



Community Facilities Planning Committee

c/o Falmouth Town Hall, 271 Falmouth Road, Falmouth, ME 04105, 781-5253

Community Facilities Planning Committee

Meeting Notes Wednesday, June 11, 2008

Councilor Breen
Council Chair

Councilor Armitage
Council Vice Chair

Marsha Clark

Judith Currier

Phil Kaplan

Analiese Larson

Tim O'Donovan

Mark Soule

Steve Tenney

Committee members present: Marsha Clark, Judith Currier, Tim O'Donovan, Mark Soule, Steve Tenney, Analiese Larson

Advisors/Town staff present: Lyn Sudlow, Theresa Pierce, Lucky D'Ascanio, Al Farris, Nathan Poore, Amy Lamontagne, Theo Holtwijk

Consultant present: Mark Gianniny, Allison Towne DiMatteo, Rob Tillotson

Others present: Councilor Rodden

As neither Councilor Breen or Armitage were able to attend, one of the other committee members was asked to chair the meeting. Mark Soule offered to do so. He started the meeting around 6:00 PM.

Review and Approval of Meeting Notes

Lyn made two corrections to the meeting notes of May 20th. Page 1: The library building is dedicated to the memory of veterans. Many of the trees of memorials to other people. Page 2: Where it mentions Reiche School, it should say East End School. The notes of May 20th were adopted with these amendments. The notes of May 15th and 21st were adopted as written.

Review of Facilities Space Chart

Mark Gianniny handed out and presented a chart dated June 11, 2008. He reviewed how it was prepared. He noted that the attic space in Town Hall was not yet included. There was a correction on the last page of the proposed Town Hall space without community programs – that figure should be 14,469 sf, instead of 11,193 sf. The school figures on the last page are without the portables. The administrative space needs of the library are listed under “service areas.” The question was asked if there was less need for meeting space there if it were available elsewhere. Some groups would go elsewhere, but the library has seen the overall demand for meeting space growing. There was discussion on the Russell Meeting Room and the donor's intention and if it could move with the library. There was a question regarding other, as of yet, unlisted, but “established” community space needs. An example of that was a proposed skate park that appeared in a past CIP. Lucky discussed that one and stated that there were other needs she knew of that had been put in writing in other documents. There was concern raised about the mention of a community pool as a proposal for that had been soundly defeated by voters a few years ago. It was stated that a distinction needed to be made between wants and needs. The response was that this was

indeed the time to put all pieces on the table, and that as the group did its evaluations, some may get off the table, but at least would have been considered. An idea may well be to reserve space for a potential future pool, but not propose to build one at this time. It was asked why the needs of the Falmouth Historical Society were not listed. Theo mentioned he had talked to its president and handed out a memo of his conversation. There appeared to be no interest in exploring co-location of administrative space needs at this time. The FHS is busy with the opening of its new museum and writing of a Falmouth history book and wants to put all its facilities at its Woods Road site. Membership would be kept apprised of the Town's planning efforts. Bonny suggested that a letter be drafted and sent to the FHS Board of Directors restating the current planning initiative, so all would be aware of it. Mark Soule asked about the Pleasant Hill Fire Station. Nathan stated that the Fire Department still needs to determine what needs it has for it. This process has not yet been completed. It was pointed out that there was a close match of space figures between the library's needs and what Lunt School offers. Town hall needs and community programs needs would fit into Plummer-Motz with space left over. These are quick assessments that do not take into consideration the type of space needed, functionality, etc. It was pointed out that if the library were to take over Lunt that an important gym facility would then be lost.

Discussion of OceanView Memo

Theo passed around a memo from OceanView. Nathan discussed how it came about and that the Council was aware of it. He gave everyone some time to read it first. He stated that it was just one option for the committee to consider. There were concerns expressed with further growth of OceanView. It was noted that the size of the Synergy complex in Exeter was large and what that may do for this historical corner in Falmouth. It was asked if the committee had determined yet if the woods in the rear of the site needed to be preserved. Some stated that these ideas made the site become more a "business" than a community facility. A question was asked if low cost housing was considered for this site. Theo explained that the committee had just finished three site visits and that it had barely begun to think of use possibilities. It was stated that the Town needed to take a long term view of this and not take quick cash. It was noted that all use ideas would have a price tag and that it was a balancing act figuring out the right combination of uses as well as how to pay for them. It was stated that the wooded portion of the site was not easy land to develop. The Committee concluded that this was only one of many options that the Committee would be dealing with.

