

PROPOSED FALMOUTH SHOPPING CENTER PUBLIC DESIGN CHARRETTE PROCESS

Draft: October 8, 2008

INTRODUCTION

Initial impetus:

1. Owner (Falmouth Realty Associates) has an interest in redeveloping and expanding development on its 61+ acre property, which likely could require a zoning amendment approval from Town Council.
2. Town Council has expressed interest in the redevelopment of vacant building space on this site and may have interest in working with the property owner to accommodate development expansion, including mixed uses. The Town Council is also interested in quality design, with a possible master plan, as well as continuing to define a vision for the Route 1 Corridor.

OBJECTIVES

Project Objectives:

1. Redevelop the currently 80,000+ sq.ft. of vacant space (33%) at Falmouth Shopping Center as soon as possible.
2. Establish a sound plan for the undeveloped portions of the property.
3. Create a model, mixed use development that will set the tone for development on other sites along Route 1.

CURRENT STATUS

Developer/property owner Status:

1. The developer has interest in the expansion of development on undeveloped property north of the existing shopping center.
2. The developer is in process of completing due diligence for the remainder of the property. Consultants have completed topographic survey, wetlands, and vernal pool work.
3. Geotechnical services are in process of being procured. Developer is concerned with cost of this work.
4. Property owner's forte is retail and hotel development, but not other mixed uses. The property owner is willing to pursue other types of uses for this site.
5. Developer wants to seek public input and Town approval.
6. Developer is interested in an up-front public process as long as it is executed relatively quickly.

Town Status:

1. Town Council wants to evaluate the 2005 Route 1 Study and has recently charged its Community Development Committee to make recommendations in that regard.
2. Town Council is concerned with long term building vacancy on the property and the impression it creates, and wants to be helpful in a mutually beneficial resolution.
3. Town Council desires to be more pro-active with economic development and is currently exploring ways to do that.

4. Town Council has developed amendments to the Development Program for Route One Tax Increment Financing District, which is aimed at making continued public investments in Route 1 corridor.
5. Town has been approached by a variety of interests in the Route 1 corridor, including a variety of land uses, all or some of which may be able/willing to be located at this site.

CHARRETTE BACKGROUND

The word “charrette” refers to a collaborative session in which a group of people drafts in a short amount of time possible solutions to a design problem, thus integrating the aptitudes and interests of the diversity of the participants. In urban planning, the charrette is a technique for consulting with all stakeholders. Such charrettes typically involve meetings between municipal officials, developers, and residents. A successful charrette promotes joint ownership of solutions and attempts to defuse typical confrontational attitudes between residents - who get early participation in the planning process - and developers - who may be able to get community consensus, avoiding a more lengthy and possibly more adversarial development approval process.¹

The Town of Falmouth has used charrettes on various occasions, such as for the Village Center, the redevelopment of the K-Mart site, and the Tidewater Project.

FALMOUTH SHOPPING CENTER CHARRETTE

Charrette Purpose:

1. To explore conceptual alternatives for (re)development of the Falmouth Shopping Center which enhances private marketability and establishes public values.
2. To create a positive corporate and community vision for the property.
3. To build on and further expand public-private collaboration/visioning efforts in Falmouth.

Charrette Sponsors:

Falmouth Realty Associates (“Owner”) and Falmouth Town Council (“Town”)

Charrette Team

- Owner’s Consultants
- Town Staff
- Possible Town Consultants:
 - Facilitator/Planner (charrette leader)
 - Landscape architect (post-charrette design synthesizer)

PROPOSED PROCESS

Pre-Charrette Process – “Getting Ready”

1. Obtain support of Owner and Town Council
2. Design the charrette process
3. Complete the property base line information

¹ This description is adapted from information on this website <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charrette>.

4. Determine design parameters in order to obtain realistic results
 - A. Minimum requirements from the owner.
 - B. Determine whether to create some “pre-vision” possibilities such as “typical shopping center” design, “clean slate” or “mega-compact mixed use development.”
5. Determine, invite, and involve stakeholders and public to provide input at the charrette event
6. Determine schedule, roles and responsibilities, and other logistics

Charrette Process – “Visioning”

1. Hold charrette event

Post-Charrette Process – Possible Implementation Steps

1. Town consultant and staff synthesize concept plans into one plan
2. Presentation of synthesized plan and charrette results to Town Council to obtain feedback
3. Owner reviews synthesized plan and develops with its Consultants a Master Development Plan
4. Town Council reviews Master Development Plan
5. Town Council and Owner develop Memorandum of Understanding which:
 - a. lays out background of the negotiations;
 - b. identifies progress that has been made to date in reaching agreement on key issues associated with the development;
 - c. identifies key points needing further discussion before an overall agreement can be reached, and
 - d. identifies the procedural steps required to complete the project.
6. Town and Owner develop “Planned Development District” zoning ordinance amendment which includes a set of design parameters and guidelines
7. Town Council approves zoning amendment
8. Owner applies for Planning Board and other approvals that may be required

FALMOUTH SHOPPING CENTER CHARRETTE EVENT AGENDA

Friday evening (6:00 to 8:30)

- Dinner
- Welcome and introductions
- Continuing to Develop a Community Vision for Route 1
- Overview of Falmouth Shopping Center
- Introduction to Saturday’s Charrette Program
- Closing remarks

Saturday morning (8:30 – 1:00)

- Site Walk
- Welcome and introductions
- Summary of Friday’s presentations
- Site Analysis Work (constraints and opportunities)
- Report Out
- Concept Design Work (program elements and concept design)
- Report Out
- Wrap Up

POSSIBLE ROLES

For Town Staff

- Charrette organization and logistics
- Project communications/coordination
- Participation in pre-charrette planning, charrette and post-charrette work

Cost: Salary expense is donation by Town. Out of pocket expenses are for Owner

For Owner's Consultants

- Preparation of base line information
- Participation in pre-charrette planning, charrette and post-charrette work

Cost: Cost is for Owner

For Town Consultants

- Participation in pre-charrette planning, charrette and post-charrette work
- Charrette facilitation
- Synthesizing concept plans

Cost: Cost is for Owner

For Town Council

- Review and endorsement of proposed charrette approach
- Participation in charrette event
- Review of synthesized plan and charrette results
- Review of Master Development Plan
- Review and endorsement of Memorandum of Understanding
- Review and endorsement of "Planned Development District" zoning ordinance amendment