

Accepted Minutes
Of the
Transportation and Land Use
First Task Group Meeting
Thursday, July 31, 2008
Serber Room, Falmouth Memorial Library
5 PM

Task Group Charge

Each Group was tasked with the following for next meeting (to be submitted in writing in advance of the meeting):

1. Take stock of what has or is taking place in town with the issue (existing policies, solutions, resources)
2. Report what opportunities/resources/funding exists
3. Summarize 5-10 best practices for the issue for a community like Falmouth
4. Identify low hanging fruit (low cost, feasible, etc)
5. Identify short/long term outreach needs and opportunities

Present: David Gagnon, Claudia King, Robert Welch

Notes:

The way land is used indirectly effects carbon emissions for the most part. Zoning is a major way to effect how land is used. Encourage density of development and encourage green open space. More parks to provide local recreational destinations. Managing public forests was discussed as a way to localize fuel supply and encourage tree growth. The Arbor Day organization, or Tree City USA was mentioned as a way to support healthy forests*. Bob Shafto, involved in the Open Space Implementation Plan, is a good contact.

Probably water and fertilizers used on farms, golf courses and lawns are not high on our list of things to effect as their effect on reducing carbon emissions is pretty indirect and minimal.

Zoning policies also have an impact on transportation and road building with their concomitant carbon costs, direct and indirect. We discussed making the town more connected by trails and paths. The trails committee in town is a resource. Making Falmouth more bike friendly was brought up. Problem with widening shoulders to make lanes for bikes mentioned.

*There have been some discussions about trees benefiting global warming through removal of carbon dioxide but some later studies indicate that they can increase warming. See: https://publicaffairs.lnl.gov/news/news_releases/2007/NR-07-04-03.html

Buses were discussed. Don't want to lose Metro. We imagined the possibility of a regional bus system with Cumberland etc. David Gagnon remembered the Brunswick Transportation bus which went from Brunswick to Portland some time ago. Would be interesting to know more about this service. Claudia mentioned that Waynflete runs buses from Brunswick and Lewiston to Portland. They're often largely empty. Also check with GP COG about any regional transportation efforts being considered.

School transport brought up. How to use school buses better. So much car traffic in/out of schools. It would be good to speak with Topper in an effort to quantify bus ridership. Is it possible to increase ridership? What are issues preventing increased ridership? Engaging the school and families in this effort is essential. HOV parking for HS students. Encourage biking walking.

Are passenger trains a possibility? Noted the train conference on August 26th at Abromson Center in Portland. Is Cumberland actively pursuing a train stop?*

Other possible areas to effect : carpooling and carpool parking and how to find people to carpool with. Also parking to take the bus.

(We should gather information on vehicle registrations in Falmouth by type of vehicle and by year over the time period we are considering effecting).

The question was asked if accounting for green space is part of ICLEI footprint. We think it is not included in the inventory.

It was noted that we will have to prioritize measures according to how much reduction a measure brings.

It was noted that another benefit of single-sort recycling is probably a lot less trips to/from the transfer station by citizens.

Began to talk about the role of education and outreach in creating change in transportation (probably land use too) The No Idling Campaign was mentioned. It was noted that only the school buses observe no idling guidelines.

* Passenger service is anticipated to begin in 2010. We have no information about a stop between Portland and Brunswick. Submitted by Claudia King