

Live Survey:
Saturday, February 3, 2018 9:00AM
Falmouth High School Auditorium

Beth Underhill, Scribe

Su Moran Introduction

- Forum evolved from the Strategic Plan and ways for outreach to community
- Live Survey = begin process of communicating with community and listening
- Hear what people want, think and view current process of making priorities and exploring the issues. Result could end up with committees – this is to be determined
- Get information to do our job better

Megan

- Engaged citizenry to grow the town - not an individual or a board
- Board believes in collaboration and communication to meet challenges and take advantage of opportunities
- We are here to listen and try this process

Linda

- Intro to microphone handlers
- I will ask questions or prompts to get conversation going
- No right or wrong response
- What is it like to live in Falmouth? What do you say? All winter??? Why??? Sense of community is unique. Look to left and right...you showed up.
- Poses question to audience:
 - Community is always my answer and I grew up in small community while husband grew up around the world and he didn't understand community until moved her
 - Year-round community, short ride to Boston, activities all year around, welcoming
 - Rosemary, NF: moved here last April. Community and nature. Connected to weather. Moved from Manhattan and NJ
 - Agree with previous stmts. Sweet spot is size but range of amenities. But, anything beyond you have to go to big city
 - Pat: I am reader and Falmouth Public Library is a treasure
 - Heartfelt thanks to raising my three children – it was not easy.
 - Sam Slarsky: Agreed with size and amenities. Greatly advantaged with not so advantage and have to work across that divide.
 - Home of America The Beautiful and infused throughout the community
 - Chris Warner: Uniqueness is nautical, access to water is a common good
 - Austin: Moved 20 years ago, full time. We are losing sense of community in this town. Turnout in elections is low even with issues on the ballot that have town-wide impact. I don't know what to do to change that. We looked along East coast for a place to live,

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but chose Cape Cod and Buzzard Bay sailing. How do we get people involved in the community, even to vote?

How many have been to Town Meeting – most of you have. Live Survey was an attempt to get those who don't to come and promote civic engagement. Most of same people showing up. How do we solve this?

- Mary Harris: Town MEMBERS email addresses are not up to date so it can be difficult to convey issues and town mtg members don't do a lot to engage their members.
- Charlotte Harris: increase voter turnout and it is usually a crisis that prompts engagement and involvement. Reputation is Falmouth is a well-run town which may temper level of engagement.
- People become engaged when they feel that they are affected by things. Write a letter and inform them of town meeting members and detail what is to be discussed and voted on.
- Lynn: returned after 30 years away from Falmouth. There is no way to find the information on ways to get involved – when are meetings, what is happening.
- Malloy: Young families involved in activities with both parents working. Is there a way to bring information to them to get more engagement? What can we bring to them where they are to get them engaged?
- Jim Callahan: I'm reminded of no smoking or no littering campaigns. Getting information to children to bring home to parents.
- Pat Johnson: getting email from town meeting members would be helpful. Go to the website and sign up for notifications of meetings.
- Linda Pogue: websites are not for everyone. Starting with children to get young families involved and prompt 18-year olds to vote.
- Marc Finneran: many are completely disengaged and voices are not being heard. This approach is helpful. With some precincts not voting, hopefully this forum can be helpful in getting more involvement.
- Linda Pogue: It is important to get engagement across all precincts because the town benefits
- Deb Rogers: Thank you for putting this forum together. Social media is major outlet of news for many. Where are people getting their news and information – do it regularly and quickly.
- Pam: Been here for two years. Welcoming and engaging community. Came from open town meeting where everyone has a voice and vote. It is disengaging to feel like you don't have a vote. This forum could be a visioning process – where do we want to see ourselves in 2, 5 and 10 years. More school comm involvement. Leadership group of School Comm, Fin Comm and Board of Selectman. Disconnect between school and town communities. Not so much the volunteerism, but the civic engagement between the two groups. Use this forum as often as possible to voice concerns.
- Judith Fenwick: Nice feeling of getting involved and discovered VIPS which opened a whole new world. VIPS are predominately retired seniors. The school environment pulls in multiple parts of the community.
- Linda Pogue: get better at a higher profile for community engagement opportunities, like Live Survey, communication from precinct heads.
- Not that tech savvy but each precinct has a way of posting concerns

