

**Annual Report of the Boards and Committees of
The Town of Falmouth**

2020



January 31, 2022

Board of Assessment Review (BAR)

Members: Richard Olson (Chair), Lois Lengyel (Secretary), and William Lunt. There are two vacancies.

Staff: Lisa Sangillo, BAR Administrative Assistant

2020 Accomplishments:

There were no BAR hearings in 2020.

Summary of ongoing duties, tasks, charge, etc.:

The Board receives its authority to hear and decide property tax abatement appeals pursuant to State Law 36 M.R.S.A. §843(1) and 30A, §2526.6(A-H); §2552.2; §2691.3 & §8439.2 The Board is constituted pursuant to Article VI of the Falmouth Code of Ordinances Section 601. Any appeal from any final decision of the Board may be taken pursuant to the provision of 36 M.R.S.A. §843. The Board had one vacancy. Pursuant to Article VI of the Code of Ordinances Section 602 a full board is five (5) members.

Goals or a work plan for 2021:

The Board's role is primarily reactive and adjudicatory, but we hope to continue to make the process transparent, equitable and user friendly to all parties who come before the BAR.

The Board is seeking two new Board members.

Budget Request:

Since staff is entirely in-house and supports the Board of Assessment Review, it is not anticipated that the BAR will have any budget requests for the upcoming year.

NOTE: The Assessor is a defendant in Appeal proceedings and does not serve as staff to the Board. The Assessor is Ben Thompson, Cumberland County Regional Assessing Department.

Board of Zoning Appeals

Members: *(Members listed below have served on the Board for at least a portion of the 2020 calendar year)*

Anthony DeRice (Chair), F. Jay Meyer (Vice Chair), Alexander Pratt, Nick Guerette, Emily Abruzzese, Cory Vargo, Joseph Lloyd.

Staff Liaison: Justin Brown – Code Enforcement Officer

Summary:

The Board conducted 11 regular meetings.

2020 Accomplishments:

The Board addressed a total of 44 separate applications in 2019 (2019 total was 32).

- 24 applications were reviewed under section 19-77 for Enlargement of Non-Conforming.
- 5 applications were reviewed under section 19-84 for Teardown/Rebuilds.
- 3 applications were reviewed under section 19-85 Accessory Building.
- 1 application was reviewed under section 19-86 Expansion in Shoreland Zone.
- 1 application was reviewed under section 19-66 for a Transmission Tower Conditional Use.
- 3 applications were reviewed under section 19-120 for a General Variance request.
- 1 application was reviewed under section 19-122 for a Disability Variance request.
- 2 applications were reviewed under section 19-54 for a Home Occupation.
- 1 application was reviewed under section 19-124 for an Administrative Appeal.
- 2 applications were reviewed under section 19-119 for Conditional Use.

Summary of Duties:

The Board is constituted under its Ordinance. The Board has regular meetings scheduled on the fourth Tuesday of every month. The Board consists of five regular members and two alternates. The Role of the Board is to hear applications for conditional uses, variances, and appeals of decisions made by the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO). The Board receives and relies on assistance from CEO Justin Brown and staff members Patrice Perreault and Lisa Sangillo. Lisa Sangillo is the recording secretary. The Board will occasionally request guidance on certain items from the town attorney. These requests are typically made through the CEO.

Work Plan Goals:

The Board fluctuated membership but ended the 2020 year with full Board consisting of seven members. The Board requested a workshop with the Town Attorney reiterate and clarify some typical practices and protocols of Board meetings as well as answer any specific questions members had about the process and legal procedures. The Board members will also be encouraged to attend education potentials outside of the workshop referenced above. *(Note: A workshop was held as described above with the town attorney in May of 2021)*

Budget Request:

No additional budget requests are anticipated for the upcoming year.

Community Wellness Committee

Members: Andrea Ferrante (Chair), Carol Kauffman (Vice Chair), Suzanne Fox (resigned), Joel Glass, Elizabeth Hamilton-Guarino, Julie Joy, Nancy Lightbody, Doug Michaud, Diane Moore, Gina Smith (resigned), and Doug Zlatin

Council Liaison: Hope Cahan and Pete LaFond (back-up)

Staff Liaison: Marguerite Fleming, Administration Analyst and Nathan Poore, Town Manager

Mission:

The Committee's charge is to determine best strategies and practices to inform and promote wellness for Falmouth residents through educating and engaging the public about available wellness resources, creating a wellness resource guide or annual wellness event, and responding to relevant challenges and opportunities that impact wellbeing in Falmouth. The Committee is also responsible for administering the Town's social services funding program.

