



# Community Facilities Planning Committee

Falmouth Town Hall, 271 Falmouth Road, Falmouth, ME 04105, 781-5253

## Community Facilities Planning Committee

## Meeting Notes Thursday, February 11, 2010

Councilor Breen  
*Committee Chair*

Councilor Pierce

Marsha Clark

Judith Currier

Phil Kaplan

Analiese Larson

Tim O'Donovan

Mark Soule

Steve Tenney

### Staff

Lucky D'Ascanio

Albert Farris

Theo Holtwijk

Nathan Poore

Lyn Sudlow

### Consultants

Cushman &  
Wakefield

Institute for Civic  
Leadership

Oak Point Associates

Spatial Alternatives

**Committee members present:** Councilor Breen, Councilor Pierce, Judith Currier, Marsha Clark, Mark Soule, Analiese Larson

**Advisors/Town staff present:** Lucky D'Ascanio, Nathan Poore, Theo Holtwijk

**Consultants present:** -

**Others present:** -

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Cathy opened the meeting at 6:33 PM.

### 1. Meeting Notes

The meeting notes of the January 28th meeting, with the revision that Tim O'Donovan was not present, were approved by consensus.

### 2. Library Update

Marsha gave a review of the Library's Board meeting earlier that week. The Board of Trustees wants to work with the Committee on the Lunt option, but pending public feedback, did not want to be locked in on that. She noted that there had been a change on the Board. The Board approved the following resolution:

"Because of the Falmouth Memorial Library's need for more space the Board of Trustees would like to continue working cooperatively with the Town of Falmouth to explore potential opportunities for the Library at the Plummer/Motz/Lunt campus and other sites including but not limited to a relocation of the Library to a renovated and/or expanded Lunt School."

The Board had a great 2 hour tour of the Portland Public Library which is being renovated and that gave some people that a renovation could provide a positive experience. Marsha noted that some people may be attached to the current library building and that there could be an outcry. She felt it was important to let the public know about the issues with the current building, such as parking and limited expansion potential. Nathan had suggested that the current arrangements between the library and the Town for now stay the same: 50-50 building ownership and 76% operating cost subsidy. If there were staff increases needed, those should be included. Marsha mentioned

that the Library's Space Exploration Committee was interested to have a Town liaison and that Theo had been asked to serve in that role. Mark suggested that a separate land parcel would have to be carved out of the Plummer-Motz-Lunt site, if there is to be joint ownership of the building. Analiese asked what the Board thought of the new building option. Marsha responded that while that would be ideal, one can't always get what one wants. Judy asked if the Portland library had a coffee shop. Yes, that is the case. Cathy asked if that shop is to produce revenue for the library. It is intended to be privately run. How much revenue the library may get is to be seen. That part of the building always cell phone use, other parts do not. Judy asked if the coffee shop will have the same opening hours as the library. Theo noted that he learned that the Portland Public Library's renovation costs per square foot were exactly the same as estimated by Oak Point (\$165/sf). Marsha mentioned that the Portland library director felt a community's library should be of top quality.

### **Post Office Update:**

Theo gave an update of a conversation he had with Michael Doyle, Consumer Affairs Manager at Portland USPS. Michael wanted not to "waste a lot of time" and wanted to be frank. His statements included "it's not going to happen" and "there is no justification for it" as USPS is in "dire financial circumstances" and they feel Falmouth customers are well served with their retail needs by Shaw's and mail distribution needs from Portland. This was an issue that Falmouth has pursued several times in the past, he said. Mr. Doyle showed some interest when he learned of the scope of the community facilities project. That might change things, he said, but did not want to get anyone's hopes up. It would have to be a lease situation - USPS would not put its own staff there - and Shaw's facility would close when that contract expires (i.e. there would not be two facilities in Falmouth). Mike suggested that if the Town wanted to pursue it further it should send a letter to Portland Postmaster David Guiney. The committee asked to find out what the current lease ends with Shaw's. Some wondered if there were any security issues with postal operations by a private entity.

### **Appraisal Update:**

Theo reported that the appraiser had requested a second extension and that appraisals were due by 2/19. A preliminary figure of \$1-1.5M was suggested by the appraiser for the library building. It was asked if the appraisal report will include an estimate on the LWCF conversion liability that the Town has to deal with. No, that item is not part of it. The Town hopes that this will be a number as close to zero as possible. Theo said that the Town will get a land value estimate from the appraiser that will be helpful to further scope out possible conversion options. Cathy noted that the cost estimates will be posted on the web as soon as the appraisal data is available.

