

TOWN OF FALMOUTH

LONG RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2023.11.16 LONG-RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE PACKET

05:00 PM

TOWN OF FALMOUTH

2023.11.16 LONG-RANGE PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

05:00 PM

Call to Order

1. **Item 1 - Approval of November 2, 2023 LPAC meeting minutes**

   Attachment: LPAC November 2_ 2023 draft meeting minutes.pdf

2. **Item 2 - Policies & Actions Pillar Summary Review**

   Attachment: Pillar Summaries - 1 and 6.pdf
   Attachment: Pillars 1 and 6 - Policies and Action Items.pdf

3. **Item 3 - Schedule & Next Meeting Date**

   Attachment: Town Committee meeting dates.pdf

4. **Item 4 - Public Comment**

Adjourn

MINUTES

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:02pm by Councilor Jay Trickett and LPAC Chair Jean Gulliver.

Comprehensive Plan Committee members in attendance: Councilor Jay Trickett, Councilor Amy Kuhn, Councilor Bryce Hach, Ted Asherman.

Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee members in attendance: Jean Gulliver, John Adelman, Tom Ancona, Sarah Boudreau, John Crowley, Christine McCollum, Heather Sustersic.

Also attending: Adam Causey, Falmouth Long-Range Planning Director; and Keri Ouellette with BerryDunn.

Introductions were made and the following members of the public were in attendance: Jennifer Packard, Leigh Hanchett, Robert Kline, Jack Uminski.

Item 1 - Approval of October 18, 2023 Comprehensive Plan Committee meeting minutes

Motion by Ted Asherman to adopt the October 18, 2023 meeting minutes as presented, second by Councilor Kuhn. Motion passes 4-0.

Item 2 - Approval of October 19, 2023 LPAC meeting minutes

Motion by John Adelman to adopt the October 19, 2023 meeting minutes as presented, second by John Crowley. Motion passes 7-0.

Item 3 - Policies & Actions Pillar Summary Review

Councilor Jay Trickett began by reminding attendees of the comprehensive plan process and the Pillars from Vision & Values.

Jean Gulliver suggested the group review the Pillar Summaries together.

There was group discussion regarding the process, the level of depth needed for policies and actions, and their prioritization. There was consensus to focus on Pillars 1 and 6 at the next LPAC meeting. There was discussion regarding other committee outreach to be attended by LPAC members.

Item 3 - Schedule & Next Meeting Date

The next LPAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 16 at 5pm at Town Hall.

No meeting date was set for the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Item 5 - Public Comment

Jennifer Packard noted that the overriding sentiment from the public is that we love where we live.

Leigh Hanchett echoed Jennifer Packard's comment, noting that any changes should be done carefully, and also mentioned that the survey results showed that 71% of respondents do not want buildings over 3 to 4 stories anywhere.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by John Adelman; second by Sarah Boudreau. Motion carries 7-0.

PILLAR ONE: Continue to pursue environmental protection and sustainable practices

- Protect and maintain existing open spaces
- Enhance environmental health
- Strengthen Falmouth as a green and sustainable community

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

- 34% of survey respondents ranked Pillar One as most important (53% ranked first or second).
- Survey respondents' greatest concerns related to climate change are: increasing weather intensity (47%), strain on critical infrastructure (42%), and impacts on ecosystems and wildlife (39%).
- The Town should prioritize the following capital investments: protecting water quality (61%), bike and pedestrian infrastructure (50%), mitigation of coastal erosion and flood resiliency (46%), and funding energy efficiency upgrades (46%).
- Cost should be considered for sustainability initiatives and prioritize pursuing grant funding should be prioritized. Survey respondents indicated that the Town should prioritize new spending on environmental initiatives but focus on cost-effective solutions (54%).
- Residents appreciate educational campaigns and would like to see more related to advancing environmental and sustainability issues (e.g., natural lawns, invasive plants, stormwater management), especially focused on sustainability practices that homeowners can adopt.
- There is support for increasing requirements or incentives for green building, low-impact development, and sustainable design, including additional open space requirements, tree planting, and bicycle facilities.
- Protecting water quality and the environment is a priority, including pollution reduction measures, consideration for healthy ecosystems, and minimizing impervious surfaces (61% of survey respondents would like the Town to prioritize protecting water quality).
- There is support for incentives and investment in renewable energy; however, there is also concern about cost of implementation, practicality of energy transition, and grid capacity (27% of respondents prefer to cut or limit spending on environmental initiatives).

