

**Town of Falmouth
Town Council Special Meeting and Workshop
January 12, 2009
Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call

Present and answering roll call: Councilors Rodden, Wrobleski, Armitage, Pierce and Libby.

Absent: Councilors Breen and Payne.

Item 1 Public Hearing and order to approve a new food service establishment license (victualer's permit) for Maine Roasters Coffee on Route One.

There was no public comment for this item.

Councilor Pierce moved to approve the order; Councilor Wrobleski seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Item 2 Order to approve the proposed River Point management plan.

This item was tabled at the December 22, 2008 Council Meeting.

The Council agreed to leave this item on the table, and move it to the next Council Meeting.

Item 3 Discussion about the findings in a report regarding the condition of a former (Workshop) residence now owned by the Town and located at 260 Foreside Road, tax map U16-015.

Town Manager Nathan Poore explained the concept behind the decision to purchase the property. The question is whether it is viable to repair the property. According to an analysis by former Town employee Paul Griesbach the property is not worth salvaging. The recommendation at this point is to tear down the building.

Councilor Wrobleski asked if the building has to be taken down immediately. Nathan Poore said no, but it should be done soon.

Councilor Rodden asked if the land is more valuable without the structure. Nathan Poore said he was not sure about the value of an empty lot in that area in this market.

Councilor Wrobleski asked about the cost of tearing it down and also asked if they can market the lot as a tear down. Nathan Poore said he didn't know the cost of tearing it down, but they could market it as a tear down. He wondered if it was worth hanging on to it until the market improves. He said he could get some estimates for a future meeting.

The Council discussed the property and strategies for dealing with it, including whether to spin off the house and its acreage, or tear down the home and retain the entire parcel. Councilor

Wrobleski wanted to know how much the lot is worth. Councilor Pierce asked about the cost of razing the home and dealing with the foundation hole.

Nathan Poore will come back to the Council with more information at a future meeting.

Councilor Wrobleski moved to take item 5 before Item 4, as Fire Chief Howard Rice had not yet arrived. Councilor Pierce seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Item 5 Introduction for an amendment to the Shoreland Zoning Map, from Limited Residential to Limited Commercial in the Tidewater Master Plan Development District.

A public hearing will be held for this item at the February 9 Council Meeting.

Item 4 Report from the Town Manager and EMA Director/Fire Chief Howard Rice (Workshop) regarding the operations of the town during the December 12 and 13 ice storm.

Nathan Poore introduced the report. Chief Rice explained that there were three days straight of incidents during the storm and he said that, overall, things went pretty well. The shelter was opened for the first time and this was Chief Rice's first incident as EMA Director. He outlined the recommendations in the report and mentioned that they need to schedule NIMS training for all Council members. Chief Rice will contact the Councilors to coordinate this.

Councilor Libby thanked both Chief Rice and Chief Tolan and observed what a difference ten years make. Chief Tolan gave special thanks to Topper West at the high school.

Item 6 Economic development discussion pertaining to development of a (Workshop) commercial property database for Falmouth and updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Nathan Poore explained that he met with Theo Holtwijk, Director of Long-range Planning, and Councilor Armitage to review the Council's workplan and the comprehensive planning process. The recommendation is to follow through with the workplan and develop this database, and also to follow through on creation of a comprehensive plan update committee.

There was a discussion about the commercial property database. Councilor Rodden wanted to know the value Freeport and Saco got from their databases and whether it was worth the staff time to put this together. Nathan Poore thought that most of this work would be part of the comprehensive plan process and it would have value as part of that process. Amanda Stearns, Community Development Director, explained the type of data that would be included in this inventory, and how it would be useful as part of the comprehensive plan process as well as an economic development tool.

The Council discussed an economic development committee. Councilor Armitage felt that an economic development committee would deal with policy issues not related to comprehensive planning or land use planning, for example joining Metro. The Council would like to schedule further discussion on this particular issue for a later date, perhaps alongside the presentation by Neal Allen.

**Item 7 Discussion on allowances for signs.
(Workshop)**

Councilor Libby has sponsored the item. He would like some flexibility for temporary signs that don't conflict with ordinances (sandwich boards, etc) especially for new businesses that don't have street frontage.

Amanda Stearns, Community Development Director, explained the types of temporary signs that are allowed by ordinance. She agreed with Councilor Libby that the sign ordinance is fairly restrictive.

Councilor Libby thought the ordinance is poorly worded. He is only interested in saw-horse type signs, limited to 30 days, primarily when a new business opens.

Councilor Wroblewski asked Amanda Stearns to describe in what way the ordinance is restrictive and whether this is a policy question as to how many signs they want.

Amanda Stearns discussed examples of how the sign ordinance is restrictive.

Councilor Wroblewski felt that the ordinance is doing what it is supposed to. Making an exception for temporary signs of this type will lead to a lot more signs and it won't look good.

Amanda Stearns can have a draft amendment available for the February workshop but she said she will need answers to policy questions.

**Item 8 Update on work by staff on amendments to the current Code of Ordinances
(Workshop) regarding street acceptance.**

Amanda Stearns discussed the changes that staff have drafted. A developmental list is attached. She said she will begin drafting ordinance language. Councilor Wroblewski suggested, prior to an introduction, sending the language to the CDC or the Ordinance Committee to make sure streets have connecting/paper street language.

**Item 9 Report from the Town Manager regarding consolidation of services with the
(Workshop) Town of Cumberland.**

Nathan Poore provided a recap of his report on consolidation with the Town of Cumberland. Based on his November report, he is recommending no consolidation.

**Item 10 Presentation from Councilor Breen, as a member of the Community
(Workshop) Facilities Planning Committee, on the Committee's progress, research, and
process that will lead to a community outreach event on March 12, 2009.**

Councilor Pierce made the presentation for Councilor Breen. She encouraged everyone to attend the March 12 meeting at the Plummer-Motz School; the committee would like good attendance to discuss these buildings and their use.

**Item 11 Order, in accordance with Article II Section 204.12 of the Town Charter and
Chapter 16, Article II, Section 16-43 of the Code of Ordinances, to authorize**

the Town Manager to sell a certain lot owned by the town, located on Field Road and identified as Tax Map R03-078.

Nathan Poore felt that there is no value to the town with this particular parcel – it is a tidbit lot and its only value is to the abutter.

Councilor Libby moved to approve the order; Councilor Rodden seconded.

Councilor Libby amended his motion to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate the sale of this lot. Councilor Wroblewski seconded the amendment. Motion carried 5-0.

Amended motion carried 5-0.

Nathan Poore said he will negotiate with the abutter for sale of the lot and will bring back an offer in Executive Session for the Council to approve.

Item 12 Review FY10 budget development schedule.

Nathan Poore presented the schedule and explained that this is a more aggressive timeline than in previous years.

**Item 13 Discussion about upcoming Council Agendas.
(Workshop)**

Item 14 Order to go into Executive Session, pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F) and 36 M.R.S.A. § 841 (2) (E) to discuss a hardship abatement of taxes.

Item 15 Order to go into Executive Session pursuant to the Laws of Maine to discuss the possible acquisition of land, pursuant 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C).

Councilor Wroblewski moved to go into executive session; Councilor Pierce seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Councilor Pierce moved to exit executive session; Councilor Wroblewski seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Adjourn

Councilor Wroblewski moved to adjourn; Councilor Pierce seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Lamontagne
Assistant Town Manager