

Falmouth, Cape Cod, MA



Falmouth Democratic Town Committee Newsletter: February 21, 2018 Monthly Meeting

Megan English Braga, Chair, FDTC, began the meeting by introducing Falmouth High School student, **Daniel Gessen**, who is organizing a walk out of Falmouth High School students on March 14th for seventeen minutes in honor of the 17 students killed at the Parkland high school in Florida. He and others have created a website:

www.actionnetwork.org/events/falmouth-hig-school-enough-walkout for an explanation of this action which is part of a Nationwide WalkOut Day. The school administration has reached out to the students for conversation about the event. **Megan** will inform the FDTC of any help we can give or if



Daniel Gessen

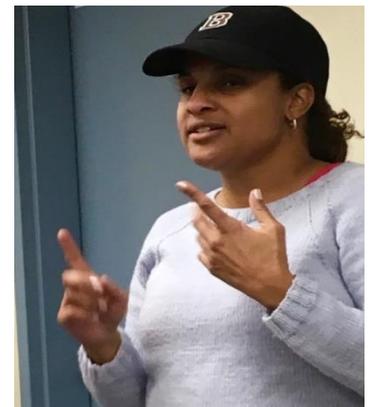
adults are needed for the event in any way. The event is being supported by Engage Falmouth, Grandmothers Against Gun Violence, No Place for Hate, and other groups. So far around 120 students have signed up to participate. **Daniel** has been elected as a delegate to the June Democratic Convention to represent Falmouth Democrats and gave an eloquent presentation.

Nan Logan, of Grandmothers Against Gun Violence and member of the FDTC subcommittee on Gun Violence Prevention, announced ways we could support the extended Extreme Risk Protection Bill. This bill, in our MA legislature, would allow the temporary removal of guns from those deemed dangerous. Postcards to reps can be signed, calls made and visits to rep offices scheduled. The bill is H3610 introduced by **Rep. Decker** and cosponsored by our own **Dylan Fernandes**. **David Vieira** is the ranking Republican on the Joint Safety and Homeland Security Committee and it is important for him to hear that his Falmouth constituents support the bill. You can go to the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence website for information on seeing **David** at his Falmouth office. See the website: <https://www.mapreventgunviolence.org/> and click the Take Action Now link.

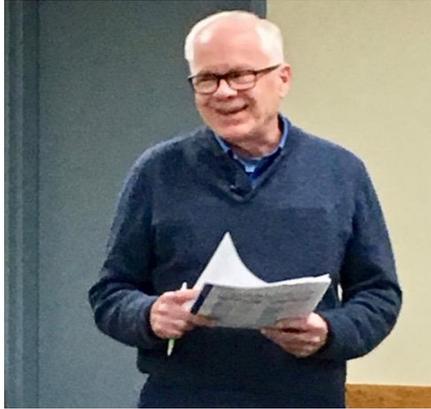


Nan Logan

Jarita Davis, of Engage Falmouth, announced a meeting on March 13 of the League of Women Voters, a meet your legislator night. The time is 7:30 pm at the Hermann Room in the Falmouth Public Library. In addition, she announced a March 24th nationwide March for our Lives for gun control. Organizers hope to have 500,000 attendees in Washington, D.C. for this march. Boston will have



Jarita Davis



Tom Stone

a version of this March from noon to 5 pm on that day. The Boston March is intended to “raise the voices of all those directly impacted by gun violence.”

Tom Stone, from the FDTC subcommittee on Gun Violence Prevention, announced the group is planning to have a gun buy back in the near future. Planning will involve the Falmouth Police Department and a church and a 501C3, Grandmothers Against Gun Violence. A planning meeting with Tiffany Van Mooy, who organized a previous gun buy back for the Methodist Church, will

be held Monday, March 5th, at 7 pm at the home of **Tom and Ann Stone**. You can contact **Tom** via email at tastone99@gmail.com for

more information. For the buy back, we will need \$10,000 to \$15,000 in donations which would be in the form of gift cards. The subcommittee needs help in raising the money needed for this purpose. They are looking for a neutral location for the event, and will assure anonymity for donors. The FDTC will be kept informed on the progress of planning for this event.