Overview:

The Community Wellness Committee is a new committee that has been meeting monthly since October 2020. Much of the Committee's work thus far has focused on establishing the Committee's work plan.

2020-Spring 2021 Accomplishments:

- Developed a definition of wellness to guide the Committee's work.
- Human Services Sub-Committee
 - Requested and received a supplemental appropriation of \$35,000 from the Town Council to restore the social services funding to the FY21 budget (the funding was previously cut due to COVID-19 budget reductions).
 - Administered the FY21 social services funding application process, distributing \$35,000 to 12 social service agencies that served more than 1,906 Falmouth residents in FY21.
 - Revised the funding program to award 14 grants with fixed amounts and to require annual results reporting as well as developed an enhanced advertising plan.

2021 Goals:

- The Committee has been working on the creation of a Wellness Resource Guide.
- The Committee plans to engage in efforts to market the Committee including creating a logo, establishing an online presence, and monthly articles in the *Falmouth Focus*.
- The Committee is interested in coordinating several initiatives including a wellness fair, Wellness Wednesdays, Food Truck Fridays, a community picnic, and mental health awareness programming. The execution of these events will be contingent upon the evolving pandemic.

Conservation Commission

Members: Rich Bicknell, Sarah Boudreau, Jeanie Campbell, Jerry Goodall, Karen Jacobsen, Nancy Lightbody, Alex Urquhart

Council Liaison: Tommy Johnson

Staff Liaison: Ashley Krulik

Mission:

The Falmouth Conservation Commission (FCC) shall strive to protect the natural resources of Falmouth and improve the Town's ecological integrity and wildlife diversity. It shall increase public awareness of the intrinsic value of the Town's natural resources and shall work to study and conserve them.

2020 Accomplishments:

Despite the many restrictions of the pandemic that began in the middle of March, the FCC was still able to meet in person or on Zoom six times and accomplish a great deal, thanks to the enormous efforts of Kimberly Darling, Theo Holtwijk, and Ashley Krulik.

- **Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction**
 - The Town Council passed an initial ordinance on March 9, 2020:
 - Requires professional applicators to register with the Town and report on their use of pesticides and fertilizers each year from February 1 through January 31.
 - Prohibits the application of fertilizers from December 1 through March 31.
 - Researched the use and cost of various water-testing strategies to measure the effectiveness of the ordinance.
 - Led a Zoom workshop for Cape Elizabeth about lessons learned from Falmouth's process of creating an ordinance to restrict the use of pesticides and fertilizer.
- **Living Lawns Educational Campaign (supports Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction ordinance)**
 - In spite of the pandemic's restrictions, continued to work on developing a robust education program for property owners: hired a marketing consultant, created a logo, explored a variety of media options, and continued to speak with experts in the area.
 - On March 3, encouraged voters to fill out a short survey about how they currently took care of their lawns and gardens and whether they wanted to learn about healthy lawn care. On March 7 asked residents who were attending a Best Management Practices at Skillins to fill it out too.
 - Included results of the survey in a report about data collected from the first year of this ordinance in a presentation to the Town Council on April 26.
- **Invasive Terrestrial Plant Management**
 - Continued to educate citizens about the ecological threats caused by invasive plants and the need for and benefits of their removal.
 - Hosted on March 3 at the polls, a table with information about invasive plants, ticks, pesticides, and fertilizers.
 - Included in the Falmouth Focus short articles about ways to get rid of invasive terrestrial plants.

- Continued educational outreach by giving in-person demonstrations about specific invasives to several condominium associations.
- Was unable to fund the annual right-of-way roadside maintenance because of budget cuts during the pandemic.
- **Watershed Protection Project**
 - Partnered with DEP, GPCOG, and consultant Robyn Saunders from Attaining: Sustainable Solutions on a project involving Falmouth's numerous watersheds.
- **Tree City USA**
 - Was unable to host an annual Arbor Day event because of the pandemic.

