

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

**2021**



**August 1, 2022**

## **Board of Assessment Review (BAR)**

**Members:** Richard Olson (Chair), Lois Lengyel (Secretary), Randy Harding, Robin Sawyer, and William Lunt.

**Staff:** Lisa Sangillo, BAR Administrative Assistant

### **2021 Accomplishments:**

The Board had one appeal in 2021 from Wal-Mart Real Estate Business Trust. At the hearing on August 2, 2021, the Board heard testimony from Andrew Hood of Stavitsky & Associates who represented Wal-Mart as well as from Benjamin Thompson of Cumberland County Regional Assessing who is the Assessor for Falmouth. After careful deliberation, the Board voted 3-0 to deny the Taxpayer's requested abatement and affirmed the assessment citing the Taxpayer did not meet the burden of proof.

### **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

### **Goals or a work plan for 2022:**

- 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.

### **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:** Anthony DeRice (Current Chair), Cory Vargo (Current Vice Chair), Alexander Pratt, Nick Guerette, Joseph Lloyd, Sarah Verville and Chris Doehne

**Staff Liaison:** Justin Brown – Code Enforcement Officer

## **Summary:**

The Board conducted 11 regular meetings and one (1) workshop. The Board discussed the roles and responsibilities of the BZA and the development review process.

## **Accomplishments:**

The Board addressed a total of 40 separate applications in 2021 (2020 total was 41).

- 18 applications were reviewed under section 19-77 for Enlargement of Non-Conforming.
- 7 applications were reviewed under section 19-84 for Teardown/Rebuilds.
- 3 applications were reviewed under section 19-86 for Non-Conforming Structures in a Shoreland Zone.
- 1 application were reviewed under section 19-66 for a Transmission Tower Conditional Use.
- 1 application were reviewed under section 19-120 for a General Variance request.
- 1 application were reviewed under section 19-122 for a Disability Variance request.
- 3 application was reviewed under section 19-54 for a Home Occupation.
- 1 application was reviewed under section 19-124 for an Administrative Appeal.
- 5 applications were reviewed under section 19-119 and/or 19-123 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 Carolyn Dorr 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 BZA is a full Board with 5 Regular members and 2 Alternate members. Board members are encouraged to attend education potentials outside of any workshops held at Town Hall.

## **Budget Request:**

No additional budget requests are anticipated for the upcoming year.

# Community Wellness Committee

**Current Members:** Andrea Ferrante, Chair, Carol Kauffman, Vice Chair, Julie Butler, Joel Glass, Elizabeth Hamilton-Guarino (resigned), Nancy Lightbody, Doug Michaud, and Doug Zlatin

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

**Staff Liaison:** Marguerite Fleming and Nathan Poore

## **Mission:**

The Committee's charge is to determine best strategies and practices to inform and promote wellness for Falmouth residents at the level of the individuals, families, and the community as a whole. Part of the intention is to educate and inform and another is to engage residents in events and opportunities. The Committee is also responsible for administering the Town's social services funding program.

Committee's Definition of Wellness: Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices towards a healthy and fulfilling life and community.

## **Accomplishments (October 2020-Dec. 2021):**

- Developed a definition of wellness to guide the Committee's work
- Developed a Wellness Resource Guide. Currently in graphic design phase.
- Wellness Wednesdays; Articles & Mini Events. Schedule and organization for 2022 complete. Launching first article and event winter/spring 2022.
- 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
  - Administered the FY22 social services funding application process, distributing \$35,000 to 13 social service agencies that served more than 1,600 residents in FY21/22

## **Goals for 2022:**

- Complete design then launch digital and potentially printed version of the Wellness Resource Guide
- Launch our first year of monthly Wellness Wednesdays articles in The Falmouth Focus on various wellness topics. Many of the articles will include a mini event in town that the public may attend to support a sense of community, make new relationships or nourish old ones, and wellness of all types including fun!!!
- Plan an annual wellness fair event to be held in 2023.
- In hopes of being included by Council, as well as our own initiatives with other like-minded committees/groups in endeavors related to community fabric, community

wellbeing, social gatherings, community center and other wellness efforts that arise out of the vision and values process. • Continue to support social service agencies with our grant program that serve needs of residents in our community.

**Council Requests:**

- FY23 Budget Request: \$35,000 for the social services agencies funding
- Future funding for an annual event in 2023
- The Committee asks to be considered and included with other members of the community, when it comes time to carry out initiatives from the Vision & Values process.

## Conservation Commission

**Members:** Nancy Lightbody (chair), Rich Bicknell, Sarah Boudreau, J.P. Connolly, Jerry Goodall, Steve Merz

**Council Liaison:** Tommy Johnson

**Staff Liaison:** Ashley Krulik

### **Mission:**

The Falmouth Conservation Commission shall strive to protect the natural resources of Falmouth, including fresh and coastal waters, and improve the Town's ecological integrity and wildlife diversity. It shall increase public awareness of the intrinsic value of the Town's interconnected ecosystems and shall work to study, protect, and conserve them.

### **Accomplishments in 2021:**

Throughout the year the full FCC met together on Zoom for all 10 of its regularly scheduled monthly meetings in addition to various subcommittee meetings and accomplished a great deal, thanks to the enormous efforts of Theo Holtwijk and Ashley Krulik.

