



# Long Range Planning Advisory Committee LPAC (+)

Date: April 4, 2019

To: Town Council

From: Becca Casey, Vice Chair

Re: Committee Report regarding Residential A (RA) zoning district

## LPAC Members

*Breana Gersen*  
Chair

*Becca Casey*  
Vice Chair

*Dimitri Balatsos*

*Paul Bergkamp*

*Rich Jordan*  
Planning Board Liaison

*Sandra Lipsey (+)*

*Sam Rudman (+)*

*John Winslow*

## Council Liaison

*Claudia King*

In response to the Council's request to provide recommendations regarding its review of Residential A (RA) district zoning by the April 8 Council Meeting, the Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee respectfully recommends the following:

### 1. DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

Three options are presented below and are summarized in this chart: [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_proposal\\_20190228.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_proposal_20190228.pdf).

#### A. Amend the dimensional standards for the RA district in accordance with the LPAC proposal of 2/28/2019.

*Three out of five members present (Rudman, Casey, Balatsos) recommended this option. These members felt that the proposed standards would prevent the recent infill developments that were enabled by the July 2016 amendments that the committee found problematic. Yet, these members also felt that this would allow for some limited infill and expansion to occur going forward in keeping with the policies of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan.*

#### B. Amend the dimensional standards for the RA district in accordance with the standards in place prior to July 2016.

*One member (Winslow) recommended this option. He felt that going back to pre-July 2016 would allow the town to move forward and would remove potential guesses as to what the zoning is as it is the same zoning that people have been familiar with.*

- C. Amend – without preference - either (a) the dimensional standards for the RA district in accordance with the LPAC proposal of 2/28/2019, or (b) the dimensional standards for the RA district in accordance with the standards in place prior to July 2016.**

*One member (Bergkamp) recommended this option. He felt that the 2/28/2019 was a good compromise, but that going back to pre-July 2016 would provide citizens with a safe place as it would fall back on standards that were familiar to them.*

## **2. SUBDISTRICTS**

- **Study the topic of dividing the RA district into subdistricts further.**

*The committee did explore the topic of subzones and agreed that lot sizes and lot widths in the RA district vary greatly, and that separate neighborhood standards within RA district may make sense. However, the committee felt that the work of subzone mapping and developing related dimensional standards needs to be done carefully, and was not feasible with the April 8 Council deadline. The committee unanimously felt that there is merit to exploring subzones further.*

## **3. NON-CONFORMITY**

- **Treat lots or buildings that will become non-conforming as a result of adoption of these zoning amendments in accordance with the current zoning standards for non-conformity as outlined in Sec.19-76 through 19-86.**

*The committee recognized that some people may have acted in good faith based on the July 2016 amendments and divided or developed their property. It felt those properties should be treated in the same manner as all other non-conforming properties in Falmouth.*

## **4. COMMUNICATION – INFORMATION – EDUCATION**

- **Going forward, communication and information sharing by the Town should be improved. This includes two-way education between the Town and its citizens.**

*The committee recognized that the recent discussion about Town-wide growth, and the RA district specifically, galvanized a lot of citizen interest. The committee feels it is important that citizens are involved and engaged in, and knowledgeable about, the planning of their town and that citizens have a lot of knowledge and expertise to offer. The committee recognizes the concerns that have been expressed relative to growth, growth cap, traffic, open space, taxes, school, and other topics and feels that additional discussion will be helpful.*

## **5. RETRO-ACTIVITY**

- **The committee did not discuss retro-activity of the effective date of any amendments and has no recommendation in that regard.**

## **LPAC WORK CONDUCTED**

The committee arrived at these conclusions after conducting eleven committee meetings (from 10/11/2018 through 4/2/2019), two public forums (on 11/15/2018 and 3/28/2019), and two Council updates (on 12/10/2018 and 2/25/2019), reviewing development data and maps, making site visits, receiving public comments at each of its meetings, and reviewing citizen communications. In addition, the committee maintained and updated a website that to date contains fifty-seven documents at

<https://www.falmouthme.org/long-range-planning-advisory-committee/pages/2018-growth-and-density-evaluation>.

## **ZONING OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The committee reviewed several zoning options, all of which have been posted on the website. In addition, the committee considered zoning suggestions that were brought forth by the public. Links of the posted options are:

- [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_lot\\_size\\_chart\\_0.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_lot_size_chart_0.pdf)
- [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_lot\\_size\\_chart\\_20190116.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_lot_size_chart_20190116.pdf)
- [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_lot\\_size\\_chart\\_20190207.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_lot_size_chart_20190207.pdf)
- [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_lot\\_size\\_chart\\_20190215\\_large\\_lot\\_option.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_lot_size_chart_20190215_large_lot_option.pdf)
- [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_lot\\_size\\_chart\\_20190219.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_lot_size_chart_20190219.pdf)
- [https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra\\_proposal\\_20190228.pdf](https://www.falmouthme.org/sites/falmouthme/files/uploads/ra_proposal_20190228.pdf)

## **NEXT LPAC ASSIGNMENT**

The committee respectfully requests specific direction from the Council regarding the focus of the committee's subsequent work and if the Council desires that current LPAC + membership remain part of the committee's Growth and Density Evaluation effort.

The committee welcomes any questions that the Council may have regarding these recommendations.