ACTION AREAS

- Sustainable development and green building practices
- Stormwater management and green infrastructure
- Educational campaigns: stormwater management, sustainable lawn care, climate resiliency, light pollution, invasive species, drinking water quality, etc.
- Resiliency measures for Town Landing and waterfront areas
- Capital planning for improving resiliency of Town infrastructure
- Continued investment in renewable energy
- State, federal, and private funding sources for sustainability initiatives
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas

POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Encourage sustainable construction and building practices.
   - Consider adopting energy standards beyond the minimum required standards of the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code.
   - Provide guidance and support to builders interested in adopting sustainable development practices, including the use of alternative building materials and technology.
   - Consider developing green infrastructure design guidelines.
2. Improve and enhance forests and tree canopy on Town-owned open space and rights-of-way.
   - Complete a street tree inventory.
   - Update forest management and property management plans for Town forests and conservation lands as needed.
   - Consider the role of forests and meadows on Town-owned land.
   - Provide support for removal of invasive species.
3. Support residents in creating a more sustainable and resilient community.
   - Develop a comprehensive education plan that provides residents materials on local issues, such as guidance on energy and water saving measures and subsidies, and natural hazard preparedness, and strategies to increase resiliency.
   - Promote Town initiatives like the composting program and monthly challenges like No-Mow-May.
   - Provide support for removing invasive species.
   - Implement the policies established in Falmouth's 2023 Climate Action Plan.
   - Work with neighboring municipalities and regional organizations on climate resiliency initiatives.
4. Continue to promote and implement responsible stormwater management practices to protect the Town's rivers and streams, Highland Lake, and Casco Bay.
   - Establish metrics for new development and consider requiring residential site plan review.
   - Require stormwater capture for all new development.
   - Create an educational campaign to support responsible stormwater management.
5. Support continued transition to carbon neutral energy sources for public services and facilities.
   - Continue to develop public EV charging infrastructure where appropriate and facilitate private development of EV charging infrastructure.
   - Continue to transition to zero-emission fleet vehicles.
   - Continue monitoring the Town's energy use and implementing efficiency upgrades where appropriate to minimize energy costs and usage.
6. Expand protection of environmentally sensitive areas in rural and undeveloped areas.
   - Identify critical environmental areas for protection.
   - Develop additional site assessment requirements to help ensure that environmentally sensitive areas are not adversely impacted due to new construction.
   - Revise zoning to further steer growth away from areas that will be vulnerable to hazards caused by climate change.
7. Continue to support maintenance and upgrades to Town facilities, infrastructure, and services to improve resiliency and environmental protection.
   - Identify and plan for necessary upgrades to Town buildings and facilities and for water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure.
   - Update the Town's Emergency Operations Plan to reflect the current personnel, resources, and potential hazards.

PILLAR SIX: Enhance infrastructure for recreation, multimodal transportation, and connectivity

- Enhance parks, public recreation facilities, and open spaces
- Continue the development of a connected multimodal transportation network
- Improve connectivity to public spaces

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

- 9% of survey respondents ranked Pillar Six as most important (31% ranked first or second).
- Improving walkability and bikeability is a priority, with a focus on connectivity to key amenities, especially the school campus (36%). More than 51% of respondents would like the ability to walk or bike to services.
- Improving road safety is a priority (56% of respondents are concerned about more traffic and 52% are concerned about bike/pedestrian safety).
- There is interest in securing easements or acquiring land to connect existing open spaces and trails, with consideration for the impact of trail use on private lands (58% of respondents strongly support more open space trails).
- Community members value parks, playgrounds, trails, and access to open space, and maintaining and enhancing these are important (70% of respondents are engaged in the community through use of parks and trails and 35% through recreation programs). There is support for making playgrounds and trails ADA compliant.
- Community members would like to have more transportation options to get around the Town and region and to provide better access to parks and facilities (25% of respondents would like increased public transportation options).
- Community members would like more waterfront access, including additional public access to the ocean and Highland Lake. Participants also noted support for maintaining and improving Town Landing.
- Community members would like to see transportation and infrastructure improvements that address traffic and parking challenges.
- Continued protection and maintenance of open spaces should be a priority with a focus on connecting existing open space and trails (29% of survey respondents ranked as top priority) and working with FLT to purchase new open space (21%).