- **Mission Update**
  - Simplified and updated our mission statement as requested by the Town Council and for a more appropriate description on the Town web page.
  - Reviewed and updated an overall work plan.
- **Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction and Regulation**
  - Revised and made reporting forms available to professional applicators for the year 2021. (The ordinance 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. It also prohibits the application of fertilizers from December 1 through March 31.)
  - Monitored and analyzed the applicator data from 2021 to continue creating some baseline data.
    - So far, annual reports for 2021 have been submitted by **30 professional applicators**, compared with only 19 at this time a year ago. Not surprisingly, this **58% increase** in the number of submitted reports resulted in a significant increase in the reported volumes of fertilizers and pesticides applied in 2021.
    - These professionals treated approximately:
      - **2,875 acres with pesticides,**
      - **1,601 acres with fertilizers, and**
      - **93 acres with combination products.**
    - **These 4,569 acres** were treated with chemical pesticides and fertilizers in 2021, compared with 3,659 acres treated in 2020, or a **25% increase.**
    - A total of **98 acres were treated at least once in the west part** of Falmouth, **386.6 acres in central Falmouth,** and **258.2 acres in the east.**
    - There were **271,041 pounds** of product applied to Falmouth lands in 2021 compared with 195,246 pounds in 2020, or **39% more.**
      - 155,371 pounds of fertilizers (**12% increase**)

- 17,566 pounds of combination products (**183% decrease**)
  - 98,104 pounds of pesticide (**1,247% increase**, or more than 12 times as many)
  - This past year **15,044 gallons** of product were applied compared with 25,720 in 2020.
    - 6,004 gallons of fertilizer (**75% decrease**)
    - 0 gallons of combination products (**same as 2020**)
    - 9,040 gallons of pesticide (**512% increase**, or more than 5 times as many)
  - Note: These preliminary numbers do not include treatments done by private residents or professionals who chose not to submit a report.
  - Researched the use and cost of various water-testing strategies to measure the effectiveness of the ordinance. Heard several presentations from FB Environmental, which also made a presentation to the Town Council. Town Council approved water testing strategy, which will be completed in 2022.
- **Living Lawns Educational Campaign (supports Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction Ordinance)**
  - Continued to implement a robust education program for property owners on various media.
  - On August 19 hosted “YardScaping: Healthy Lawn Care Made Easy,” a workshop given by Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District.
  - Continued to encourage residents to fill out a survey about how they currently took care of their lawns and gardens and whether they wanted to learn about healthy lawn care.
- **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.
  - Participated in the Maine Invasive Species Network webinar on February 23 and 24.
  - Participated in an educational workshop led by Town Open Space Property Steward Caleb Hemphill at Tidewater Farms on June 16 and also attended by members of Falmouth’s Wastewater Department, Public Works, and Parks and Community Programs.
  - Participated in several Town-wide Invasive Terrestrial Plant Management meetings, continuing to learn about the newest invasive terrestrial plants, where to find them, and how to deal with them.
  - Reaffirmed ongoing support (citing an October 2016 letter from the FCC) for an intensive forest management plan for Pine Grove Preserve. In 2021 funded removal of many invasives in the Preserve rather than the annual right-of-way roadside maintenance.
  - Included in the Falmouth Focus short articles about possible ways to get rid of invasive terrestrial plants.
- **Strategic Watershed Protection Plan**
  - Partnered with the Department of Environmental Protection, Greater Portland Council of Governments, and Attaining: Sustainable Solutions on a unique project involving Falmouth’s numerous watersheds. Heard a detailed presentation and voted to participate in the project in whatever ways were needed.
- **Tree City USA and Arbor Day 2021**
  - Held a “Treemendous” and socially distanced Falmouth Arbor Day Scavenger Hunt on May 16-22 with a search for 10 specific trees in Town.

- Planted a black cherry tree near the bird banding station at the River Point Conservation Area on May 17 to ensure that Falmouth's Tree City USA designation continues with the yearly planting of a tree.
- Replaced one of the original white pines that had been planted on Route 1 near Route 88.
- **Earth Day**
  - Held two trash pick-ups in recognition of "Restore Our Earth," the Earth Day theme for 2021. One was at River Point on Route 100 and the other along Route 1 from Waldo's to Bucknam Road.
  - Delighted that other Falmouth groups (Scouts, students, various neighborhoods) participated on an ad hoc basis at different times.
- **Plastics Pollution Plan**
  - Heard presentations from Dan Marks (Falmouth's Wastewater Superintendent), Dwayne Brown (Falmouth's Wastewater Supervisor), and Jeff McBurnie (Director of Compliance, Casella Waste Management) about the dangers of microplastics getting into the water.
  - Participated in an educational tour of Falmouth's Wastewater Treatment Plant with Dan Marks and Dwayne Brown on November 8. Saw firsthand what people were putting down their drains. The goals of the Wastewater Treatment Plant include making beneficial use of sewage, keeping contaminants in a landfill out of waterbodies, and improving the water quality of the Presumpscot River Estuary and Casco Bay.
  - Placed signage at Town Landing about the dangers of plastic pollution.
  - Realized we needed to learn a great deal more and educate others in Town.
- **Climate Action Planning**
  - Heard several presentations about the urgent need to create a climate action plan specifically for Falmouth and prioritize targets for climate mitigation in our town.
  - Chose two FCC members to be part of Falmouth's ad hoc Climate Action Planning Committee.
  - Voted in support of the carbon fee and dividend approach to slowing climate change. As prices become more expensive, consumers will be incentivized to reduce carbon usage, such as buying an electric vehicle (EV) when they are due for a new car or changing their source of heat.
- **Liaison with Other Town Committees**

