

**FOSP Analysis Subcommittee**  
**May 25, 2011 minutes**

Attendance: Chris Franklin, Chair, Richard Bauman, Craig Cooper, Frank Governali, Jessica Sullivan

Staff: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

Mr. Franklin called the meeting to order and asked for comments from the public. No members of the public were attending.

Mr. Franklin asked about the process for conducting the study. Ms. O'Meara explained that the subcommittee will make a recommendation for an RFP to the full committee and then FOSP can recommend that to the Town Manager. The Town Manager issues the RFP because FOSP does not have the authority to enter into contracts. Once proposals are received, they go back to FOSP to recommend a consultant choice to the Town Manager.

Mr. Franklin noted that the study is not hugely complicated. It is just an allocation of revenues and costs. Most studies use 3 different categories, including industrial/manufacturing, which does not apply in Cape. The Town Council charge says residential, but maybe we should expand that to agriculture and open space as separate entities. Perhaps we should also break up residential into categories such as clustered condo as opposed to single family homes. This should be a strong planning tool for the town.

Mr. Governali questioned whether we were going for a boiler plate treatment or digging in deep.

Mr. Franklin said we should hire someone with ability.

Mr. Bauman said the RFP should include a statement that the study should be on current policies.

Mr. Cooper agreed and the study should distinguish between single family and condos. We do have policies in place where open space comes with the development.

Mr. Governali asked where do you end with the number of options. Some studies give you generic responses.

Mr. Cooper suggested that it is not that complicated. We have 2 acre zoning and clustered.

Mr. Governali said we may recommend zoning changes; we should leave all options on the table for discussion.

Mr. Bauman cautioned against projecting decisions that may be made onto the study. We should stick with what currently exists for land use types. He questions how germane a product based on speculation will be for the work FOSP has to do.

Mr. Governali wants a result that has general components so we can apply it to possible rule changes.

Mr. Franklin noted that residential uses are typically top-heavy with school expenses.

Mr. Governali would like a graphic. For example if a future new home has x number of occupants, and if x changes, what is the new projected expense.

Mr. Cooper suggested a chart of housing growth and school enrollment.

Ms. O'Meara described the information in the Comprehensive Plan demonstrating that housing turnover has a greater impact on school enrollment than new home construction.

Mr. Governali wants the study to go beyond the current housing bubble. This should be a working model, a flexible tool to use to project costs.

Mr. Franklin said that if we use this tool, we may not amend the ordinance to allow more multiplex units. Mrs. Sullivan asked about the personal property tax. Ms. O'Meara said we do have a personal property tax, but it is a small amount of annual revenue compared to the whole budget.

The committee agreed to leave the commercial category general because there is so little in Cape.

Mr. Franklin suggested that open space and agriculture be broken into separate categories rather than combined as one as these studies often do. The study should factor in the following: open space donations in contrast to purchases; agricultural lands generate some property taxes; conservation lands typically do not generate property taxes; private land owner taxes can be reduced with deed

restrictions. The consultant should look at expenses, not at market value although from past experience should have a fair value basis.

Mrs. Sullivan asked why you shouldn't use fair market value?

Mr. Franklin said the Land Trust has 26 properties and the majority are donations. The study should discount the value of obtaining properties by a proportion, such as 20% -25%, to reflect possible future donations. He cited Winnick Woods as an example.

Ms. O'Meara suggested that the analysis should be done at full market value and then a discount could be applied as a policy decision to reflect anticipated donations. She noted that there have been several times when properties that have been developed were in discussions with the land trust, but the land was not preserved because of a lack of funds.

Mrs. Sullivan said that land cost is a core part of the analysis. Some land is wildly more valuable than others. We should look at that too.

Mr. Governali said that the implications of decreasing tax revenues from removing taxable property from the tax rolls is a separate issue from land purchase costs.

Mr. Franklin said Scarborough build a model to test properties and determine what the cost to develop the land versus conservation would be, but variables between properties and qualitative conservation values made its applicability limited.

Mr. Governali said the study should make it possible to do a sensitivity analysis and it would be ok not to include donations in the initial calculation.

Mr. Franklin confirmed that the committee agreed to separate open space and agriculture.

Mr. Bauman said that existing agricultural land, as designated by the study, would be distinct from public open space.

Mr. Governali said he wanted to know the cost of a working farm, the cost of selling to develop the farm, and what we should pay to avoid the farm to development conversion.

Mrs. Sullivan questioned if the study would include the benefit of preserving open space for aesthetic reasons, what value does a scenic vista have to a community.

Mr. Franklin noted the benefit to residential homes bordering on conservation land.

Everyone agreed the study should be concrete and credible.

Mr. Governali said we should separate cluster and traditional developments and we should provide examples to be useful.

Mr. Franklin said the study should not add preserved open space as a value for clustered developments, but it should be noted. We should model after Scarborough. We can use Cross Hill and revisit the projections.

After discussing several neighborhoods that would represent different housing types, the committee agreed to use Cross Hill, Hobstone, Hemlock Hill and Elizabeth Farms.

Ms. O'Meara agreed to provide a revised RFP, based on the discussion, to the committee by end of day Friday. Committee members would review the draft and provide comments before end of day Tuesday. Ms. O'Meara would then send the revised draft to the entire FOSP committee on Tuesday afternoon. The subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, June 1st, at 6:00 p.m., to discuss the revised draft and make their recommendation to FOSP at the meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. The subcommittee also scheduled another meeting for July 13th, also beginning at 6:00 p.m. to review the consultant bids in advance of the FOSP committee meeting on July 13th, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. O'Meara agreed to prepare minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen O'Meara  
Town Planner