



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC+)

Thursday, May 27, 2010 Minutes

Attendance

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Rebecca Casey	-	Bud French	√	Hugh Coxe	√
Paul Bergkamp	√	Kurt Klebe	-	Jim Thibodeau	-
Steve Hendry	-	Sandra Lipsey	-	Julie Motherwell	√
Rachel Reed	√	Sam Rudman	√	Steve Walker	√
Claudia King	√				

Council Liaison:

-

Staff present:

Ellen Planer, Theo Holtwijk

Sam started the meeting around 7 PM.

1. Oath of Office

Town Clerk Ellen Planer took the oath of office of Rachel Reed and Bud French. She obtained signed papers after the oath from both of them.

2. Other Committees

Sam asked which other committees LPAC+ members were or had been on as he thought it was important to tap into special knowledge that committee members had.

Hugh: Planning Board and CPAC/LPAC

Steve: Board of Zoning Appeals and Charter Review Commission

Claudia: Green Ribbon Commission

Julie: Planning Board, Recycling Committee, CPAC, Route One Committee, Equity Ordinance Committee

Rachel: School Board

Paul, Bud, and Sam have not served on any other Town committee other than this one.

3. Minutes

The draft minutes of May 13, 2010 were approved by consensus.

4. Sticky Notes

The sticky notes sheets indicating the various chapters of the reading materials had been hung on the wall again. During the course of the meeting Rachel added her notes to the wall. Claudia mentioned that she would like to add a note on sustainability and climate adaptation. She also mentioned that she liked the plan of the Town of Cumberland.

5. Discussion of Work Plan

Sam said he wanted to divert from the agenda a bit and talk about the need to formulate a game plan for the committee's work. He passed around a handout he had prepared that contained a schedule for the next 12 months and a summary sheet of possible tasks and number of meetings each of them could take up.

He suggested that the committee divide itself into three groups, each of which would examine in more detail several of the categories contained in Comprehensive Plan 2000. These reports would then be discussed with the entire committee. Sam also proposed to have a discussion with the committee that prepared Comp Plan 2000, as well as do some visioning with the committee and the public, before putting together a draft plan.

Hugh thought that the proposed schedule was a good effort. There was a suggestion made that some categories could be added (such as sustainability) and that other categories could be combined.

Claudia asked what the relationship was between the committee and the Council and the public. Theo responded that the end product of the committee's work was a set of recommendations for the Council, which the Council could adopt, reject or revise. As part of its work the committee is expected to gather input and/or test its ideas with the public at large. The manner in which to do that is up to the committee.

Steve liked the proposed work flow. He was wondering if public input should be gathered sooner than was proposed.

There was a discussion on the public visioning component. Sam mentioned that the work plan envisioned various tools, from surveys to face to face discussions. Theo was asked to explain what a vision meant. He replied that it was a description of the desired state of the town, and that the recommendations in the proposed plan are intended to come closer to reaching that state, and possibly reach it.

Julie mentioned that she thought that appendix 2 – the implementation status report – was a terrific base for the committee to start its work from. She also referenced the book Future Shock and said that in the last ten years changes had occurred that no one had envisioned back then. She cited issues such as sustainability, climate change, and water quality concerns that permeate our lives. She felt that good economic and environmental practices should be behind whatever the committee ends up recommending. She also noted that she liked the three broad goals from the Portland Oregon example and the way the public was brought in the planning effort right away.

There was a question asked if data collected today was collected differently than it had been collected in the past. Paul commented that he felt that financial data was probably still apples to apples, but that with all other data there always were questions of data gathering and interpretation. He felt that data should be seen as a context, and that it could give a false precision. Besides looking at data of the past (rear view mirror), the committee should try to identify the new forces at work.

Paul felt that it was important to have public comment early on and to have the opportunity out there for people to provide their thoughts. There could be another stage later in the process where the committee's proposals could be tested with the public. There was general consensus to do early outreach and the discussion moved to how that could be done.

6. Community Outreach

There was a discussion on using the Town's website for that and Theo mentioned a site called www.ideascale.com which allows people to provide ideas concerning a specific question or topic. These ideas could then be commented and voted on by others, with the effect that the best ideas float to the top. It is a method to gather a wide range of input.

Bud suggested that The Forecaster might be good tool as well. The committee might have three stages of outreach: early on, as part of its visioning, and to test draft recommendations.

Rachel cautioned to not solely rely on computer input as the older population might lose out on that. She suggested involving the library and providing easy access for people to the project there. Claudia stated that she could not see the committee not talking to people as part of its work and that a variety of methods should be deployed to get a spectrum of views. The group agreed that it should be open to receive bright ideas from the public early on in the process.

Claudia mentioned that the way an issue is framed and the public is educated on an issue, affects its outcome. She felt that the public should be educated as to the nature of a Comprehensive Plan, before being asked for ideas on it. The committee desired to make this outreach inviting, useful, and as holistic as possible.

