

Falmouth Democratic Town Committee
Meeting Minutes
8/14/25 Gus Canty Center 7pm & via Zoom

Rosemary Dreger Carey called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. This session was held in person at the Gus Canty Center and online via Zoom. FCTV also recorded the session for broadcast at a later date; the recording will be posted on our website.

Rosemary, Scott Simenas, Steve Tom, Lynne Rhodes, Elaine Hickey, Kirstin Moritz and Jim Gagne from the FDTC Executive Committee were in attendance. Bob Mascali - Falmouth Select Board, Margaret Souza - Falmouth School Committee and Tom Moakley, MA State Representative joined us. Approximately 40 attendees in total.

Our first speaker was Catherine Clark - VP of Development for Housing Assistance of Cape Cod (HACC). Ms. Clark reported HACC has served the Cape for over 50 years and currently has 6,500 clients that utilize rentals, shelters and homes. Their facilities include 255 Independence - Hyannis, Family Improvement Center - Dennis, Angel House - Barnstable and Carriage House - Falmouth. HACC has a three-pronged approach to the housing shortage - Prevention, Stabilization and Empowerment. Prevention includes homeless outreach and housing counseling to explore opportunities on Cape Cod. Stabilization provides rental vouchers, a heating system program and energy assessment audits. Empowerment brings real estate advice, support for first time home buyers, advice for landlords and help for those considering Accessory Dwelling Units. HACC has made a major regional impact thru delivering over 600 affordable homes and rental units. Additional properties are planned for Mashpee, Falmouth, Bourne and Orleans. They offer one-hour online classes for 1st Steps to Owning a Home. To get involved, Ms. Clark suggests Advocate for HACC, Volunteer your time, give gift Cards for gas and groceries or make a monetary donation. For more details visit their website haconcapecod.org.

Dan Gessen serves as Deputy Speaker on the [Barnstable Assembly of Delegates](#), working to build coalitions and lead Cape Cod's regional government. In that role, Dan's biggest focus has been making sure that we're able to address many of the most pressing regional issues, such as infrastructure, wastewater, and climate change while making sure our solutions don't further exacerbate the housing crisis that we have in our communities. Dan described key factors in the growing housing shortage: exclusatory zoning, growth of short-term rentals vs. year-round, failure of policy, and affordability. Dan advocates for an increase in the Community Preservation Act (CPA) housing share from 10 to 35%. He also recommends a 30% reduction in real estate taxes for full-time residents, limiting the number of Air BNB homes per person or corporation and implementing a Luxury Real Estate Transfer Fee of 0/5%. He stated that the availability of homes on Cape Cod is dropping rapidly. For example, in 2020, there were 800 homes under \$1M, in 2022, 88 were for sale. Developers and general contractors must be incented to build smaller, affordable homes. Dan encouraged FDTC members to participate in the Assembly of Delegates discussion on housing on September 3rd. To share your thoughts and support, contact him on dangessen.com.

Announcements

- Rosemary introduced Alexander Rikleen, a Democratic candidate for US Senate from MA. You can see his comments on FCTV recording. Or contact Alex at: info@alexrikleen.us.
- FDTC is planning an End of Summer Social at the Winery on 9/10/25 5-7pm. Watch your Dmail for more details.
- MA Democratic Convention is on 9/13/25. FDTC is sending 20 delegates to support our state party platform.
- Standouts on the Falmouth Village Green continue every Saturday 12-2pm. Make a sign, raise your voice!
- Post carding to Get Out The Vote at Cape Cod Bagel every Tuesday and Thursday 10 -12pm at Cape Cod Bagel. Walkins welcome!

Rosemary adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Gagne - Recording Secretary