ACTION AREAS

- Enhance street design and traffic calming
- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to public facilities, parks, schools, and transit
- Improvements to parks, playgrounds, and other Town facilities (including ADA accessibility)
- Support for recreation programming
- Regional coordination on transportation initiatives and funding for projects
- Plan for infrastructure improvements (e.g., roads, sidewalks) in a way that prioritizes connectivity and traffic reduction
- Promote alternative transportation modes
- Resiliency improvements to Town facilities
- Identify funding opportunities for parks and facilities improvements and infrastructure

POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with a focus on connecting existing public spaces and amenities, including schools, Town facilities, and public parks.
   - Work with private property owners to establish easements on properties to allow for connection of existing trail networks.
   - Work with the Falmouth Land Trust to improve the connectivity of existing trail networks.
   - Expand the Town's sidewalk network with a focus on connecting public facilities and parks.
   - Increase signage and road markings on primary bike routes to enhance driver awareness of cyclists.
2. Continue to invest in and maintain the Town's recreation facilities.
   - Invest in resiliency improvements to Town Landing and Town Landing beach.
   - Make improvements to enhance safety and accessibility to Town facilities in coordination with planned upgrades and improvements with a focus on creating multi-generational spaces.
   - Create more ADA accessible trails, parks, and playgrounds.
3. Improve safety for all road users.
   - Establish Complete Streets design guidelines for street improvements in village centers.
   - Develop a traffic calming toolbox and implement traffic calming and speed reduction measures on local roadways.
   - Limit new curb cuts within village centers and consolidate/reduce curb cuts where possible for new development and redevelopment projects.
   - Improve the buffer area between pedestrians and automobiles (landscaping, trees, etc.).
4. Support efforts for regional coordination on transportation and connectivity.
   - Coordinate with the Town of Cumberland on improvements to Route 100.
   - Work with GPCOG to improve regional transportation efficiency.
   - Support efforts to expand transit service.
   - Improve connections to regional transportation and consider establishing a ride share program.
5. Leverage state and federal funding and utilize municipal financing tools to fund infrastructure improvements, transportation projects, and public facilities.
   - Evaluate the Town's current use of tax increment financing (TIF) districts to encourage development in commercial growth areas and finance infrastructure improvements that support walkability and the development of village centers.
   - Continue to partner with MaineDOT to fund transportation improvements that support multimodal transportation on the Town's major corridors.
   - Seek state and federal grant funding for innovative public projects.
   - Consider establishing development impact fees for recreation and transportation to support the increased costs to maintain and provide infrastructure and services associated with growth.

Pillar 1 - Policies & Action Items

1. Encourage sustainable construction and building practices.
    - Consider adopting energy standards beyond the minimum required standards of the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code.
    - Provide guidance and support to builders interested in adopting sustainable development practices, including the use of alternative building materials and technology.
    - Consider developing green infrastructure design guidelines.

2. Improve and enhance forests and tree canopy on Town-owned open space and rights-of-way.
    - Complete a street tree inventory.
    - Update forest management and property management plans for Town forests and conservation lands as needed.
    - Consider the role of forests and meadows on Town-owned land.
    - Provide support for removal of invasive species.

3. Support residents in creating a more sustainable and resilient community.
    - Develop a comprehensive education plan that provides residents materials on local issues, such as guidance on energy and water saving measures and subsidies, and natural hazard preparedness, and strategies to increase resiliency.
    - Promote Town initiatives like the composting program and monthly challenges like No-Mow-May.
    - Provide support for removing invasive species.
    - Implement the policies established in Falmouth's 2023 Climate Action Plan.
    - Work with neighboring municipalities and regional organizations on climate resiliency initiatives.

