on. Ms. Colby-George said she was not aware of anything but would let the Committee know if she thought of something.

- Ms. Casey brought of the question of what is neighborhood character and how are neighborhoods defined? Mr. Poore said that residents could be surveyed. Ms. Colby-George added that residents could be asked to draw their neighborhoods on a map.
 - Committee members discussed creating as many touch points as possible to engage with residents so that feedback is not only coming from one group and that all population subsets are covered.
 - Ms. Colby-George discussed public engagement strategies including comprehensive plan committee members presenting at neighborhood and PTA meetings and canvassing.
 - Mr. Rudman asked Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Noyes what their top two data questions would be.
 - Mr. Sheldon said what the impact of growth has been on the schools. He is also interested on the impact of development on the environment as well as the impact of growth and how it is managed and the relationship with taxes.
 - Mr. Noyes said the impact of development on the environment and on traffic.
 - Ms. Casey asked for clarification on what Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Noyes meant by the environment.
 - Mr. Noyes used the example of how much traffic can be sent across Route 1
 - Mr. Sheldon said water is important.
 - Mr. Poore asked about how important it would be to wait for the 2020 census data to come out. Ms. Colby-George said that since the long form has been eliminated it should not be too hard to plug the short form data in. Mr. Poore also mentioned that police traffic contact data, EMS call data, and wastewater data could be useful in assessing the impact of growth on municipal services. Ms. Colby-George added the caution that municipal services are step up costs. Mr. Poore said that there could be interest amongst towns in re-starting municipal benchmarking.
 - Ms. Colby-George said that she likely has enough information to start building a plan for what data could be used to answer which questions by the next meeting.
7. Review Meeting Format and Number of Meetings a Month-MOVED TO NEXT MEETING
 8. Appoint New Vice-Chair-MOVED TO NEXT MEETING
 9. Other Business
 10. Set Date and Agenda for Next Meeting
 - The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for October 10. Ms. Fleming will email the Committee to confirm.
 11. Adjourn
 - Karen Farber moved to adjourn; Rich Jordan seconded. Motion to adjourn was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Draft minutes prepared by Marguerite Fleming