Continued to collaborate with and/or be members of the following committees:

  - **Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee** (REAC): An FCC member is also a member of REAC.
  - **Land Management and Acquisition Committee** (LMAC): An FCC member attended the monthly meetings. The full FCC reviewed the goals of the current 2018 Open Space plan and discussed how the FCC could help support LMAC with input about the development review process, how to protect beneficial wildlife habitats and unfragmented wildlife blocks, and publicity in general.
  - **Planning Board**: In addition to attending monthly meetings, designated FCC members joined site walks and related presentations.
  - **Highland Lake Leadership Team** (HLLT): An FCC member is on the Education & Outreach Subcommittee, which coordinates communications with the general public



regarding water quality issues and provides information to residents around the lake via brochures, newsletters, and appropriate workshops.

## **GOALS for 2022:**

- **Mission Update**
  - Get approval from the Town Council for a slightly revised wording of the FCC mission.
- **Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction Ordinance**
  - Per the current Town Council Work Plan, continue work on recommending amendments and modifications to the original ordinance, which was passed on March 9, 2020. Possible changes may include banning sludge and biosolids in addition to neonicotinoid pesticides, which were banned in June 2021 at the State of Maine level.
  - Continue to work with professional applicators throughout the ordinance process to hear their thoughts on proposed regulations and incorporate their feedback.
  - Analyze results from the second year of the ordinance and continue to improve the process.
  - Revise and make applications available to professional applicators for the upcoming year.
  - Distribute a survey developed by FB Environmental relating to appropriate water-testing sites and support and guide the project as needed.
- **Living Lawns Educational Campaign (supports Pesticide and Fertilizer Restriction Ordinance)**
  - Continue a robust education campaign to inform residents about the proper use of pesticides and fertilizers.
  - Continue to distribute surveys and analyze data collected from the most recent round of surveys.
  - Continue to be in touch with Falmouth's supportive local nurseries.
  - Continue to include in the Falmouth Focus short monthly articles about how to have healthy, sustainable lawns that are safe for people and pets and help keep our waters clean:
- **Invasive Terrestrial Plant Management**
  - Continue to educate citizens about the ecological threats caused by invasive plants.
  - Continue to develop invasive management policies and amend as needed the Town-wide Invasive Terrestrial Plant Management Plan in partnership with Public Works, the Land Management and Acquisition Committee, and Parks and Community Programs, thus uniting efforts involving roadside rights-of-way, open space, and Town properties.
  - Focus on removing invasives in Pine Grove Preserve in 2022, as well as at Tidewater Farm; work on other Town lands as time and money allow.
  - Search for a knowledgeable and, if possible, local business to take over the invasive work previously performed by an out-of-state contractor.
  - Continue to include in the Falmouth Focus short monthly articles about possible ways to get rid of invasive terrestrial plants.
- **Strategic Watershed Protection Plan**
  - Will participate in the project in whatever ways are needed.
- **Plastics Pollution Plan**

- Develop a detailed plan to get the word out about the dangers of microplastics.
- Continue to meet with members of Falmouth's Wastewater Department.
- Make connections with manufacturers and local businesses.
- Consider including the schools in education outreach.
- **Tree City USA and Arbor Day 2022**
  - For Maine State Arbor Week (May 16-20) will ensure that Falmouth's Tree City USA designation continues with the planting of a tree in the Community Park orchard.
- **Earth Day**
  - Have planned an exciting trash clean-up in recognition of "Invest in Our Planet," this year's theme. On April 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon will focus on the River Point Conservation Area, on Route 100, just east of the West Falmouth Crossing Shopping Center.
  - Encourage students to submit Google Earth images of a cool place on our planet.
  - Will offer Town yellow trash bags to neighborhoods for their clean-ups and post notices in the Forecaster, in the Falmouth Focus, and on Town social media.
  - Think about using trash-collection bags that are not plastic for future years.
- **Liaison with Other Town Committees**

Continue to collaborate with and/or be members of the following committees:

  - **Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee** (REAC)
    - The FCC and REAC will work together to educate residents about ways to reduce the overuse of plastics, publicize REAC's Sustainable Business Recognition program, encourage the use of electric/battery-powered tools, and learn about a proposed Green Purchasing Policy.
  - **Land Management and Acquisition Committee** (LMAC)
    - Take advantage of open space educational opportunities with LMAC members.
    - Revisit the 2008-2009 Natural Resources Plan.
  - **Planning Board**
    - Attend monthly meetings and share input on proposals.
    - Designated FCC members will continue to join site walks and related presentations.
  - **Highland Lake Leadership Team** (HLLT)
    - In May an FCC member will give a talk about appropriate buffers and native plants to be planted next to lakes.
- **Additional Initiatives**
  - **Maine Pine Tree Amendment:** Agreed unanimously to support this right to a clean and healthy environment (LD 489). Will learn from the Town Council whether we are able to bring to the Town Council an advocacy initiative that was not on the FCC's original work plan. Will also learn how to handle such time-sensitive proposals.
  - **Wetland Stream Crossings, Presumpscot River Corridor, and Vernal Pools:** Continue to research and determine the overarching concepts that will guide the FCC in the protection and conservation of our town.