### **3. Community Outreach / 4. Forum Preparation**

Theo reported that the Middle School Cafeteria was reserved for Forum 2 for April 7<sup>th</sup>. Lucky mentioned that school functions and the art show were occurring around the dates the committee had discussed.

There was agreement to "get out there" and do another round of outreach before Forum 2. The "fact sheet" brochure will be updated with the latest information. The web and the Forecaster will be used to announce the event and a poster will be developed. Some alternate Forum dates were discussed: April 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. The event will have coffee and cookies.

Cathy suggested editing the 10 minute video that exists as a reminder of what we talked about before. She also felt the March 2009 survey needed to be presented. Then the committee should then present its recommendations. The group agreed that the goal of the meeting was to get community feedback. There was agreement that project financing also needed to be presented and that the recommendations needed to be broken down. It was noted that with Town Hall there may be an operational saving as there would be no upkeep of the current building.

The group wondered if the recommendations should also be tested during the outreach phase. It may be hard to see nothing about that. Mark asked if other small parks around the community could be sold as a way to reduce project cost. Teresa felt that Village Park could be sold to a commercial interest.

There was agreement to do a key pad survey again as well as an on-line survey. The group felt that no outside facilitator was needed. It felt that a 90-minute program was sufficient. It was mentioned that we should make note of our visit to the Gorham Town Hall complex.

The public could ask informational questions after the presentations, but would be asked to hold off on comments until after the key pad session.

There was a question what role the Library Board would have at the meeting. It was felt that it was important for the public to hear directly from the Board its support for the Lunt option. Some felt that the library's resolution was lukewarm. It was stated that the way the Library Board would present its support for the Lunt option at this Forum would affect the chances of success or failure of that option. It was asked if the Library Board met in March, so they could be made aware of the committee's concern. The answer was yes. There was agreement that Cathy and/or Teresa would talk with Susan Tartre about this.

## **5. Recommendation Development**

Nathan presented a draft financial analysis of the Vision A option that the committee had been discussing. Various assumptions had been made, all of which could be revised in the spreadsheet to see the implication for the taxpayer. He was asked to explain what TIF stood for and how it worked. It was also asked if the LWCF conversion costs had been accounted for as well. The answer is no.

Upon reviewing this, it was noted that the financial tolerance of the voters could be tested in the key pad session.

There was a question if there was any library fundraising anticipated (the spreadsheet did not carry any fundraising revenue source). It was suggested that perhaps the projected addition could be privately financed. The same could apply to the proposed community center. Some felt there was an opportunity to tap into some big donors.

The private development component was also discussed. OceanView's vision B contained 44 new units. The spreadsheet indicated 40 new units. It was noted that the spreadsheets really pointed to vision B, instead of vision A.

Mark stated that he felt the construction estimates were lower than he expected. Teresa mentioned selling Village Park again and felt a big buffer would be needed around any private development. Cathy felt that room should be left for a private vendor on the site, such as an operator for a coffee

shop. It was noted that if the current buildings were sold that they would also generate annual tax revenue. Some stated that those buildings should not be sold to non-profit entities. Judy asked what the plan was for the Pleasant Hill fire station and what revenue was anticipated for that. The appraisal for that is not known yet. There is no specific plan for that building at this time.

The committee discussed upcoming meetings and who could not be there.

February 25: No Teresa, Analiese, and Nathan

March 11: No Cathy

March 18: TBD

## **6. Next Steps**

Next steps will be for all committee members to schedule their outreach meetings, for Theo to prepare an update project handout, for Theo to be in touch with Judy Colby-George re. keypad, to settle on Forum date, and to review an appraisal summary that Theo will prepare.

There was a question about the referendum date, and there was some sense that the proposed landscape estimates should be looked at to make sure they include what the committee envisions. The group liked the idea of having a bird's eye view rendering prepared by Oak Point Associates that could be used to illustrate the recommendations. Theo mentioned he had been contacted by supporters of a propose pool who want to meet with him. The sense of the committee was that some land near the Motz wing could be reserved for a future pool. It was noted by others that the committee should be careful to attach its support as this effort has failed several times in the past. Cathy noted that she will give the Council a project update on 2/22.

The March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting will be devoted to the committee's recommendations and the Forum program.

## **7. Next meeting**

Next meeting is Thursday February 25 at 6:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Draft meeting notes by Theo Holtwijk, February 16, 2010