Goals for 2021:

- **Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction Ordinance**
 - Continue to work with the Town Council about next steps for the current ordinance.
 - Analyze results from the first year of the ordinance and continue to improve the process. So far, paperwork has been returned by 21 professional applicators. These preliminary results do not include treatments done by private residents or professionals who chose not to submit a report. More details will be included in a presentation to the Town Council on April 26.
 - Revise and make applications available to professional applicators for the upcoming year.
- **Living Lawns Educational Campaign**
 - Continue to inform residents about the proper use of pesticides and fertilizers.
 - Analyze data collected from the most recent round of surveys and revise as needed.
 - Continue to be in touch with Falmouth's supportive local nurseries.
- **Invasive Terrestrial Plant Management**
 - Continue to educate citizens about the ecological threats caused by invasive plants.
 - In mid-September will resume the annual right-of-way roadside maintenance to eradicate invasives in designated priority areas if the post-pandemic budget allows it to happen.
 - Continue work on (and amend as needed) the Town-wide invasive management plan in partnership with Public Works, LMAC, and Parks and Community Programs, and uniting efforts involving roadside rights-of-way, open space, and Town properties.
 - Continue to include in the Falmouth Focus short articles about possible ways to get rid of invasive terrestrial plants.
- **Watershed Protection Project**
 - Have been asked to take on this project after the Town Council approves the recommendations that will be included in a report in the fall of 2021.
- **Tree City USA**
 - For Arbor Day on April 20 will ensure that the Tree City USA designation continues by planting a tree and hosting a socially distanced, Falmouth-wide tree scavenger hunt (suggested by a resident).
- **Earth Day**
 - Planned two trash pick-ups in recognition of "Restore Our Earth," April 22's theme this year. One on April 17, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, at River Point on Route 100,

and the other on April 24, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, along Route 1 from Waldo's to Bucknam Road. Trash sorting will follow the pick-ups.

- **Liaison with other Town Committees**

- Continue to collaborate with and/or be members of the following committees: Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee (REAC), Land Management and Acquisition Committee (LMAC), Planning Board, Highland Lake Leadership Team (HLLT).

- **Additional Initiatives being considered**

- **Microplastics:** Educate residents about the environmental concerns associated with these, as well as the proper recycling of, and alternatives to, using plastics.
- **Maine State Climate Action Plan:** Determine actions that can be taken at the local level to mitigate the impact of climate change.
- **Carbon offset markets, CO₂ fees, dividends, taxes, and/or credits:** Research these topics.
- **Wildlife Corridors, Wetland Stream Crossings, and Vernal Pools:** Determine overarching concepts that will guide the FCC in the protection and conservation of our town.

Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee (FEIC)

Members: Chris Wasileski (Chair), Bill Lunt (Vice Chair), Mindy Schwartz, Kevin Moss, Ozan Tuzmen, Nicholas Weightman, Tural Nadirli

Council Liaison: Janice de Lima, Jay Trickett

Staff Liaisons: Nathan Poore, Theo Holtwijk, Marguerite Fleming

FEIC was created in 2011 by the Falmouth Town Council to assist and promote business activity.

FEIC webpage: www.falmouthme.org/economic-improvement-committee

Further resources for businesses: www.falmouthme.org/businesses

2020 Accomplishments:

- Met 8 times in 2020.
- Reviewed project updates provided by staff.
- Reviewed Economic Development Strategy assignments in Town Council Work Plan.
- Discussed a concept for a Falmouth Business League and sought community outreach on that idea, including the Portland Regional Chamber and Falmouth-Cumberland Community Chamber.
- Discussed ideas for future business events.
- Reviewed business support efforts by Town regarding COVID-19.
- Discussed the purpose of the Committee and its future charge.

Summary of Ongoing Duties:

According to its charge, the Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee (FEIC) shall:

- Undertake and support economic development activities aimed at creating a sustainable economy and broadened tax base in collaboration with public/private entities, Town staff, Town Council and regional economic development efforts.
- Provide advisory assistance to Town staff and Town Council on economic development matters, including, but not limited to, policy and ordinance development, strategic planning, business attraction, and land use.
- Develop economic development guidelines and recommendations, including, but not limited to, workforce development, business development, and infrastructure.
- Assist the Town Council with implementation of Falmouth's 2015 Economic Development Strategy and review this plan every three (3) years.
- Assist the Town Council with any other projects as the Council may choose to assign it.

Goals:

- Continue to discuss the purpose of the Committee and its future charge.