The Conservation Commission thanks the Town Council for this opportunity and for your ongoing support.

## **APPENDIX TO THE FALMOUTH CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE**

**Mission Statement sightly simplified and approved unanimously by the FCC on February 2, 2022:**

**The Falmouth Conservation Commission shall strive to protect the natural resources of Falmouth, including fresh and coastal waters, and improve the Town's ecological integrity and wildlife diversity. It shall increase public awareness of the intrinsic value of the Town's interconnected ecosystems and shall work to study, protect, and conserve them.**

The Falmouth Conservation Commission consists of 7 members appointed by the Town Council for 3-year terms and serves the people of Falmouth.

The FCC may recommend to the Town Council or other appropriate municipal entities actions or programs to better protect, conserve, minimize impacts to, or increase the understanding of Falmouth's natural ecosystems.

The FCC shall work cooperatively with Parks and Community Programs, Public Works, the Land Management and Acquisition Committee, the Falmouth Land Trust, the Falmouth schools, and other community and private entities in terms of its duties, powers, and functions.

### **Record Keeping**

The Conservation Commission shall keep records of its meetings and activities and make an annual report to the Town.

### **Expenditures**

The Conservation Commission shall prepare an annual budget and may employ such personnel as may be approved by the Town Manager.

## **Falmouth Economic Improvement Committee (FEIC)**

**Members:** Chris Wasileski (Chair), Bill Lunt (Vice Chair), Paul Bergkamp, Kevin Moss, Nicholas Weightman, Tural Nadirli

**Council Liaison:** Jay Trickett

**Staff Liaisons:** Nathan Poore, Theo Holtwijk, Marguerite Fleming

### **Mission:**

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

FEIC webpage: [www.falmouthme.org/economic-improvement-committee](http://www.falmouthme.org/economic-improvement-committee)

Further resources for businesses: [www.falmouthme.org/businesses](http://www.falmouthme.org/businesses)

### **2021 Accomplishments:**

- Met just 1 time in 2021
- Discussed the purpose of the Committee and its future charge
- Agreed to discontinue meeting while the Council reviews the Code of Ordinances relative to the future of the committee.

### **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 for 2022:**

- As the committee was put on hiatus, pending Council review, no goals were set for 2022.

# Falmouth Memorial Library

## **Vision:**

The Falmouth Memorial Library serves the community as a center for intellectual inquiry and discovery by providing relevant resources, services, programs, and cultural and social experiences that celebrate ideas, promote creativity, connect people, and enrich lives.

## **Mission:**

The Falmouth Memorial Library enhances the quality of life of our community by inspiring lifelong learning, providing free and open access to information, and fostering community connections.

## **Our Guiding Principles:**

1. **Promote literacy and a love of learning** - We recognize literacy's vital importance to expanding horizons, and we strive to support each person's journey as a lifelong learner.
2. **Welcome and embrace the entire community with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion** - We strive to ensure that all people feel welcomed, safe, and supported in the Library.
3. **Adapt and innovate** - We invest in our staff, technology, resources, and infrastructure to provide quality service and remain relevant to the community's evolving needs and interests.
4. **Form strong community partnerships** - We extend our reach and impact in the community through collaboration with individuals and organizations who value our mission.

## **2021 Accomplishments:**

- Traffic inside the building has steadily increased since we re-opened – to nearly 3,000 in July, on average 116 per open day.
- Library groups have been taking advantage of the meeting rooms again, and the new drop-in study rooms added in the renovation are incredibly popular. Our meeting rooms were used over 350 times in the last quarter.
- In FY18, we opened on average just over 40 new card applications each month – since re-opening in April we've averaged 127 per month! Many of these transactions have taken place at our new Information Desk.
- Library service inside the building has also dramatically increased – in September 2021 alone staff answered nearly a thousand reference and technology questions (that's nearly twice as many as just the prior month.) As people have become more comfortable coming inside, they've also become more comfortable asking for one-on-one help.
- Circulation has steadily increased since we unpacked our books and got back to business in September 2020 – we're now near FY18 numbers, even without programs in the building, and while still wrestling with a pandemic.
- Library Takeout was hugely successful – when we closed in December, we had 913 orders that month, and peaked in March with 1,265 orders (for 3,838 items.)
- Take & Make kits for children have been increasingly popular – we started making 20 kits a week when we were doing Takeout. That grew to 40 in March, 60 in June, and now we're giving out 80-100 kits each week.

- The new used bookstore has become even more popular since we increased the hours in August – it's now open for business whenever the library is open. During a half-price sale in September, we raised \$258 in single day sales. We plan to hold another sale during Very Merry festivities. All of these fund's help pay for new collections and programs.
- Even when we all got zoom fatigue and virtual programming attendance was modest, we have had trailing views on our YouTube channel and found a way to reach new audiences and stay connected with our patrons.
- We added a private cloud for Falmouth in cloudLibrary, our eBook and eAudiobook platform – increasing the availability of in demand titles for Falmouth patrons; and we resumed Best Seller Express to improve hold times on the most popular items.
- We were able to hold an in-person celebration for Summer Reading – Sparks Ark attracted over 80 attendees for each outdoor show. And we are holding outdoor story-times in the shade garden until the weather turns.

