



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC+)

Thursday, October 28, 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: Theo Holtwijk

Sam started the meeting around 7:07 PM.

1. Review of Draft (Revised) Minutes of September 9, 2010 and Draft Minutes of October 14, 2010

The committee approved the 10/14/2010 minutes with two revisions:

- Correction of a typo on page 1, and
- Revision of a sentence in 2nd paragraph on page 3 (new text is underlined):
 “Steve W stated that he had heard some say in the community that ‘it seemed there was available affordable housing and that it was located in Portland.’ “

The committee approved the 9/9/2010 minutes as written.

2. June 2010 Survey Status

The committee agreed to close the June survey. Over 500 responses were received to this survey. The committee agreed with the look and content of the interim report. Theo will add the responses received in the last few weeks to the interim report results, publish a final report, and post it on the website.

3. Project Update

Using the previous 2-page Council updates as a template, Theo had prepared a draft of a project update that could be e-mailed to those people that had responded to the June Survey and had requested periodic project updates. Paul suggested that the update include a

statement how the committee is planning to use the June survey results. He felt that the survey results were akin to doing 500 interviews, that it showed how people talk about issues, what language they use, and how they frame the issues. He felt it was a very valuable aid to the design of the statistical survey. Theo will add a sentence addressing that.

Sandra liked that the update was succinct. She also liked the various references to the web site as they allowed people to dig deeper on their own, if they had the interest. Claudia wondered what the “research” heading referred to. Theo said it referred to the three Research Subcommittees that the committee had established. Claudia suggested under “Some Early Observations” to delete the word “critical” from the “(t)here is a *critical* need to develop a West Falmouth Sewer Master Plan.” The committee agreed.

The upcoming statistical survey will not be addressed in detail in this update as there will be an opportunity for the committee to distribute another Project Update in a couple of months when that survey is about to be rolled out. Theo will finalize and distribute this update. It will also be posted on the committee’s web site.

4. 2011 Survey Update

Theo reported that two survey proposals had been received by last Monday’s deadline for the statistical survey. There were cost and scope differences between the two proposals that need to be examined more closely by the Survey Subcommittee. Two sample reports had been submitted – one for Cape Elizabeth, the other for Yarmouth.

A key decision will be if the Committee should proceed with a “census survey” (i.e. sending surveys to 4000 or so people), as it envisioned originally, or a “sample survey” (i.e. contacting a sample of 400 people). That has a cost implication. Paul suggested that the decision between those two options should be left to the Town Council as it was a political decision. Sandra commented that even a census survey would be a sample of Falmouth residents as not all residents would respond to the survey. The consultant would still need to do weighting to make those results statistically significant. Becca wondered if the committee’s recommendation needed to go to the Town Council. Theo responded that the recommendation should be submitted to the Town Manager and to let him decide if it needed any further review.

The committee discussed the Survey Subcommittee’s review process. The subcommittee will convene this coming Monday at 6 PM to discuss the two proposals. It may decide to conduct interviews, which could be conducted in person or over the phone. The subcommittee is expected to make a vendor recommendation to the full committee. The full committee’s recommendation will be sent to the Town Manager.

5. Complete Reports from Research Subcommittees

Sam suggested that, once all subcommittee reports were completed, the committee would circle back and review all topics to distill the “low-hanging fruit” and the really important issues. He then thought the committee could do some visioning. He also reported that he, Councilor Rodden, and Theo had been working on a memo for the Council requesting clarification on the direction that the Council has for the committee. He wondered what the

committee was going to do over the next two months, while the survey subcommittee was working on the survey design. Becca stated that she felt there were several connected topics that would be important to explore in more detail. Sandra stated that she felt the survey questions would be key. She expected that a discussion on overlapping topics would be complete by November. Claudia noted that there were some overarching questions in past Falmouth surveys. She wanted to spend some more time with her subcommittee to see if it could arrive at some overarching questions for this survey.