Falmouth Memorial Library

- The Library adapted its operations and hours to meet COVID-19 protocols.
- Prior to opening, the Library installed a new RFID self-check system from Bibliotecha. This required adding an RFID tag to each item in the collection and re-configuring library systems to communicate to the self-check kiosk and security gates. Self-check is an added convenience for patrons wishing to avoid a line at circulation and a welcome feature for providing a no contact form of checkout. The Library also performed a full inventory of the collection during its pandemic closure, so it will be able to better monitor inventory moving forward with this new system.
- The Library saw steady traffic since re-opening on October 13 – averaging 160 people per day (with a high of 244, and low of 109). The Library's pandemic curbside and takeout services were also popular.
- Fall 2020 was a very busy time for new library cards. The Library issued 81 new library cards in October (6 of those were non-resident cards), compared to 23 in October 2019 and 33 in October 2018.
- One of the expansion features of the renovation was the creation of a new Information Desk. This desk will help the Library be more efficient in providing customer service at the circulation desk by providing more in depth help with opening new library cards and getting technology help such as help downloading eBooks available via cloudLibrary or help with wireless printing and basic reference questions. It's designed as a triage between circulation and reference, and during COVID will help continue to provide Library Takeout service with existing staff.
- ReVision Energy installed a donor-funded 65kW photovoltaic array with about 200 panels manufactured by REC. The system will produce an estimated 74,954 kWh/year (by comparison, the average household consumes about 10,400 kWh/yr.) The first energy production started on September 14, and the first month's credit was \$541.
- During November 2020, the Library received a \$1 donation from each purchase of the \$2.50 reusable GIVE BACK WHERE IT COUNTS Bag at the Falmouth Shaw's.

Goals:

- Revisiting fundraising plans due to COVID-19, expanding and re-energizing virtual programs and planning for future re-introduction of in-person programming next year, developing a more robust communications and marketing plan to help inform the public and keep people aware of all the Library offers. The Library is looking at ways to utilize some of its space for a used bookstore to provide both a safer space than a large single gathering for fundraising, as well as to provide a more consistent revenue stream that will help plan for future programming and program supply costs.
- The Library is also looking for ways to fund expanding its offering of eBooks beyond the state cloudLibrary to add a Falmouth cloud that can cut down on hold times for patrons.
- Discovering new or expanded ways to reach the community is also increasing access for people who might otherwise have physical difficulty engaging with the library. The Library plans to review its virtual programming, electronic offerings, and planning for future outreach services.

Harbor/Waterfront Committee

Members: Richard Garrett (Chair), Pete Leavitt (Portland Yacht Club), Christopher Dyer (Handy Boat), Manny Kourinos, Richard Craven, Peter Dion, and Martin Bruno

Council Liaison: Janice de Lima

Staff Liaison: Alan Twombly, John Kilbride

2020 Accomplishments:

- Discussion to update ordinance to those obtaining and retaining mooring permits must have a valid and approved access point.
- Review complaint of lobster commercial float usage. No action taken by HC.
- Web camera installed at harbor for public view. Support by a grant.

Summary of Ongoing Duties, Task, Charge, etc.:

- Ordinance change to reflect language in addressing access points. Currently being reviewed by legal.

Goals for 2021:

- Resiliency study by Baker Associates of climate impact to harbor. This is supported by a grant.
- Painting of the outbuilding and inside the harbor office.

Highland Lake Leadership Team (HLLT)

The mission of the Highland Lake Leadership Team (HLLT) is to work together to improve and maintain the water quality of Highland Lake for the benefit of the residents, the Towns, and Future generations.

This effort includes the Towns of Falmouth and Windham, the Highland Lake Association, the Maine DEP, and the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD). To accomplish this mission, the HLLT developed and are implementing a Strategic Plan that identifies important management issues through input from key stakeholder groups. These management issues are then prioritized, goals are determined, and implementation activities are identified - including institutional and public roles, timing, and funding.

The charge of the HLLT includes:

1. Assist with the implementation of, and recommend, if necessary and appropriate, updates to the 1999 Highland Lake Watershed Management Plan, 2003 Phosphorus Control Action Plan, 2005 Highland Lake Watershed Management Plan, and new 2020-2030 WatershedBased Management Plan (see below for more details);
2. Monitor, assist, and coordinate, as deemed appropriate and necessary, scientific efforts to further understanding of watershed and water quality issues affecting Highland Lake;
3. Seek input and recommendations from experts and other stakeholders such as: Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District (CCSWCD), Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, local experts, the general public and other and other stakeholders;
4. Report on its progress and identify any resource needs to the governing bodies of the respective members of the Team;
5. Review existing zoning and ordinances in the two towns for effectiveness in protecting the lake, modify as appropriate, and research lake protections utilized by other towns for consideration in Falmouth and Windham.

2020 Accomplishments:

While efforts were curtailed at the beginning of the year by the impact of COVID 19, once allowed, the use of Zoom meetings freed up the group to move toward the goals as detailed in the strategic plan through its various committees:

Highland Lake Watershed-Based Management Plan (WMP) was completed in early 2020. EPA 319 grant monies were applied for and approved for the initial phases of the effort. The WMP is a 10-year plan that will form the basis of the HLLT efforts for the foreseeable future. While this plan is what will detail the next year or so, it is a living document that will be adjusted as we move forward. EPA 319 Grant money as well as grants from Windham, Falmouth and other sources will all be used to reconstruct high erosion sites along with long term maintenance plans to minimize phosphorus movement toward the lake.