## **Goals for 2022:**

### **Promote literacy and a love of learning**

1. Invest in staff recruitment and retention to ensure consistent high-quality programs.
2. Invite outside talent to supplement staff-operated programming for adults and children.
3. Invest in a cloudLibrary to meet the increased demand for eBooks.
4. Review Town surveys and independently survey patrons to gain a better sense of community needs and aspirations for the Library.

### **Welcome and embrace the entire community**

1. Develop a best-in-class customer service model for the Circulation Department.
2. Establish Teen-specific programs and a Teen Advisory Group.
3. Revive training and resources for Family Place Programming.
4. Develop and deliver high-quality Adult programming to attract new and young adults to the Library.

### **Adapt and innovate**

1. Build and improve workplace culture to foster a team-oriented, cross-trained, and supportive environment for staff.
2. Recruit, onboard, and train new staff members, Trustees, and volunteers to meet the increased demands of the new space.
3. Complete a rebranding project to revamp the Library's marketing materials and communications.

### **Form strong community partnerships**

1. Continue partnership with the Town on Very Merry and explore opportunities for collaboration.
2. Strengthen connections with the Falmouth schools and after-school groups.
3. Build a large and diverse Fundraising Committee to steward relationships with community members and businesses wishing to support the Library's mission and vision.

## **Harbor/Waterfront Committee**

**Members:** Marty Bruno (Chair), Richard Garrett, Richard Craven, Pete Leavitt (Portland Yacht Club Rep), Chris Dyer (Handy Boat Rep), Manny Kourinos, Peter Dion

**Council Liaison:** Janice de Lima

**Staff Liaison:** Alan Twombly, John Kilbride

### **Mission:**

The Committee works with the Harbormaster to develop and present recommendations to the Council on the orderly use of the coastline, anchorage, moorings, and related town owned property.

There are approximately 1,200 moorings in Falmouth Harbor. These moorings are accessed via the Town Landing facility, Handy Boat, Portland Yacht Club, or privately owned shorefront.

### **2021 Accomplishments:**

- 1) Handy Boat request for 30 additional mooring rentals
- 2) Installed a web camera at Town Landing to aid with remotely observing sea and weather conditions
- 3) Acceptance of Falmouth Town Landing Beaches to Maine Healthy Beaches Program
- 4) Clarifying language in the Coastal Waters Ordinance regarding how commercial floats can be used
- 5) Clarifying language in the Coastal Waters Ordinance regarding official access points to moorings
- 6) Heard citizen concern regarding legal authority of mooring inspectors

The committee held 3 meetings in 2021 – May, June and October and elected new officers.

In 2022, The Committee met in January, March, with a planned meeting in April. This is well ahead of the pace of 2021 and previous years.

# Highland Lake Leadership Team (HLLT)

## Mission:

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 2020-2029 Watershed-Based Management Plan.  
[https://www.highlandlakeleadershipteam.com/\\_files/ugd/ff1f9f\\_924e18a8cb584c1cadda1db6b5df3157.pdf](https://www.highlandlakeleadershipteam.com/_files/ugd/ff1f9f_924e18a8cb584c1cadda1db6b5df3157.pdf)
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.

## Lake Water Quality in 2021

Chart of Secchi Disk readings shows that the pattern of loss of water clarity of the past 7 years did not occur in 2021 during the late July/early August timeframe. We're not sure of the reason, but 2021 was a little different from prior years in that it had a very dry spring and wet summer along with the lowest count of alewives migrating into the lake since we started counting them.

## 2021 Accomplishments:

Ordinance Committee – Developed Highland Lake Watershed nutrient management policy for Falmouth and Windham to consider. Both Falmouth and Windham have done a great job in protecting the lake from development, making Highland Lake the best protected lake in Maine, but as we came to learn more about the sources of phosphorus, it became clear that animal waste is a significant unaddressed issue. This table shows why this is important.



Education & Outreach – Extensive outreach to residents around the lake through HLA Annual Meeting, newsletters, the development of new brochures on healthy lake living and gravel road maintenance, private road workshop, etc.

Link to the two brochures: <https://www.highlandlakeleadershipteam.com/resources>

Watershed Management Plan – The 2020-2029 Watershed Management Plan (WMP) is the guiding document that HLLT is implementing. The WMP also sought, and was successful in winning, an EPA 319 Grant. The Grant was to complete a project in Windham on one of the biggest erosion sites in the watershed on Overlook Road. Road association funds matched Windham Watershed Protection grants that together matched an EPA 319 Grant to redesign and rebuild the road base, crown and stormwater flow for the \$65,000 project. The project was completed in Fall 2021.

Water Quality Committee – There have been two full Water Quality Committee meetings since our last report to the Council, and we have another one in the planning stage for later this spring. At these meetings, members of the committee with specific expertise in all areas of limnology and land use join together to discuss progress in water quality and propose new going forward changes and plans.

## **2022 Goals:**

Ordinance Committee – We will continue to help shepherd the draft nutrient management policy through the Falmouth and Windham ordinance approval processes being mindful of land rights and the new “right to food” addition to the Maine Constitution.