Discussion of Project Direction

Several people argued that public outreach should not occur before the new elementary school vote this fall, as it may not make sense to plan for a facility that may not become available. Vacating the school premises, if approved, is anticipated by Fall 2011. The question was asked what should be done in the meantime with Town Hall and the library. Al stated the energy needs of Town Hall. There was a suggestion to develop three totally different plans for the public to react to. Another suggestion was to add some cost reality to those, including the possibility for a public-private partnership as that may be important to people. Rob suggested that in forums they work with lots of options, but when it came down to voting that only one option was presented. He agreed that this kind of outreach should be done after the school vote. There was discussion on a survey. Analiese stated that the Falmouth Corners planning project did not involve a survey, and described the various steps that had been done – no less than 5 forums were held. Analiese recommended no more than 2 forums. People noted that the Woodville area had followed a similar process, but with entirely different results. Pleasant Hill also followed this process. Theo mentioned that there were several questions to consider: Does the committee desire to obtain additional professional help in organizing and conducting its outreach? What should the timing of the outreach be? What should be the elements of the outreach? A discussion of the current bus survey followed. Theo made the suggestion that it

seemed there was concurrence on not doing any major outreach until after the school vote, and that the committee perhaps should off on engaging other consultants at this time. He wondered if the committee, before it generated any options, would like to learn more about examples from elsewhere or possibly visit any sites, such as the Town Hall-community center in Gorham. Several schools in the area have been renovated for residential use, so those might be an option as well. Mark asked how much money the committee had available. He wondered if the committee could do some if this research instead of asking the consultants to do that. Lucky mentioned that a Town van might be able to be used for a field trip. There was a discussion how Oak Point could best be used. Allison stated that a lot of time could be used up if the committee wanted detailed cost estimates or a written report. Al wondered if Oak Point could do an energy review of Town Hall. Rob cautioned the committee that the Town, if it decides to make energy improvements in Town Hall and then decides to vacate it, would not necessarily get its money back from that investment. Bonnie asked if the committee had been given an assessment of the reuse potential of the schools. Rob replied that the schools were generally reusable. That reuse costs may range from \$50 to \$500 per square foot, depending on the use. That renovation of the schools for up to date school use was due to the specific requirements of that use, so expensive that building new made more sense. The group agreed that Oak Point's work should be put on hold as the committee digested the information it had received up to now.

Next Steps

The suggestion was made that the committee go around the room to see what questions people had – as a way to explore issues and consider options - and to devote the next meeting to answering those questions. The group liked that idea.

- Judy: Does the community desire to have or need a post office, and if so, what are the requirements for that?
- Analiese: What are the space implications if we go forward with merging efforts with Cumberland? Including need for a pool.
- Theresa: What is the interconnect between affordable housing and the Route One Study?
- Lucky: Does the community desire to have a full size gym as part of a community center? Would a full size gym at the new elementary school be an acceptable alternative?
- Al: Should the Town invest money into Town Hall over the next three years?
- Mark S: Do we need to move all of Town Hall?
- Mark G: What is the public's opinion on moving Town Hall and/or the Library from their current locations? What does the public think of creating a new municipal center?
- Marsha: What is the traffic impact of any of the proposals on the community? What experiences have other communities had – when did they reach out to the public?
- Judy: Is the food pantry a temporary use in Town Hall?
- Nathan: If the voters agree to school consolidation, where will the new school administrative offices be? If the voters do not agree with school consolidation, what potential is there for internal consolidation between Town and School.

Other Business

There was no other business. Rob stated that Oak Point was happy to be flexible, and come in and out of the committee's process as the committee wished.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is Monday June 23rd at 6 PM in Town Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Meeting notes prepared by Theo Holtwijk, June 12, 2008 rev June 17, 2008