



MEMORANDUM

To: Town Council

From: Councilor Bonny Rodden, Chair, Community Development Committee, LPAC+ Liaison
Sam Rudman, Chair, Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC+)

Date: December 9, 2010

Re: **Proposed Direction of LPAC+ for Comprehensive Plan Development**

As you know, LPAC+ is working on an update of the Comprehensive Plan. In order to present its recommendations to Council in 2011, LPAC+ wants to make sure it meets the Council's expectations in the most efficient and forthright manner possible

Therefore, LPAC+ drafted this memo with its proposed direction to the Comprehensive Plan items listed the Council's **2010 Work Plan** (dated July 30, 2010)¹ and has the following questions for the Council:

1. Does the Council agree with the stated direction on the work items in this memo?
2. Which items are high or low priorities for the Council?
3. Does the Council have any other feedback for LPAC+?

A worksheet has been developed to allow individual councilors to express their opinions. Completed worksheets are proposed to be tallied by staff for review and further discussion, as necessary, by the Council. Completed worksheets should be sent to Theo Holtwijk, tholtwijk@town.falmouth.me.us.

Besides the items on the worksheet, LPAC+ expects to address over a dozen other topics including: population and demographics, local economy, housing, transportation, public facilities, public water and sewer, recreation and open space, natural resources, agriculture and forestry, marine resources, historic, archaeological and cultural resources, current and proposed land use, fiscal capacity, and regional coordination.

¹ The **2010 Work Plan** states:

"Complete the Comprehensive Planning process. Areas of interest include but are not limited to: compact development (growth areas); TDR (non-growth areas); overall visions; specific vision areas such as Rt. 100; transportation planning; workforce housing; long term use of the MTA spur; Rt 1 and MTA spur intersection; and economic development.

Create process for Council input at milestones during the Comprehensive Planning development."

Note: If the Council decides to establish a Recycling and Energy Advisory Committee, LPAC+ plans to follow up this memo with one addressing the Green Ribbon Commission's report.

2010 Work Plan Items for Comprehensive Plan

Compact development (growth areas)

At the Council's request, CPAC made recommendations regarding compact development zoning in 2005 and 2007 as a way to reduce sprawl and the cost of constructing infrastructure for new development. Compact development would create higher residential density in the form of smaller lots and could include multi-unit housing.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will recommend if compact development zoning should be pursued.
- If so, LPAC+ will recommend what the next implementation steps should be.

- LPAC+ will not recommend where zoning should be changed to accomplish compact development, i.e. recommend specific growth areas.
- LPAC+ will not recommend whether compact development should be required or optional.
- LPAC +will not recommend detailed zoning text amendments.

TDR (non-growth areas)

Transfer of development right (TDR) programs are programs which through the purchase of development rights by developers in the so-called "sending areas" extra construction permits can be obtained for projects in the so-called "receiving areas." It has been recommended by various studies that some type of development rights transfer system be considered that would preserve other properties within the study area as permanent open space, thereby maintaining an overall neutral density of development within the study area.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will recommend if a transfer of development rights program should be pursued.
- If so, LPAC+ will recommend criteria for the establishment of "sending" and "receiving" areas.

- LPAC+ will not recommend where "sending" and "receiving" areas should be established.
- LPAC + will not recommend detailed zoning text amendments.

Overall visions

The 2000 Comprehensive Plan states that Falmouth's goal is to "encourage a diverse quality of life for Falmouth residents that balances:

- growth and change with traditional lifestyles and values;
- the rights of property owners with the interests of neighbors and the community;
- conserving natural resources with making land available for development; and
- the need to provide municipal services and facilities with the ability and willingness of citizens to pay."

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will recommend an update the 2000 vision statement.

Specific vision areas such as Route 100

Major commercial development has been recently completed on Route 100 near the Turnpike exit/entrance. This development was coordinated through a master plan and regulated through a Planned Development District chapter in the zoning ordinance. This is attracting other commercial development to this area. However, no Town vision exists for this area and development is occurring in an uncoordinated manner.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will recommend criteria for the identification of an appropriate area for commercial growth along Route 100 and where zoning may need to be changed.
- LPAC + will not recommend an appropriate area for commercial growth along Route 100 and where zoning may need to be changed.
- LPAC+ will not recommend detailed zoning text amendments.

Transportation planning

The Town is currently in the process of completing a *2010 Pavement and Transportation Management Plan*. Task 6 of this plan is to prepare an update to the Comprehensive Plan on transportation issues.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will review the *Pavement and Transportation Management Plan* and will incorporate it, as appropriate, into its transportation recommendations.

Workforce housing

The Town documented the need and recommendations for the provision of affordable housing through various studies. In 2008 the Town Council established an ad hoc Workforce Housing Commission to advise the Council on the Woods Road Workforce Housing Project, a 48-unit single-family and multi-family housing project. In 2009 the Council decided not to pursue this project any further and the Commission was disbanded. Staff prepared a memo outlining a range of possible approaches and potential next steps on workforce housing.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will recommend to the Council whether or not the Town should continue to pursue affordable housing.
- If so, LPAC+ will recommend an approach for the Council to consider.
- LPAC+ will not recommend detailed implementation steps.

Long term use of the Maine Turnpike Spur

Since the mid-90s the Town has been attempting to attain local road access to the Turnpike Spur in order to divert commuter traffic off local roads and onto the highway system. A 2002 study stated that “(i)mplementation of a Regional Toll System providing for toll-free travel with the Greater Portland area has been shown to divert a significant amount of traffic from the I-295 corridor to the Maine Turnpike and Falmouth Spur.” That study also recommended the addition of ramps to the Falmouth Spur at two locations: 1) at Route 9 and 2) at Route 26/100. To date the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA) has been reluctant to embrace the Town’s recommendations.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will recommend if the Council should continue to pursue toll-free travel on the Turnpike Spur and the additions of two ramps.

Route One and Maine Turnpike Spur intersection

Representatives of the Falmouth Shopping Center have suggested that the Turnpike Spur ramps on the east side of Route One could potentially be replaced with an at-grade intersection. Possible benefits of such an effort could include elimination of Route One bridge and on/off ramp and associated maintenance and capital costs and additional economic development opportunities. The Town Council agreed to take the lead on the pursuit of feasibility of that suggestion in cooperation with the Maine Department of Transportation, Maine Turnpike Authority, and PACTS. A preliminary study, overseen by Town staff, is currently under way.

LPAC+ direction:

- If a new Route One-Turnpike Spur intersection proves feasible, LPAC+ will incorporate it in its recommendations for Route One.

Economic development

Recently the Town launched a Business and Economic Development Resource Information website, approved the creation of a new Economic Improvement Committee in Falmouth, and voted to support the establishment of the Greater Portland Economic Development Corporation (GPEDC). Members are currently being sought for the Economic Improvement Committee. LPAC is represented on that committee.

LPAC+ direction:

- LPAC+ will coordinate its recommendations for the Local Economy section with the new Economic Improvement Committee, once that committee is established.