Education & Outreach – We will follow the outline of the WMP in the timing of outreach to the public through a variety of avenues including seminars on maintenance of gravel roads, emails, workshops on buffers and native plants, pet waste etc.

Watershed Management Plan – Plans are in place for regular email communications through the HLA, more road association outreach and training, hoping to find lower cost road material and equipment rental group rates.

Water Quality Committee – The schedule and details of the routine testing is done, and we’ll finalize what new plans come from the late spring meeting for the summer. The pandemic slowed down the work that several laboratories were doing, and we hoping to learn more from some eDNA analysis later this spring to further help us understand the nature of the blooms we experienced in the recent past. Additionally, we’ll explore ways to better count incoming alewives as well as ways to count the leaving juveniles.

# Land Management & Acquisition Committee (LMAC)

**Members:** John Adelman, Chair, Fred Farber, Chris Wasileski, and David Gagnon

**Council Liaison:** Ted Asherman

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

## **Mission:**

### **Sec. 2-139. Powers and duties.**

LMAC shall advise on matters related to the management of the town's designated open space and conservation lands and further shall:

1. Develop procedures for how conservation land and associated facilities are created, acquired, managed, and maintained in accordance with town ordinances.
2. Provide advisory assistance to the town council for matters pertaining to the acquisition and management of conservation lands, including but not limited to policy and ordinance development and land use.
3. Create management plans for each designated conservation property owned by the town.
4. Produce information and guidance for the public regarding trails, land, and public facilities in the town.
5. Recommend funding levels for the acquisition of new properties and for the management of existing properties.

Ord. No. 117-2013, adopted May 15, 2013, repealed and replaced div. II-2-3-11, Sec. 2-136— Sec. 2-138, in its entirety. Former div. II-2-3-11 pertained to Falmouth trails advisory committee and was derived from Ord. of 5-24-2004; Ord. of 12-19-2006 and Amd. of 12-13-2010.

## **2021 Accomplishments:**

1. Field Days - LMAC 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 evaluating the forest at Pine Grove Preserve and working on the reroute of the Twin Pond Connector to Community Park.
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. 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 Town was awarded Lands for Maine's Future grant funding for trail/parking upgrades to NCFE. Work on a new parking area will begin in late summer 2022.
3. Land Trust/Town Open Space Management Proposal – Mila Plasvic, FLT Exec. Dir.,

gave a presentation to the committee in April 2022 outlining a proposal that staff and administration have been reviewing for contracted services to be provided by the Land Trust. The proposal outlines a plan for the Land Trust to manage Town open space operations in lieu of hiring a replacement Open Space Manager. The presentation was well received by committee members who raised several questions that were addressed by staff, administration, and the Land Trust prior to the Town Council presentation at their May 23 meeting. This proposal was presented to the Council and received consensus to proceed with further discussion between the Town and Land trust for potential implementation in 2022.

4. Woods Road Community Forest – The committee worked with Maine IFW and presented to the Council an ordinance change with regard to keeping WRCF open during the winter months. It was determined that this did not violate the Maine DEP Order that this property be maintained as a deer wintering yard.

## **2021 Challenges:**

1. Pine Grove Preserve – the condition of the forest at Pine Grove Preserve redirected both committee and staff time to property evaluate and make recommendations to the Council. With approval from the Council in place, it is anticipated that the forest management plan will be implemented by the end of the summer 2022.
2. Invasives treatment – The staff worked with the Sustainability Coordinator to evaluate and recommend an invasive plant treatment plan for 2021-2022. The result is that Pine Grove Preserve received a comprehensive treatment which will be repeated Fall 2022 after the management activities are complete. Discussions are being scheduled for developing an invasive plant treatment plan for FY23.

# **Parks & Community Programs Advisory Committee (PACPAC)**

**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

## **2021 Accomplishments:**

- The committee began the year sharing their thoughts about their involvement as a PACPAC member. Their comments included:
  - Connection to the community
  - Programs and opportunities for all ages
  - Helping to shape policies for parks and programs (i.e. ordinance changes)
  - Happy to be a link between Town and citizens
  - Feel like a more informed citizen by being involved
  - Give back to the community
  - Amazed at how little I knew about the “goings-on” in the town before I became involved

This exercise was helpful as the committee welcomed a new member and is now fully staffed for the first time in a few years.

- Moving through 2021 and looking to 2022 the committee assisted staff providing input for a “bottoms up” budgeting process for Parks and Open Space. The committee reviewed benchmark data provided through the National Recreation and Park Association Parks Metrics tool and discovered how much Falmouth has and how much Falmouth offers compared to like sized communities across the nation. This assisted the department and the Town Council’s work to support additional staffing. (A second Full-time Parks Assistant and a Part-time Property Steward/Trails Manager were added this fiscal year.)
- The “Spotlight on Staff” agenda item was reintroduced in virtual format this year and members were introduced to Ashlee Quirion, Recreation Assistant who shared what it takes to run the Before/After Care Program and to Ashley Krulik, Sustainability Coordinator who talked about her role as and how it relates to Parks & Community Programs as well as gave an overall picture of what is happening town wide with sustainability.
- In May when COVID restrictions were somewhat relaxed, the committee enjoyed another Parks Tour led by staff and this set-up on-going tasks and discussions about town wide parks and facilities. The committee is currently working on a checklist/form to use and will be tasked with visiting parks to assess from a “resident’s point of view” prior to formalizing a Town Wide Spaces Improvement Plan and Parks & Active Recreation Areas Plan following the Visions & Values project.