Education and Outreach

The bulk of the effort for the WMP lies in helping watershed residents better understand their role in limiting the phosphorus that goes into Highland Lake. The major sources of phosphorus that were prioritized are gravel roads, animal waste, and potentially alewives, with individual homes, driveways, walkways, and shorelines at a lower level. A strong relationship with the road

associations around the lake will result in a new conduit for information and hopefully joint efforts in bulk purchasing of quality road materials, vacuum truck rentals etc. The Education and Outreach Committee, in partnership with CCSWCD, has developed a 10-year Education & Outreach plan that focuses on private roads, yard erosion, and shoreline buffers within the shoreland zone. Tactics include developing educational materials that focus on these issues, offering workshops and expertise to road associations and residents, and digital efforts including social media campaigns, website updates, and e-newsletters.

Ordinance

A renewed effort to look at nutrient management has been recognized from the numerous stream sampling results over the past two years. This topic is a complicated, largely because of the different goals of the DEP and the Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF). Farms are appropriately well protected by the DACF, but the goal of the committee is to work with both State departments to optimize Town ordinances that will provide the best nutrient controls without impacting the operation of farms, both large and small.

Water Quality

The water testing effort in 2020 was much less than hoped because of the closure of most laboratories and the difficulties in keeping appropriate distances while taking samples. The routine secchi disk (water clarity), temperature, phosphorus, some zooplankton as well as the above-mentioned stream sampling was done, but not the more specific testing that had been planned. The Water Quality Committee is currently putting together the plans for 2021 and will include all the above as well as much more detailed eDNA studies that were halted last year. These studies will further validate or invalidate the hypothesis that the alewives spawning in the lake and their young are upsetting the food chain to an extent that causes the bloom to occur. Additionally, we are hoping to perform some testing to determine if there is any phosphorus recycling from the bottom sediment in the lake. It has been thought that there was none, but there are some unexplained peaks and valleys in the amount of phosphorus in the water column throughout the seasons. While the water clarity over the past three summers did not reach an “official bloom” definition of secchi disk readings of 2 meters or less as it did in the prior four summers, there was, nonetheless a very prominent decrease in water clarity to a depth of 2.5 to 3 meters over the past 3 years.

Land Management & Acquisition Committee (LMAC)

Members: John Adelman, Chris Kittredge (resigned), Fred Farber, Dave Gagnon, and Chris Wasileski

Council Liaison: Ted Asherman

Staff Liaisons: Lucky D'Ascanio, Parks and Parks & Community Programs Director, Amanda Stearns, Open Space Manager, and Caleb Hemphill, Open Space Property Steward

Summary of Ongoing Duties, Tasks, Charge, etc.:

In its 2019-2020 work plan, the Town Council charged LMAC to implement the Open Space Plan, adopted by the Council in 2018. In July 2019, LMAC presented to the Council a recommended implementation strategy and the Council directed LMAC to work on the recommendations as submitted. A review of those work plan items (in order of priority) is below.

- 1. Improvement of the existing Geographical Information System (GIS) framework**
This project includes the collection of accurate GPS data for all trails and trail related infrastructure. This will increase accuracy of information and efficiencies in maintaining records, organizing work, and communicating with the public. This task will remain a top priority concurrent with all other tasks until implemented. With the support of the Information Technology Department and the Town's GIS consultant Spatial Alternatives a data dictionary has been developed. A data collection test has been conducted and it is expected that all properties will be inventoried by June 2021.
- 2. Develop a comprehensive trail management plan**
While this task was not specifically addressed in the 2018 Open Space Plan, trail management and protection are mentioned. LMAC identified it as a top priority as the town does not have a trail management plan for its approximate 50 miles of trails. The development of a comprehensive policy for management of existing trails and development of new trails is crucial for the success of the recreational component of the open space program. This plan is still under development. Many current issues relating to trails during this past year have been used to develop policy. It is anticipated that this will be completed by June 2021.
- 3. Review and update the Open Space Rating Guides used by LMAC in evaluating potential acquisition and trail properties**
This task was elevated in importance due to several properties coming before LMAC for consideration for purchase. This task is complete.
- 4. Develop and/or update land management plans for all open space properties.**
There are currently fifteen conserved lands that have management plans. Of these, two were updated in 2011, one in 2012, nine in 2013 and the remaining three in 2017. All need to be updated to be integrated with the new Terrestrial Invasives Management and Control Plan developed in 2018 in conjunction with the Sustainability Coordinator, the 2018 Open Space Plan and the new Trail Management Plan. All plans are being reviewed with regard to management policies and goals. The management plan for Pine Grove Preserve has recently been updated as well. It is anticipated that several more will be updated by June 2021.
- 5. Improve the ongoing efforts of staff and LMAC by developing a communication and outreach strategy to appropriately apprise/the public of open space.**