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- Representative town meeting: How do we establish precincts – is there the right number for each one, adding more to draw people in? Should we reserve certain positions between certain ages? /
- Thank you for forum and opportunity to be heard. People want transparency, that they are being heard and part of a community. Confidence and sincerity from leaders with follow up to convince that it is all worthwhile.
- We decry retaining youth and one suggestion is bring government to the high school whether in class or after school. Many students may not realize what type of government Falmouth has.
- Ron: Been here for four years, precinct 8. Falmouth Enterprise is key to finding out what is going on in Falmouth. Feel in love with Falmouth and friends have moved as a result. While you learn from Enterprise about activities it is you don't get civic engagement. More engagement on precinct level and need to strengthen precincts.
- One of few towns left in America with very own newspaper.
- Lyn Whitehead: when in high school, I was required to take Civics with town meeting component. Required to attend a town meeting. Many of those high school friends are still involved where they live. As students, I was required to ask a question and town meeting member had to answer the question. When a controversial topic was being addressed, the high school students got the parents involved.
- Lyn Whitehead: hesitant to bring up the yellow letter. Many don't feel trusting of the officials but they have all changed since 2009/2010. I hope we can learn from past of how it evolved.
- Linda: want to proceed with exploring other priorities that haven't gotten much exposure.
- Social media is transformative in the case of Peter Freitas, ice bucket challenge. Use the Facebook share button.
- I would like to see follow up on all articles that were passed at town meeting. Such as 40B on Main Street, turbines. More sessions like this to get follow up.
- Collect data like emails, twitter accounts, phone numbers and people select preferred communication method. It seems like we may not have data.
- Linda P: How many prefer print...50% By email...30%...Social media...15% to get their news?
- Marc Cool: Follow up on complete review of zoning bylaw that hasn't been addressed in the past 5 years. May fix litigations etc. that regulatory boards go through. Land use master plan. Very important to collectively local comprehensive plan into something visual that brings technical studies and resource and incorporate into Land Use plan to get predictability when searching permits.
- Linda P: Communication is underpinning of many concerns. Generate list and sign up to help collect data and ways to gather it.
- Jessica: Graduated in 2008 from FHS. Social Media is a huge part of it. I saw this on Facebook. If you need help, I am happy to help. I work with Atria residents. I will put my name on that list.
- I think this group is on to something for engaging young people. A local documentarian - Voices for the Planet.org. I came here to speak for the wind turbines and travesty that they have been stopped. We are in a climate emergency with no leadership at federal level so up to local government.

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- I want to comment that it is not either/or statement – we need to meet people where they are. Falmouth Enterprise is great resource for information to increase confidence in discussing issues.
- Ray: Is this the time to tell our wish list? establish a schedule for power poles in Falmouth because a 30-year timeline. Incorporate into updating of roads and have power poles gone. Trucks and jake brakes – not necessary and need to be eliminated. Use of time for kids on buses – for some an hour of unsupervised and an opportunity to withdraw.

Linda Pogue: What have you read or heard that other Cape towns do that you think Falmouth may benefit from? For example, a restaurant in P-town burned down and left many unemployed. A local person put together a Go Fund page and job fair.

- Marc Finneran: Bourne has released Selectman packet before meeting. Demonstrates complete openness and have same information as Manager and Board. This should be adopted immediately
- Pam Rothstein as vice-chair bikeways: Complete Streets which is well-funded program to make streets safer and more accommodating for pedestrians and bikers. It is a well-funded program and accessed by other Cape towns. We all benefit – residents, business, visitors – because it optimizes movement. Other towns have built bridges for bikes. Lack of East – West access (Brick Kiln, Thomas Landers, Rte. 151). Everyone has something at stake. #3 Make Main Street on certain days and times a pedestrian-only, not just Art Fair. There are times when we can do this like quiet Sundays, off-season. We know there are obstacles but worth exploring.
- Unknown: I find email to town officials it is not acknowledged. Many towns do better with accommodating bikes.
- Walker: of 351 town, 210 are labeled Green Communities to reduce energy and increase renewable energy. Falmouth has done many but need to do some more. Falmouth Enterprise is great source of info and may want to suggest that they increase space for Letter to the Editor.
- Unknown: P-town has repaved with pervious surface so it is absorbed versus run off.
- Unknown: Bringing young people need high-speed internet to grow a business.
- Deb Seigal: Sea level rise. Falmouth has two committees working on this but results of a former one were not taken into account. I hope that going forward it will be looked at. Cape will have higher than average because land is sinking. Damage from storms is most concerning.
- Teaticket Commercial Fisherman: lived for 17 years – Fishery Advisory board is needed and other towns have done it
- Gonsalves, Pr. 9: retired police officer. Use retired personnel to do detail versus out-of-town personnel while other towns do this. Falmouth claims it is an insurance issue. Need an answer from town Manager or Chief of Police.
- Marc Cool: Chatham has evolutionary approach for coastal resiliency. We need regulatory tool for guidance and protection
- Deb Rogers: A coordinated effort for all communication methods. Municipal broadband has starts and stops. Important to look at cable and internet to bring young families and grow economy – it is part of the infrastructure
- Austin Heath: Town meeting member who received an email about this meeting. If you want more people then word needs to get out quickly. Use local/neighborhood associations to