- On-going work plan items have included reviewing Community Program brochures three times a year and cooperative planning with other committees such as LMAC (Land Management & Acquisition Committee).

# Planning Board

**Members:** Peter Kenlan (Chair), David Sinnett (Vice Chair), David Sinnett, Jamie Mason, Seth Blanchard (Resigned), Ashlan Oberholtzer, Karen Farber, Jocelyn Lavallo and Jason Denby

## Mission:

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.

## 2021 Accomplishments:

- The Board held 12 regular monthly meetings and 1 workshop held in March.
- Processed 24 development applications (some of which were withdrawn before being heard by the Planning Board) and issued 33 approvals to applicants.
- Held 4 public hearings on proposed amendments to the Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance.
- The approvals granted in 2021 include:
  - 7 Subdivision Amendment Approvals for:
    - i. 1 Approval pertaining to easements.
    - ii. 1 Approvals for modifications to wetland area and building envelope.
    - iii. 1 Approval for drainage improvements, elevation change, and driveway expansions on Baysite Lane
    - iv. 1 Approval to reduce setbacks at Homestead Farms
    - v. 1 Re-Approval for Tuscan Way Amendment from 7/7/2020
    - vi. 1 Approval for a boundary line adjustment in the Woodlands
  - 1 Site Plan/Subdivision Amendment for a new cottage unit/duplex at Ocean View
  - 6 Site Plan Approvals:
    - i. Solar Array at the Town Landfill on Woods Road
    - ii. Outdoor classroom structure at Maine Audubon
    - iii. Chase Bank Building at Falmouth Shopping Center
    - iv. Morong Falmouth Building Addition
    - v. Outdoor seating at Rivalries
  - 2 Site Plan Amendments:
    - i. Relocation of Building A at Falmouth Shopping Center
    - ii. Seasonal Outdoor Seating for JPs Bistro
- 5 Private Ways
- 2 Private Way Re-Approvals
- 3 Private Way Amendments
- 2 Shoreland Zone Permits
- 1 Shoreland Zone Permit Amendment
- 4 Sign Permits

## 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:** Dave Low (Chair), Caleb Hemphill, Dick Klain, Rich Bicknell, Sydney Patten

**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.<sup>1</sup>

The committee continues to have active membership. The committee met 11 times in 2021.

## **2021 Accomplishments:**

Much like 2020, REAC's year was highly affected by COVID. Continuing to meet remotely and more importantly, unsure of how to move forward with a variety of initiatives due to economic concerns, REAC continued to be cautious in its work. We had some turnover with two members moving on and one new member joining the committee.

Also having a large impact on REAC's work this year was the advent of the Climate Action Plan work. While there has been work on several projects, the committee has decided to hold off on a variety of recommendations until the Climate Action Plan is completed to ensure any decisions or prioritization in the plan is reflected in REAC's work.

Below are the various activities REAC worked on during the past 12 months.

### **Solar**

While REAC has not needed to intervene in the ongoing process, we have been closely monitoring the solar project and will continue to push to ensure completion. Latest solar update: Panels/modules for the array were delivered to the landfill in December and are being stored there until construction begins

Due to supply chain issues, the design of the ballast system, which is what the panels connect to, has been modified. The ballast materials are expected to arrive in May.

Construction is anticipated to begin early summer

### **Bicycle Repair Stations**

Given transposition plays such a large role in emissions in Maine, REAC has decided to do what it can to affect transportation in various ways in town. There is already a fair amount of bicycle usage in town, and we would like to continue to promote more use. To do this, members proposed installing bicycle repair stations that supply air pumps and repair tools to cyclists. A survey was developed and distributed to residents to learn more about biking habits, key routes, and whether repair stations would be useful. The stations were also discussed at the Bicycle-Pedestrian Forum. Overall, response was positive, with many remarking on how these stations show Falmouth's commitment to alternative forms of transportation. Via the surveys and forum feedback, two locations were selected:

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<sup>1</sup> Draft updated mission statement to be reviewed by the Appointments Committee.



The corner of Johnson Rd. and Rt. 88, and

251 Route 1, at the main entrance to Shaw's, next to the Metro Bus Stop.

Funds to install the stations was included in the FY23 TIF budget and installation is expected to take place this fall. We hope the stations will both promote more bicycle usage and signal the town's ongoing commitment to address vehicle transportation.

#### Plastic Straw Ban

This recommendation was tabled due to COVID. We hope to revive it this year when the time is appropriate, and businesses are on firm ground. A draft ordinance has been developed.

#### No Idling

Our newest committee member has taken on the effort to ensure there are no idling signs around town and they are enforced. She is working with the schools as well as several businesses which may have car or truck idling situations to post voluntary signage. While this effort will not take any action from Council, any support in the effort will be appreciated.

Commercial Sustainable Education and the Sustainable Business Recognition Program  
REAC developed the Sustainable Business Program, and the information is posted on the town website. This allows businesses to fill out a brief application to highlight any "sustainability" actions they feel make them stand apart. The committee reviews applications and then awards special recognition to businesses the group feels meet the necessary threshold. Thus far we have had one business recognized and have received 2 applications. We hope to continue to promote the program, highlight more business in the new year and continue to educate businesses about how they can make a positive impact.