Current efforts need to be reviewed and expanded to meet the goals of the Open Space Plan. This effort should be in collaboration with the general Council commitment to public outreach and communication. This task has not been started.

2020 Accomplishments:

1. Field Days

LMAC has participated in several field days over the last year. This provides an opportunity for committee members to gain personal knowledge of properties, be more familiar with the work required to maintain and improve properties and participate in outdoor activities. Projects this past year have included trimming at River Point Conservation Area, building a new trail section in North Falmouth Community Forest and improving trails in Pine Grove Preserve.

2. Volunteer Support

Staff have worked to engage new members of the community and trail users to help with property and trail maintenance and improvements. This support is vital to the program as there is always more work to be done than staff time. This year two Eagle Scout Projects were supported, one in North Falmouth Community Forest to provide a trail connection and a second in River Point Conservation Area and Hadlock Community Forest beta testing a trail conditions survey. Both projects have added value to the program. In addition, new stewards have been added for several properties. Members of the biking community are particularly active and have donated weeks of time to provide safer trail options in several sections of trails where topography provides a challenge for multi-use trails. The Hayfield section of Blackstrap Hill Community Forest now has a foot traffic only trail, a downhill bike only trail and a multi-use trail that climbs the hill from Hurricane Road to Blackstrap Road. In North Falmouth Community Forest, Poplar Ridge now has two trails, one for foot traffic and uphill bike traffic and one for downhill bikes only. This improves the user experience for all users, making travel safer and more enjoyable.

3. Trail closure

COVID made establishing and maintaining both trail closures and parking area closures difficult. With staff and the help of the Parks Division and Police Departments, the Hurricane Road and Blackstrap Road parking areas were well managed.

2020 Challenges:

1. **COVID** – While the management of COVID related issues was a success, it was extremely time consuming for staff. It also appears to be a catalyst for increased use by all user groups, which has also increased user inquiries.
2. **Staffing** – The FY21 budget included an increase of staffing to 44 hours a week with time to be allocated to two part time positions, the Open Space Manager and a Stewardship and Outreach Coordinator (SOC). The SOC was filled temporarily from January to August 2020 but was vacated as the individual accepted a position elsewhere. Due to spending freezes that position was not filled. This has resulted in the program staffing to be reduced to 15 hours a week and over-taxing volunteers. With limited staff, work plan task completion has slowed.

Parks & Community Programs Advisory Committee (PAC-PAC)

Members: Chair-Karen Jones, Janet Dye, Melanie Collins, Doug Zlatin, Scott Simmonds, and John Lane

Council Liaison: Tommy Johnson

Staff Liaison: Lucky D'Ascanio, Director of Parks and Community Programs

Town Council Work Plan Items:

1. Develop a “Comprehensive Parks & Active Recreation Areas Strategic Plan”: ON-GOING

Lucky D’Ascanio has been working with Maggie Fleming to upload the Town’s current data into the National Recreation & Park Associations “Park Metrics” database. Parks Metrics is used to assess benchmarks regarding things such as, the number of parks and/or playgrounds per population and capita as well as the number of staff to the number of facilities, etc. This work is very near the finish line and should be available for discussion at our meeting in November so we can begin to map out a strategy. It is the committee’s hope to highlight some fun facts about Falmouth’s data in upcoming issues of the Falmouth Focus and on social media in the near future.

2. Develop a Town Wide Public Spaces Improvement Plan: ON-GOING

With regard to a “beautification plan” for the Town, the committee expects this work to overlap with information gathered from the Comprehensive Parks & Active Recreation Areas Strategic Plan which will give the Town some time to develop a funding strategy for this work. The committee is prepared to spend meeting time on-site at each facility over the course of the next year or so to gather more information and formulate a plan. But the committee and staff are cognizant of the fact that this work will require workforce and with a full-time Parks staff of only two, volunteers will likely be required to bring this plan to fruition, especially given the current pandemic and economic situation we are all facing.