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provide adequate notice. Each of these meetings should have one or two topics to be discussed – limit the subject to draw those that are interested. People should not be afraid of saying something that is unpopular.

- Mary Harris: Recycling is collected every other week. Confusion about what is recyclable.
- Jim Callahan: Young people are not covered in Falmouth Enterprise like recreation soccer, little league games. Telephone poles are looking old. Reinvigorate East Main Street.
- Jill Neubauer: Decisions and bylaws that we make now impact ability to engage community. Look to other communities for best practices. One impactful opportunities is the hiring of a new Town Planner who is visionary, innovative can help create environment that is pleasant. Community should be involved in hiring. Amenities – sports facilities, open space, commitment to environment – will attract younger families. Fun and cool business. Direct relationship between spaces we create now and attracting millennials. Embrace innovation.
- Phil Logan: Mention impact of traffic serving island. Town should increase awareness like a helicopter ride to observe the impact on the town.

Susan Moran Conclusion:

- Email Boards with ideas
- Plan on taking action immediately – keep the forum going
- Look at committee list
- Thank you for input.

Comments Received in Writing After the Event

Paul Dreyer

- Precinct Meetings – In order to engage citizens in the nine precincts in Town, consider periodic informational meetings with the Town Meeting Members in each precinct with a representative of the Board to address important issues in the Town.
- Seasonal Residents - In an effort to engage the property owners who are not full-time residents, consider periodic brief mailings to inform of recent Town issues (say on a quarterly basis).
- Student Engagement – As a way of increasing the participation of the younger population in Town, consider including a non-voting member from Falmouth High School who can attend the Board meetings and then provide a summary of the key issues in the student newsletter.

Tod Bidwell

What a great meeting on Saturday. Thank you to the Board and Town Management for putting the live survey together and I look forward to one again in the future!

Couple of quick items I wanted to throw out, since I didn't speak at the meeting

- Regarding the need to reach out to the community, possibly through social media, which will also reach younger people. The Falmouth Police Department is doing an excellent job using Facebook, sharing news, updates, important topics, etc... out to our community in a timely fashion. I believe Lt. DeCosta is in charge of Facebook, and he is doing an excellent job with it!
- What if Town Hall posted similarly to Facebook so that a Town Hall followers on Facebook, we will be alerted to information that was being posted?
- Perhaps Town Manager Office news on Mondays, BOS on Tuesdays, Town Clerk's office on Wednesdays, etc... so that each key department has the responsibility to share important information, helpful advice, updates to hot topics, etc... one day every week.
- I fully support Ms. Neubauer's recommendation that our next Town Planner demonstrates a desire and skill for creative visioning and forward thinking with enthusiasm. We truly need a dynamic Town Planner that will generate desire and creative thinking for our Town's future development.

Martha M. Asendorf

As a property owner on an inlet off West Falmouth Harbor, I am interested in passive erosion mitigation. I am hoping the Town will partner with property owners as projects which may increase sea flow come forward, much as they are doing in Eastham.

Ed Haddad

- The beaches are important natural resources both for residents and to support our tourist industry. There should be more done to preserve/replenish them.
- More events targeting age groups 30-45.
- BOS meetings should not devote time to administrative tasks, e.g. permits, licenses, signs, etc.
- "Studies" never turn into action/results: E.g. Parking, beaches, LCP
- Make the Community Planning Dept. happen.
- Reaffirm the EDIC's role of creating jobs in Falmouth

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Charles Burgess

Thank you for soliciting community input from the Falmouth Heights Maravista Association. My area of concern is the high rate of vehicular speed, at all times of the day and night on Maravista Ave. particularly at the dangerous intersection of Maravista and Randolph street.