Megan praised the work of all the FDTC subcommittees, and announced that **Chris Dunn** would be working on messaging for subcommittees and to create a regular voice for the FDTC to use in our outreach. She then introduced our main speaker, **Heather Harper**, from the Cape Cod Commission.

Heather Harper is the Community Design and Affordable Housing Specialist in the Planning and Community Development section of the **Cape Cod Commission (CCC)**. The CCC is the regional land use planning, economic development, and regulatory agency created in 1990 to serve the citizens and 15 towns of Barnstable County. The CCC is a department of Barnstable County regional government, but is funded separately through the Cape Cod Environmental Protection Fund and supplemented by grants. The Act creating the CCC found that the region known as Cape Cod had unique characteristics and values which would be threatened by uncoordinated or inappropriate uses of land and other resources.



Heather Harper

Heather stated that the goal of the CCC was to “Keep our special place special.” The commission tries to anticipate changes in order to guide planners in making good decisions. We have 215,000 people in 394 sq. miles on the Cape, so there are lots of pressures on a small space. In spite of some beliefs, the commission sees upward trends in wage growth, employment labor force growth and overall GDP growth. Falmouth has 22,000 people in jobs with 1000 new jobs recently created. So why should it feel like we are not thriving? We have a housing issue. Single family detached housing prevails and we have a lower share of rental property (13% as opposed to the

norm of 30%). **Heather** said that 26,000 people in Barnstable County are “cost burdened”, spending more than 30% of income on housing and this is rising up the income range. The current median value

of a house at \$340,000 will rise to \$578,000 by 2025. There is a decline in population in all age groups except those over 65, but not a mass exodus.

The CCC hopes to develop a new Regional Policy Plan for housing density with creation of more affordable housing for those earning \$50,000 to \$150,000 a year. A concern is “death by 1000 cuts, or a significant net loss in tree cover area. Only 11% of floodable land can be developed so the commission explores the question of how sea rise will affect housing areas. Overall, planning for housing is a key mission of the CCC.

Attendees asked why bills for affordable housing are stalled in our legislature. **Heather** noted she cannot advocate for any particular bills but the CCC is concerned with this issue. **Heather** stressed the idea of “form based codes.” These would allow housing to be planned by how the design fits into the values of the local community, not planning by use alone. This would allow communities to have more mixed use areas such as the Davis Straits plan that Falmouth’s Planning Board envisions. Residents can email Heather Harper at heather.harper@capecodcommission.org or google the website for the Commission for additional information, including a recent housing survey.

Submitted by **Kirstin Moritz**, Newsletter Editor and photos by **Martha Gillis**, FDTC photographer

Calendar:

March 5th: Gun Violence Prevention FDTC Subcommittee meeting at 7 pm at home of **Tom and Ann Stone**. Email Tom at Tastone99@gmail.com for more information.

March 13th: LWV meeting at 7:30 at the Hermann Room, Falmouth Public Library for Legislator’s Night.

March 21: FDTC Monthly meeting at Gus Canty Center at 7 pm. **Tammi Jacobsen**, Director of Workforce Development and Training, The Center for Corporate and Professional Education at CCCC, on job training at CCCC for Cape jobs.

March 24th: noon to 5pm. in Boston, March for Our Lives about gun control, with partner March in Hyannis. Check for details on websites.

April 18: FDTC Monthly meeting at Gus Canty Center at 7 pm. Democratic Party candidates for office to speak.

May 16: FDTC Monthly meeting at Gus Canty Center at 7 pm. **Jane Scarborough**, Constitutional scholar and **Professor Jack McDevitt** of Northeastern University on the 2nd Amendment and MA gun laws.

June 20: FDTC Monthly meeting at Gus Canty Center at 7 pm. Reports on the Convention.

FDTC Officers:

Chair: **Megan English Braga** at 508-540-3434 Ext. 4 and attymeb@gmail.com

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Please note that annual dues for April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 should be submitted. Contributions to the Thelma Goldstein Scholarship Fund can also be made at any time and submitted to the address below . Include the following:

Name: Address: Precinct

Email Address and Phone

Elected Committee Members: \$25 a year

Associate Member: \$15 a year Newsletter by U.S. mail is \$10 extra a year

Please mail to FDTC, PO Box 312, Falmouth, MA 02541