

Falmouth Tercentennial Committee
Stakeholders Forum
February 29, 2016
6:30 pm

Welcome and Introductions

Attendees included representatives from the Falmouth Education Foundation, School Board, individual schools, the Class of 2018, the Library, Lions Club, Town Council, Historical Society, local Girl Scouts, Forecaster, Food Pantry, Maine Audubon, OceanView and Maine State Ballet, and Falmouth Congregational Church.

Overview of Falmouth300 Planning to date

Erin Cadigan gave a brief overview of the work of the committee to date. There are a lot of good ideas floating around, but the committee wants the ideas for the celebration to come from the townspeople.

Brainstorming

Why do we love Falmouth?

- Wide open spaces;
- Houses are not crowded together;
- Convenience of location;
- Open countryside;
- Great businesses;
- Thriving community but not Portland;
- Not stuffy;
- People know and care about each other;
- Neighborhoods;
- Near the water (both ocean and lake);
- Schools;
- Programs for families with kids;
- The library;
- Nature trails;
- So much right here (Audubon, Library, UMaine extension, 5 minutes from Portland);
- Intellectualism here;
- Cultural options;
- Historical society;
- Oceanview has added ambiance and its residents have brought experience;
- Great history (rivers, Native Americans, original Portland);
- Well-functioning town government with good services (recycling, garbage collections, plowing);
- Good fishing;
- Forests and hills;
- Charming architecture;
- Bike paths;
- Wildlife;

- Golf courses;
- Rural feel;
- Skating rinks;
- Uniqueness of people and place - special combination;
- Good education, high rate of kids going to college;
- Historical society's museum;
- Stories of historic homes here.

What is our purpose in celebrating the 300th? What is the goal? Why should we do this?

- Honor the sacrifices and steadfastness of the people that founded and developed the town;
- Introduce Falmouth to more people (current residents, businesses, new people);
- Celebrate the variety of cultures and heritage represented here;
- Make some money;
- Increase membership to organizations;
- Attract new residents;
- Attract an occupant for the old Shaws and other new businesses;
- Invest in Falmouth;
- Raise awareness of preservation of open spaces and our willingness as a community to purchase/preservation of open space; this is important to the town and a goal in town planning;
- Celebrate where we came from and where we are going;
- Maintain a balance in what is great about Falmouth--rural and cultural and communicate the plan of maintaining that balance. Acquaint people with the comprehensive plan;
- Attract visitors to Falmouth as a destination point--"Come to Falmouth"
- "honor our past, celebrate the present, and invest in the future";
- Attract a movie theater;
- Involve everyone, especially kids;
- Have fun! Come together as a community and have fun with young and old together;
- Foster pride in being from Maine;
- Share history of the Town;
- Foster hometown pride;
- Showcase our good public policy;
- Share the wealth of the Town's history;
- Link past to present.
- Educate about our history

Who is our audience?

- Citizens;
- Residents of all ages;
- Internet audience;
- Surrounding towns, county, all of Maine and beyond;
- Alums/former residents;
- Outside businesses;
- History buffs. Those interested in colonial, revolutionary and New England.

Events and Activities? How can we mark this occasion?