In addition lack of proper curbs on the sidewalk and the lack of stop signs and/or stop lines where the intersecting streets meet Maravista adds to general safety concerns.

- Perhaps the blinking light at Maravista and Randolph could become a 4 way stop, which might reduce the speeding at that section of Maravista and would make the intersection safer.
- I understand that proper sidewalk curbing is on the agenda for the future, but perhaps that could be moved forward.
- the installation of stop signs at the end of all of the intersecting roads with Maravista would be a positive improvement.

Dr. Vidaver-Cohen

I would like to add my voice to the issue raised again about building a swimming pool in falmouth. There really is a need for such a facility in our community that can be used by all residents year round without the need to join costly private clubs or drive all the way up to Sandwich, Wareham etc. Before Woodbriar's management changed we had an adequate pool available but under Atria management the cost now is prohibitive --- to fixed income seniors in particular. As a retired senior myself now, I would spend less time away from Falmouth in the winter if there were an affordable, convenient place to swim. For Falmouth resident of all ages, the benefits of a swimming pool cannot be understated!

Maria Guglielmo

Hello, we have a house on lake Leaman. One thing we have noticed is houses are being bought, knocked down, and becoming huge! We wonder what the zoning laws are, and are concerned that the character of Falmouth will change. Some of these houses are not too attractive, huge, and we feel bad for the houses they completely block and tower over. Johnson rd has many charming capes and now one has been knocked down and a huge one is going up. Completely out of character. We are afraid everything will become like this and change the character we love. Can there at least be height restrictions ? Is anyone else concerned about that?

My other thought is about Falmouth heights beach. My husband and I often walk on the wall behind the bluff area down to the harbor. We often think of how great it would be to have a real walkway here, with maybe some benches like the marginal way in ogunquit or the cliff walk in Newport. It's such a beautiful spot and we feel the walkway would be a real asset to the town.

Just some thoughts! Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the town.

Sbleighton@verizon.net

- Growth: Already mentioned in the minutes of your meeting. I agree that Falmouth is at a "sweet spot" of size.

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- Some, especially those whose livelihood is in development, construction and related fields want "growth".
- Others want growth because they see only the increased tax revenue and not the increased costs that it brings.
- Please keep in mind that growth by definition changes Falmouth and moves it closer in kind to Fall River, New Bedford and Hyannis - growth is impossible without an increase in population density and all the problems it entails.
- At the very least, always admit that growth vs. status quo is a legitimate point of disagreement and we can't have both. Find ways for meaningful discussion of this conflict by the town.
- High speed internet: Again, already mentioned at the meeting. Please make sure that the town is always seeking ways to increase competition among providers and if possible provide openings for private sector competition to Comcast.
- Website: I've been told by someone in DPW that "in the works" is a web based system that will allow Falmouth residents to post notices of work they think needs doing such as pothole repairs. A good system would allow DPW to post a response and show the priority that they feel the request deserves. Not just vague grades like high, medium and low priority but arranging the list in the order of priority with estimated dates of completion or a statement of why a certain request will never be acted on. Software to implement this probably exists commercially and I hope you support it.
- Sea level rise: Already mentioned at your meeting. It would be difficult to find many in Falmouth who do not think this is a serious problem facing us. How about not expecting the town or other levels of government to buy out or bail out waterfront and low altitude property owners but let the market work its magic over the next decades. Let's not subsidize their FEMA insurance either but make sure the premiums accurately reflect the risks.
- Next steps: Don't just list all these ideas from everyone but find ways to prioritize them and be transparent about it with realistic budget constraints.

Carol B. Chittenden

So sorry I missed the Live Survey meeting, and have read the Summary and the Verbatim accounts with interest. I have come to love Falmouth, and think often of what makes it special and what might make it better. Many of the responses point to communication as important, and often emphasize Municipal to Citizenry communication. Of course that's important, but I think we'd also benefit from citizen-to-citizen listening, rather than acting on the assumption that everyone with common sense thinks and votes like ourselves, and those who post yard signs of a different color are ignorant, foolish, or insensitive. One of the best ways to facilitate such listening is to work together.

Falmouth's extensive use of volunteers is one secret to its vitality. I would like to see further encouragement of projects and processes that bring together people from different ages,

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neighborhoods, economic levels, in service activities. (Sorry to be so long-winded about it, but that's communication for you.)