The committee is investigating making a recommendation to council to require businesses to recycle and commercial landlords to provide recycling infrastructure in their buildings. Many progressive towns have taken this step as an effort to address waste reduction. Prior to any recommendation, REAC plans to survey the business community to assess impacts.

#### Composting/Food Waste

A REAC member spent time working on a specific goal of increasing food composting in town. This led to the addition of a new compost drop off site at Village Park. With three sites operating, residents composted 68,000 lbs or 34 tons, in 2021 through the drop-off bins, separate from the commercial services which operate in town for residents. We will continue to educate residents and businesses about the importance of composting with hopes of increasing our numbers. REAC will also research the possibility of making a recommendation to council about requiring composting for certain businesses in town in addition to the possible recycling requirement.

#### Green Building Ordinance

The committee has done extensive research into making a recommendation to council about a municipal green building ordinance. This ordinance would require the town to meet certain green building standards in its building and operations. There are several different options for ordinances which include:

LEED or similar certification requirement for building projects

This requirement would be similar to the path Portland has adopted and requires all new buildings or major renovations be LEED certified or equivalent.

Net Zero Emissions

Another method to accomplish a similar goal would be to put into effect an ordinance requiring existing and new buildings to achieve net zero emissions by a certain date. In many respects, this is a more comprehensive approach for town-wide operations but will also require significant buy-in from council and staff

The committee is very close to making recommendations to council about a direction in this area. However, the decision was made to wait until the Climate Action Plan is adopted to ensure any recommendations from REAC to council are in line with the suggestions from the new plan. Passage of a municipal green building ordinance will allow REAC to explore the possibility of recommending a commercial green building ordinance to be applied to all commercial development within town.

#### Building Stretch Codes

The State of Maine recently updated the building codes and the energy code. The update included a new provision to allow towns to adopt a more stringent energy code (referred to as a stretch code) than the standard state code. REAC has done some research into the possible adoption of the stretch code and hopes to make a recommendation to council.

#### Procurement policy

The committee has done research into a recommendation to council to adopt a green procurement policy. Similar to the work on a green building ordinance, there are various different approaches to green procurement policies and a final decision has not been made about a recommendation. Also similar to the municipal green building ordinance, the committee is waiting to make a final recommendation until the Climate Action Plan is completed as any recommendations in the plan may have an effect on the procurement policy. The policy will also have some cross pollination with the green building policy in regards to operations, energy and construction.

#### Request to Rename

Finally, the committee would like to remind Council of the hope to rename the committee to become the Falmouth Sustainability Committee along with the new mission and values which have been recommended.

# Shellfish Conservation Committee

**Current Members:** Richie Garrett (Chair), Dave Skillin, Wally Geyer, Dave Irish

**Council Liaison:** Jay Trickett

**Staff Liaison:** Ashley Krulik

## Mission:

- Establishing annually, in conjunction with the Department of Marine Resources, the number of shellfish recreational digging licenses to be issued;
- Surveying the clam flats to maintain current information on shellfish resources;
- Submitting to the town council proposals for the expenditures of funds for the purpose of shellfish conservation;
- Keeping this article under review and making recommendation for its amendments;
- Securing and maintaining records of shellfish harvest from the town's managed shellfish areas and closed areas that are conditionally opened by the Department of Marine Resources;
- Recommending conservation closures and openings to the town council in conjunction with the Department of Marine Resources;
- Submitting an annual report to the municipality and the Department of Marine Resources covering the above topics and all other commission activities.

## 2021 Accomplishments:

2021 was a year of renewed focus and engagement with shellfish conversation in Falmouth. It included:

- April 2021 – Town Council adopted the updated Shellfishing Ordinance
- May 2021 – Staff, Shellfish Council Liaison, and past Shellfish Committee Members completed a shellfish survey at Town Landing with the Department of Marine Resources to inform the 2021-2022 shellfish license allocation
- September 2021 – Members were appointed/reappointed to the Shellfish Conservation Committee
- October 2021 – First “new” Shellfish Committee Meeting. During this meeting members:
  - Determined shellfish license application fees for residents (\$10) and non-residents (\$20)
  - Set Recreational (55) and Commercial (0) license allocations for the Department of Marine Resources to review
  - Elected Richie Garrett as Chair
- November 2021 – Received Shellfish License Allocation approval from the Department of Marine Resources; Town Council adopted license allocation recommendation
- December 2021 – Posted Shellfish Application online and began issuing licenses

5 resident shellfish licenses have been issued to date.

Shellfish Committee meeting have been on hiatus during the Omicron surge as virtual meetings are not feasible for this committee.

**2022 Goals:**

- Reconvene in-person Shellfish Committee meetings and recruit more committee members
- Submit required Annual Review Report to the Department of Marine Resources
- Survey Town Landing clam flats for 2022-2023 license allocation and, at the same time, offer an educational opportunity for community members to join the survey and learn more about harvesting shellfish
- Install educational signage at Town Landing about shellfishing and post when the flats are open/closed
- Town to appoint a new Shellfish Warden
- Monitor flats to suggest changes to the Department of Marine Resources' openings/closures