4. Continue to promote and implement responsible stormwater management practices to protect the Town's rivers and streams, Highland Lake, and Casco Bay.
    - Establish metrics for new development and consider requiring residential site plan review.
    - Require stormwater capture for all new development.
    - Create an educational campaign to support responsible stormwater management.

5. Support continued transition to carbon neutral energy sources for public services and facilities.
    - Continue to develop public EV charging infrastructure where appropriate and facilitate private development of EV charging infrastructure.

- Continue to transition to zero-emission fleet vehicles.
- Continue monitoring the Town's energy use and implementing efficiency upgrades where appropriate to minimize energy costs and usage.

6. Expand protection of environmentally sensitive areas in rural and undeveloped areas.
    - Identify critical environmental areas for protection.
    - Develop additional site assessment requirements to help ensure that environmentally sensitive areas are not adversely impacted due to new construction.
    - Revise zoning to further steer growth away from areas that will be vulnerable to hazards caused by climate change.

7. Continue to support maintenance and upgrades to Town facilities, infrastructure, and services to improve resiliency and environmental protection.
    - Identify and plan for necessary upgrades to Town buildings and facilities and for water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure.
    - Update the Town’s Emergency Operations Plan to reflect the current personnel, resources, and potential hazards.

Pillar 6 – Polices & Action Items

1. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with a focus on connecting existing public spaces and amenities, including schools, Town facilities, and public parks.
    - Work with private property owners to establish easements on properties to allow for connection of existing trail networks.
    - Work with the Falmouth Land Trust to improve the connectivity of existing trail networks.
    - Expand the Town's sidewalk network with a focus on connecting public facilities and parks.
    - Increase signage and road markings on primary bike routes to enhance driver awareness of cyclists.

2. Continue to invest in and maintain the Town's recreation facilities.
    - Invest in resiliency improvements to Town Landing and Town Landing beach.
    - Make improvements to enhance safety and accessibility to Town facilities in coordination with planned upgrades and improvements with a focus on creating multi-generational spaces.
    - Create more ADA accessible trails, parks, and playgrounds.

3. Improve safety for all road users.
    - Establish Complete Streets design guidelines for street improvements in village centers.
    - Develop a traffic calming toolbox and implement traffic calming and speed reduction measures on local roadways.
    - Limit new curb cuts within village centers and consolidate/reduce curb cuts where possible for new development and redevelopment projects.
    - Improve the buffer area between pedestrians and automobiles (landscaping, trees, etc.).

4. Support efforts for regional coordination on transportation and connectivity.
    - Coordinate with the Town of Cumberland on improvements to Route 100.
    - Work with GPCOG to improve regional transportation efficiency.
    - Support efforts to expand transit service.
    - Improve connections to regional transportation and consider establishing a ride share program.

5. Leverage state and federal funding and utilize municipal financing tools to fund infrastructure improvements, transportation projects, and public facilities.
    - Evaluate the Town’s current use of tax increment financing (TIF) districts to encourage development in commercial growth areas and finance infrastructure improvements that support walkability and the development of village centers.
    - Continue to partner with MaineDOT to fund transportation improvements that support multimodal transportation on the Town’s major corridors.
    - Seek state and federal grant funding for innovative public projects.

- Consider establishing development impact fees for recreation and transportation to support the increased costs to maintain and provide infrastructure and services associated with growth.

Town Committee Regular Meetings Days

Below is a list of various Town committees and their regular meeting days/times.

Community Wellness Committee – second Tuesday of the month

Next meeting: December 12

Conservation Commission – first Monday of each month

Next meeting: December 4

Highland Lake Leadership Team – only meets twice per year but will meet in January 2024

Land Management & Acquisition Committee (LMAC) – second Tuesday of the month

Next meeting: January 9 or January 16

Falmouth Land Trust – January 9, 6:45pm

Parks & Community Programs Advisory Committee (PACPAC) – third Tuesday of the month

Next meeting: November 28, 4pm

Sustainability Committee (formerly REAC) – first Thursday of the month

Next meeting: December 7

Planning Board – first Tuesday of the month

Next meeting: December 5