Hugh felt that outreach should be done early and often, and suggested that a subcommittee be formed to flesh out this topic. Going back to Sam's proposed schedule, Hugh thought it provided a great framework, but that some tasks might need expansion. He was not as certain as Sam that all tasks could be completed in 12 months. He had provided a written set of responses to the homework questions of the last meeting.

Steve commented on his work on the Charter Review Commission and that hardly anyone showed up to provide comment on its work. He felt that some of the Comp Plan 2000 categories could become subcategories under new topics, such as sustainability.

Claudia felt that the choice of words may affect how people perceive the plan and its recommendations.

Steve also noted how some of the Comp Plan topics are referenced in the Town's Charter. Committee members were unfamiliar with the Charter and asked Theo to provide a reference to it so they could see if there was any overlap with its work.

Hugh stated that it was incumbent to search out the community feedback and not wait for it to come to the committee. Sam felt that the Town's website might be the most effective tool initially. He suggested that a concise statement and some questions on the web may be worthwhile in addition to outreach through a Forecaster ad, going to OceanView and Falmouth by the Sea, and having a display at the library. Claudia stated that the Green Ribbon Commission found the Town's website restrictive.

Rachel liked the facilities committee's outreach and asked about the cost of that. Theo summarized that briefly. Most of the effort was by the committee members (visiting with some 30 community groups on top of their regular meetings) and staff. A consultant was hired for about \$3K to do keypad polling and do a Survey Monkey survey. The on-line surveys are now administered in-house further reducing cost. He suggested that the committee think out of the box, as some people have argued that survey monkey surveys are old hat and more innovative tools should be deployed. If there was an event, why not make it a fun event to capture people's attention.

There was a suggestion of using focus groups and having a Question of the Month for the public to respond to.

Sam asked if reaching out to the public in November would be too late. Rachel felt that September-October would be the best time. Hugh felt that a kick-off meeting could be held in September. Sam suggested that by that time the committee could have a mission statement and some ideas for the public to respond to.

Hugh stated that by September the committee might not necessarily be done with its inventory and analysis work, but that that would be OK.

Rachel suggested that the committee could do effective outreach to a lot of people by dovetailing its work with other events, such as the ice cream social at the schools. Theo noted that the volunteer recognition dinner was coming up in June and that that event would be attended by 100 or so community residents who are already connected in some manner to the Town. A handout might make them aware of the work of this committee.

Sam asked for volunteers for Marketing Subcommittee. Julie, Paul, and Steve volunteered for that.

Julie mentioned that the committee in doing its outreach should not come with an empty cart and by providing some provocations people might be more engaged.

Sam noted that the time to hook people with an idea is about 10 seconds. It was commented that people need to hear a message or invitation seven times before it connects, preferably through a variety of methods: e-mail, supermarket poster, display in library, ad in Forecaster, conversation with neighbor, etc.

7. Next Steps

Sam suggested that for the next meeting on June 10th the committee divide into the three data analysis groups based on member interest.

Theo offered two suggestions: One, to ask the marketing committee two things – 1. To bring to the June 10th meeting a proposed handout that could be used at the June 24th recognition event (assuming that it was OK to distribute a handout at that time). That would allow the committee to fine-tune that handout and run with it. Number two would be to ask the Marketing Committee to also bring to the June 10th meeting proposed ideas for the September Kick-Off event for the committee to respond to.

Theo's second suggestion was to send the committee the list of the data categories and ask each member to respond with their top five preferred categories. Theo could then make a chart that could be reviewed and fine-tuned at the June 10th meeting, so the three groups could get to work. Both suggestions might save the committee some time.

The committee liked the two suggestions and also added a discussion of the committee members' "big ideas" to the June 10th agenda.

Those committee members who have not had a chance to add their sticky notes containing questions/comments on Comp Plan 2000 will be requested to do so at the June 10th meeting. Rachel's sticky notes will also be reviewed at that time and Sam apologized for not being able to get to that this evening.

Julie expressed her appreciation to Theo for posted the large files to the Town's website for the committee to access that way.

8. Draft Development Profile

Theo quickly reviewed the draft development profile handouts he distributed. They showed non-residential and residential development of Falmouth since its founding, as well as for the last ten years. He suggested that the Town-wide data also be looked at on a neighborhood basis. He included a neighborhood map that has been used in past planning efforts. He also distributed a recent parks and publicly accessible lands map and a map showing new building footprints from 2000-2008. Future developments will be identified by examining approved, but not yet built projects. He will continue with this data gathering and analysis.

9. Next Meeting

The committee agreed to meet again on Thursday June 10th at 7 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Draft Meeting Notes by Theo Holtwijk, May 28, 2010