- Historic tours of town (bus, self-driving, QR Code displays, plaques, exhibits);
- 2018 calendar with vintage pictures of town landmarks – old schools, stores, Falmouth Corners, Handy Boat;
- Cookbook;
- Cemeteries—document, restore, clean up, beautify;
- Lecture series, especially in winter months or in 2017 to spark interest and gather momentum;
- Commemorative merchandise and souvenirs (examples: Christmas ornament; pottery)
- Business passport program;
- Weeklong event, inc. parade with high school band, floats, firetrucks, vendors, rides (like Clam Festival), baseball games, hot air balloon rides (Falmouth Fair);
- Historic style carnival-type event;
- Historical play/skit;
- People in historical costume, re-enactments (kids, military);
- Vintage baseball game;
- Oral Histories--Younger students interview older residents, with high school students filming them and making a movie;
- Historical society has boxes of oral histories on cassette tape – could digitize them, edit them, and put together with photos, put them online;
- Introduce newer residents to places in Falmouth;
- Seasonal events over the year;
- Tie businesses in with financial support/gain;
- Incorporate expansion of library (hopefully opening by February 2018);
- Treasure hunt of buildings/iconic places with passport stamps;
- Kayak race to Clapboard Island;
- Walking tours of Falmouth trails;
- Story walk with exhibits along the way;
- Marking places/trails (QR codes);
- Program on the ecological system of Casco Bay/estuary, importance of water to Falmouth's history;
- Guided canoe and kayak trips;
- UMaine Extension's demo garden at Tidewater;
- Fun run/5K/triathlon (“ter-athlon”);
- Photography contest of different landmarks (for kids)— make into coffee table book and sell them—tie in with current 4th grade art, social studies, poetry, photography project;
- Brand existing events with 300th theme;
- Scholarship contest – writing/painting/photography;
- Interview residents for 5 minute talks on their memories of Falmouth—film for internet or CD; link with senior class projects, similar to TedX;
- Reaching out to local scouts for Eagle Scout/Gold Award projects;
- Fireworks on New Year's Eve Kick Off Event – town green;
- Walk 300 mile challenge;
- 300lb weight loss challenge;
- 300 cans of soup/boxes of cereal for the food pantry;
- Top 300 photos taken during walking challenge;
- Track with a hashtag--#Falmouth300;
- Interviews ranging from youngest to oldest residents;

- Talk with Dan Wolotsky, Falmouth high school librarian to link with class projects and film club;
- Charity event/donation/project--something altruistic to reflect our gratitude and generosity
- 300 pennies—donate to charity;
- 2018 will be 10th anniversary of Food Pantry location at Town Hall;
- Food Pantry fall community supper at congregational church;
- Music program featuring schools (band, chorus, etc)
- Community Programs summer concerts could feature Falmouth musicians;
- Get the word out about all the great stuff that is already happening;
- Library hosts community read; could be combined with a cooking contest if food item featured in book;
- Parade with neighborhood/family floats;
- Historic tours of Falmouth for young and old;
- Storytelling to liven up the histories;
- Historical driving tours; 2nd grade curriculum has historical bus tour for the kids; FCP has worked with the historical society to do those tours;
- History of the churches;
- Tours of Historic Homes (find out which homes have landmark status)—tie in with community programs
- Historic plaques around town
- Afraid of the weather impacting events, have alternate plans;

Putting it all together

Patterns/themes?

- Multi-Generational; something for all ages;
- Love of Falmouth-- pride of place; Showcasing all we have to offer;
- Community: getting together; sharing;
- Focus on Storytelling—telling the story of Falmouth residents;
- Focus on History;
- At least one opportunity/event that would bring everyone in the community together to celebrate, all ages, for fun, connection, and community spirit; “Fabulous folks, fabulous fun in Falmouth”;
- At least one event that will bring in visitors to Falmouth from outside and have economic impact on the town;
- Focus on the people of Falmouth (wonderful people are why we like Falmouth)—what are their stories?;
- Focus on environment/getting outside; walking; talking advantage of Falmouth’s nature, trails and open spaces;

Gaps?

What are we missing?

- Native Americans connection;
- Homes on historic registry;
- Connect with businesses;
- Facebook page and branding to get the word out;
- Connecting with schools regarding senior projects;
- Connecting with scouts regarding Eagle Scout projects;

Timeframe?

Consensus was this should be a full year of commemorative activities, perhaps starting in 2017 with some lectures to gain momentum and encourage interest, then building to a crescendo in 2018. A lot of enthusiasm surrounding a week-long or multi-day event.

Next Steps

A Public forum will be held March 7. The committee will review findings from the two forums and the online survey and make recommendations to the Town Council, likely for 5-8 main events/activities spearheaded by the town, and then work with local organizations/businesses to facilitate partnerships. Once the Council approves, the committee will work on branding, imaging and getting the word out. We will encourage organizations to participate in these events/activities, by expanding or linking their current programs to the 300th, or working collaboratively with the town and others to create new activities that will all be linked under a cohesive 300th “brand”. We will also seek additional funding and sponsorship opportunities to facilitate these plans.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.