3. PACPAC Charge-Review Status: COMPLETE

The PACPAC Chair, Staff Liaison, Council Liaison, Council Chair and Town Manager met last month to review the committee charge and discuss the committee’s work. This meeting allowed council leadership and administration the opportunity to gain a better understanding of PACPAC’s past project involvement and to discover what type of projects that will be tasked to the committee in the future.

Committee Highlights:

- Each year for the past 10 or so years, PACPAC has taken part in facilities tours of Town parks and open spaces. These tours have been “moderated” by the Parks & Community Programs Director, the Parks Supervisor, the former Open Space Manager as well as the current Open Space Manager. All have a wealth of history and knowledge and anecdotal information about town facilities, open space and conservation areas. The “tours” have focused on all areas of town and included not only parks but trails, open space and

conservation areas as well. This month, we will once again be taking a tour and focusing on cemeteries in Town that the Parks department has the responsibility for maintaining per state statute with regard to Veterans burial sites. Several committee members have expressed interest in assisting the Parks & Community Programs Department in uploading GIS data of veteran burial sites. This work is nearly done but the two larger active cemeteries in town need to be completed.

- Moving through 2020 and looking to 2021 we are optimistic and for PACPAC, we envision a return of projects for the committee to oversee. While we were asked to put the Underwood Park parking upgrades and additional playground amenities on hold until the Rt. 88 and Johnson Road study was completed, we believe we will be tackling this once again over the course of this fiscal year. We anticipate robust public input from the neighborhoods in the area as well as others, likely in the way of surveys and forums. The committee will be tasked to design and implement survey questions and forums.
- On-going and past work plan items have included reviewing Community Program brochures three times a year, cooperative planning with other committees such as LMAC (Land Management & Acquisition Committee) on reviewing and making recommendations for changes in dog ordinances and working with SCAC (Senior Citizen Advisory Committee) on the development of the Senior Services Coordinator position and the remodeling of the Presumpscot Senior Citizen Room at Mason-Motz.

Planning Board

The Planning Board is a citizen board made up of seven members appointed by the Town Council to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan by regulating development practices. With the assistance of Town Staff, the Planning Board reviews proposals for various development applications.

Members: Peter Kenlan (Chair), Rich Jordan (Vice Chair), David Sinnett, Jason Cole (Resigned 1/31/2020), Jamie Kelly (Resigned 5/5/2020), Jamie Mason, Joel Kallich (Resigned 7/8/2020), Seth Blanchard and Ashlan Oberholtzer

Staff Liaison: Dawn Emerson

2020 Activity:

- The Board held 10 regular monthly meetings.
- Processed 43 development applications (some of which were withdrawn before being heard by the Planning Board) and issued 31 approvals to applicants.
- Held 3 public hearings on proposed amendments to the Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance.
- The approvals granted in 2020 include:
 - 2 Subdivision Approvals for Homestead Acres 65 single family condominium lots off Mountain Road and Meadow Winds 20 single family condominium units on Route 100.
 - 1 Subdivision re-approval for Falmouth Foreside Village on Route 1.
 - 10 Subdivision Amendment Approvals for:
 - i. 1 Approval for the relocation of the sanitary sewer main for Homestead Acres.
 - ii. 4 Approvals pertaining to easements.
 - iii. 2 Approvals for reductions in setbacks.
 - iv. 1 Approval for building footprint modifications at Tuscan Way.
 - v. 1 Approval for drainage improvements and elevation change at Tuscan Way
 - vi. 1 Approval to remove a septic restriction on a lot.
 - 6 Site Plan Approvals for a riding arena, two high top greenhouses, a maintenance facility and wellness center at the Portland Country Club, and two new buildings-one on Route 100 and one on Route 1.
 - 3 Private Way Applications.
 - 4 Private Way Amendment Applications.
 - 6 Shoreland Zone Permits.
 - 1 Sign Permit.
 - 1 Fill Permit.

Summary of Ongoing Duties:

- Regulates development practices, reviews development applications, and implements the recommendations and policies of various Town-adopted plans and studies.
- Reviews development proposals for subdivisions, private ways, commercial site plans and signs, shoreland zoning permits, and fill permits.
- Conducts public hearings for proposed zoning amendments as the Town's designated Municipal Reviewing Authority.

Budget Request:

As staff support for the Planning Board is provided for entirely in-house, it is anticipated that the Planning Board will not have any budget requests for the upcoming year.

Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee

Members: Richard Klain, Dave Low, Donna Lee Cheney, Lynn Breckinridge, Rich Bicknell, Audrey Hotchkiss, Alan Solander (resigned)

Council Liaison: Peter LaFond

Staff Liaison: Ashley Krulik, Sustainability Coordinator

Mission:

Advise residents, businesses, and municipal operations on sustainability initiatives that help cultivate a resilient community.

The committee continues to have active membership. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the committee met 5 times in 2020.

Overview:

2020 was a year of change for the Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee. In addition to dealing with COVID and the absence of in-person meetings, the committee changed its leadership and staff liaison. Kimberly Darling left her role as the Sustainability Coordinator in the spring/summer and was replaced by Ashley Krulik in October. REAC appreciates the commitment that the Town has made to Sustainability, showing no hesitation in the decision to replace Kimberley despite budget constraints from COVID. In another change, REAC lost its Chairperson as Pete LaFond stepped off the committee to serve on the Council. Pete now serves as a liaison to the committee, and Dave Low, a REAC member for several years, has taken over as committee Chair.

Despite all the changes noted above and the COVID slow down, REAC had a productive year on several projects with the assistance of staff members. REAC has and will continue to rely on the work of the Town's Sustainability position to implement most of the items it addresses.

2020 Accomplishments:

- **Landfill Solar Array:** This project was championed at REAC by Pete LaFond and he should be applauded for his dogged insistence that this project be pushed to Council for approval. Despite delays due to Central Maine Power, the array is on-track to go "live" in late summer. This 875 KW project is estimated to save the Town nearly \$2 million over 20 years.
- **Sustainable Business Recognition Program:** The committee developed a program to recognize Falmouth businesses that are championing sustainability in their operations - including energy conservation, waste management, transportation, air quality, water conservation, food issues and community stewardship. The committee has already received several applications from interested organizations and hopes others will be motivated to follow their peers.
- **Plastic straw ban:** The committee did extensive research on whether a plastic straw ban would be feasible for the Town. Ultimately, the conclusion was that this makes sense and should be implemented. However, prior to suggesting this to Council, COVID hit, and the committee decided the potential financial implications businesses would incur when

this is implemented would be too difficult to enact in the current business environment. The committee will re-introduce this idea to Council when it may be more feasible.

- **EV Charging for new commercial developments:** The committee has prioritized the need to transition to EVs through supporting the development of electric vehicle infrastructure. EV chargers will be installed at Falmouth Memorial Library, and outreach has been completed to some developers along Route 1. Grants will be used when possible, to help fund the cost to install chargers on both public and private property.
- **Bicycle repair stations:** The committee has researched the installation of several bicycle repair stations around town to continue to encourage alternative modes of travel. Locations have not yet been fully studied but possibilities include the library, town hall, the school campus and Route 88 fire station.
- **Recycling Reform Bill Resolution:** REAC brought a resolution to Town Council to support LD 2104, an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging Law, to place more responsibility on manufacturers to produce less wasteful packaging. Town Council endorsed the resolution. LD 2104 stalled out when COVID hit, but a new version has brought forward this legislative session.
- **East Side Food Waste Kiosk:** The third and final food waste kiosk has been installed as part of the DEP food waste grant program. The locations include Community Park, the Falmouth Transfer Station, and Village Park (next to Casco Bay Arena).

Goals or Work Plan for 2021:

- **Municipal Green Building Ordinance:** Require that all Town owned and/or funded construction projects over a certain threshold be required to meet a specific green building goal. Other local jurisdictions such as Portland have passed similar requirements.
- **Green Building Ordinance:** The committee will propose to Council that all commercial developments be required to meet certain green building standards. In many progressive municipalities around the world, building projects are held to a high standard given the impact they have on their local environments and the environment in general.
- **Sustainable Procurement Policy:** Work with the Finance team to better understand current policies and procedures to see where there is opportunity to look at things through a “green lens” and reduce waste, lower our carbon footprint, and save money.
- **Business Recycling Program:** The committee is discussing business recycling with the local waste haulers to ascertain the viability of aiding businesses in their recycling efforts. Should the committee be able to implement a successful program, there may be a suggestion to Council to move to a recycling requirement for businesses.
- **Thin film plastic recycling at the transfer station:** The committee is researching how the transfer station might be able to start accepting thin film plastics which can currently only be recycled at large retailers in town. Ascertaining viable haulers to help in the effort is proving difficult but the committee hopes to be able to make a recommendation later this year.
- **Resident Sustainability Education:** Ongoing effort to educate residents on sustainability efforts they can help to support.
- **Commercial Sustainability Education:** Continue to work with businesses to become more sustainable; oversee Sustainable Business Recognition Program.