Becca and Sam stated that it was important to get the intent of the questions and the important topics down on paper. The wordsmithing was a task for the consultant, Jim responded. Sandra felt it was really important for the committee to wrestle with what questions to ask in the survey. She also noted that four of the topics had not been completed yet and that it was hard to develop questions for that if there were no reports yet. The committee moved to discuss its meeting schedule.

The committee agreed to meet again on November 18th and 30th. The survey subcommittee is expected to have a survey vendor recommendation ready by mid November. The committee agreed that all draft survey questions should be submitted by November 12th. Jim asked if it was OK for him to send along some survey questions he had in mind on the land use and facilities topics. The committee welcomed that, and stated that any person who had any suggestions for any topic should feel free to submit those.

The topics for the November 18th meeting will be to (1) review the survey vendor recommendations, (2) do a review of draft survey questions, and (3) tackle any of the remaining subcommittee reports.

The committee then went to discuss two of the topics for which a report had been submitted. The first topic was open space. Jim reviewed his open space report. He stated that he was waiting on a report from Bob Shafto, the Town's open space ombudsman. Bob had suggested that the Town had not followed the open space recommendations from the last comprehensive plan and Jim had requested additional information on that. Jim stated that he had already met with various committees that deal with open space issues and that he felt a "roadmap interface" between these various groups was needed for that.

Sandra asked what the definition of "open space" was. Jim explained his definition and stated that Bob Shafto gave a presentation last Monday for the Town Council that provided a good open space overview. He recommended that committee members take a look at that. (This presentation is available at: http://www.town.falmouth.me.us/Pages/FalmouthME_CouncilAgendas/2010/10252010/TM_OpenSpace_D)

It was asked if Jim felt the Town has reached the "finish line" on acquiring open space. Jim stated: no. He proceeded to discuss the 100 acre Woods subdivision project that he has been involved in. That project includes, besides a donation of open space to the Falmouth Land Trust, a "license" for the public to use a portion of the remaining open space of that parcel. He felt that granting a license was a good tool for property owners to use in allowing the public to use privately-held open space land, but to also retain control over that land.

Sam asked if the Town encouraged land donations with development projects. Jim responded that it was a requirement if a certain development option was chosen. He stated that conventional development was also an option, which did not force a property owner to set aside open space. A discussion of the RCZO amendments proposed by councilor Chase followed. Sam asked if there was a big picture vision for connectivity of open spaces. Jim replied that Bob's presentation did contain a map with a master plan vision for open space.

Sandra stated that she felt the survey questions on open space required respondents to be knowledgeable on this topic. Theo noted that Jim's report made mention about preparing a specific guideline for the responsibilities and duties of the various committees dealing with open space. He wondered at what level of detail the committee should address its work. Should it identify the need to tackle an issue, or actually propose a way to deal with it? He felt that Jim had identified an important topic, but that his understanding was that many other people would also want to weigh in on that topic. Jim stated he had received an e-mail from Bob Shafto in that same regard and that Bob told him there was a separate effort already under way to tackle this issue. Jim was happy to take preparing a guideline for that off his to-do list. Becca stated that she felt it was OK for the committee to provide suggestions for issues such as this one. Sam stated that he felt that the Town Council probably would want the committee to delve in detail on some to-be-determined topics.

Sandra requested that a definition of open space be added to the survey questions. The committee agreed. Becca mentioned that she had thought of a question related to the issue of cultural resources and branding. Should the Town use its resources to pay for signage (be it to identify open space parcels or important historic or cultural sites)?

The committee then moved to the next topic. Paul discussed his report on Fiscal Capacity that was also part of the packet that Theo had handed out. Steve W felt that this topic had interplay with the regional coordination topic. There was a question to explain the "tax levy limit." Paul also explained what he meant with his third open question. He thought it would be interesting to find out if Falmouth were to spend as much money as the regional average, how much additional money would be available to do so. There was some discussion to what extent to school expenditures and income were reflected in the numbers that Paul had cited. As the schools are such an important part of the community and have significant budget implications, Becca felt that the schools should in some manner be acknowledged in the final plan. The committee agreed with that.

6. Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Next Meeting

The next committee meeting will be on November 18th at 7 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.