

Town of Falmouth Massachusetts



Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2022



Town of Falmouth
59 Town Hall Square
Falmouth, MA 02540
(508) 548-7611
www.falmouthma.gov

Falmouth Economic Development Industrial Corporation (EDIC)

The Falmouth EDIC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization established on April 7, 1981 by a Falmouth Town Meeting vote, in accordance with Chapter 121C of the Massachusetts General Laws for the purpose of improving local economic conditions and to promote employment opportunities for Falmouth residents. Our mission is to attract, advocate and support economic vitality and seek to constantly improve the business climate in Falmouth.

Falmouth Landfill Solar - Phase I & II

On April 29, 2016 the Falmouth EDIC entered into a 20-year sub-lease agreement with Falmouth Landfill Solar LLC / Citizen's Energy Corp. to develop and operate a ground mounted solar array energy generation facility on an 18.8-acre portion of land at the Falmouth Dept. of Public Works Waste Management property located at 0 Blacksmith Shop Road in Falmouth, MA – a capped municipal landfill. This project was developed in 2 phases.



Falmouth Landfill Solar Array

Falmouth Landfill Solar Phase I, a 4 Megawatt (DC) Solar Photovoltaic System was completed in 2017. Since inception thru August 2022 this system has generated 26,633,850 kWh of electricity and is expected to generate 99,000,000 Kilowatts (99 Gigawatts) of energy within the next 20 years. The Phase I array was projected to provide approximately \$515,472 in 2022 to the Town in Eversource Net Metering Credits and \$63,333 in Citizen's Energy PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes).

Falmouth Landfill Solar Phase II is a 2 Megawatt (DC) Solar Photovoltaic System completed in May 2021. Commercial operations began in August 2021 and since inception thru August 2022 this system was projected to generate 2,477,148 kWh of electricity and is expected to 51,000,000 Kilowatts (51 Gigawatts) over its lifetime. This year the Phase II project provided approximately \$30,176 to the Town in Eversource Net Metering Credits and \$31,668 in PILOT.

In addition, the Falmouth EDIC evenly shares all the solar rental income it receives with the Town of Falmouth, remitting \$125,447 in 2022 to the Town from the Falmouth Landfill Solar projects.

In total, the Town of Falmouth received an estimated \$766,096 in 2022 from all previously noted sources pertaining to the Falmouth Landfill Solar arrays. Over the course of both 20-year agreements, the Falmouth Landfill Solar Phase I & II, developed by Falmouth EDIC, will provide the Town of Falmouth with over \$15 Million dollars in revenue.

One of the elements of the Solar Phase II agreement with Citizen's Energy Corp. was to include a program to support families in need in Falmouth. To this end, Citizens Energy created the Joe-4-Sun program composed of discounted electricity rates offered to 250 lower income Falmouth residents who meet the program qualifications. Eversource provides bill credits that will lower the electricity bills on average by \$40-80 per month, saving 50% on the bill credits - about \$300 a year. Since inception in September 2021 through June 2022, 16 Falmouth residents have enrolled in this program, with an approximate credit allocation of \$270 per customer during this 10-month period. The benefit over the lifetime of this program is estimated to reach \$1.7 Million dollars. We are hopeful that more residents in Falmouth will apply and take advantage of these available savings. To learn more or apply to this program go to: [JOE-4-SUN Falmouth | Citizens Energy](#).

The Falmouth EDIC is extremely proud of our work to provide clean and affordable energy to our community as well as a significant monetary benefit to the Town of Falmouth.

Community Development Block Grant for Small Businesses in Falmouth

The Falmouth Select Board, working in partnership with the Falmouth EDIC, received \$173,840 in funding by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

The Falmouth EDIC was responsible to develop the on-line grant application, market the program and facilitate and assist applicants thru the process. These grants for up to \$25,000 were to support low to moderate income business owners in Falmouth that were negatively and significantly impacted by COVID-19 business disruptions. The Falmouth CDBG grant program officially opened and began accepting applications in March 2021, and the project was completed in March 2022.

Working in conjunction with the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce, Cape Cod SCORE and the Town of Falmouth Planning Department, this team awarded all the funds in CDBG grants to thirteen small businesses in Falmouth. Though considerable effort was made to reach out to minority owned businesses, only two of the awarded businesses were minority owned, however, four of the business owners were over the age of 60, and twelve of the business owners were female (eight of which were Head of Household). Interest in the program was not as strong as we expected, and many impacted businesses were not able to be awarded a grant due to the stringent State grant guidelines.

The grant recipients expressed just how meaningful the grants have been to their operations. Francine Meriot, owner of Byway Barber & Massage in Falmouth wrote "To be faced with a mandatory closure of my business and no income coming in, with rent and utilities remaining due, the Falmouth EDIC was a pleasure to work with ...to help sustain my cash flow and relieve the stress of keeping my business afloat. They made the process as easy as possible – with quick responses and offering clarity.... The funds aided me in keeping current with my bills as well as allowed me to enhance and implement new practices to keep myself, my coworkers and clients safe during this pandemic. I am very grateful for the assistance and generosity."

Other Falmouth small businesses who received grants were Artisan Salon, Funtastic Getaways, Collaborative Therapies, D. Hazelton Inc., Falmouth Auto Center, Stone's Barber Shop, Tanorama Day Spa, The Art of Beauty, Woods Hole Passage Inn and Courtney's Floral Creations and People Training for Good Dogs. The grant funds were primarily used to help pay rent, utilities, payroll, special equipment, supplies and marketing expenses.

The Falmouth EDIC was honored to be asked to participate with the CDBG grant program and remains dedicated to supporting the small businesses within our community.

Falmouth Station

The original Falmouth Station, located at 50 Depot Avenue, originally a train station, was built in 1872 of wood, and provided service for more than forty years. The New Haven Railroad improved the station in the summer of 1908 with the addition of platform canopies. In 1914, a new "fancy" brick station was constructed with stone cornices, a red tiled floor and an iron and glass canopy. As the years passed and rail

service declined, the station was scheduled to be razed; however, a group of citizens petitioned that the station be saved for usage primarily as a bus station. This third restoration of the Falmouth Station to improve the station facilities was completed in 1989 with funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In 2015, the Falmouth EDIC entered a long-term ground lease with Mass DOT to acquire and renovate the historic Falmouth Station. In conjunction with the lease, Mass DOT provided the Falmouth EDIC with a \$1.4 million grant to renovate the Station. With the help of the Falmouth EDIC, local representatives, local business leaders and Mass DOT, this main portion of the renovation project was completed beautifully in the Spring of 2017.



The Falmouth Station

The Falmouth EDIC has continued to develop the facility by committing in excess of \$250,000 to add furniture, air-conditioning, local artwork, landscaping, outdoor wrought iron handrails, extra security measures, energy efficient outdoor lighting, among other embellishments.

On-going endeavors to maintain and upgrade the facility continued this past year. In 2022 the Falmouth EDIC painted the interior of the Falmouth Station, installed security cameras, installed an art hanging system, replaced the old original wood “Falmouth” sign, painted over graffiti, repaired the basement bulkhead doors, installed a supplies storage cabinet, and repainted the parking lot lines for the walkways, parking spaces and commercial bus stall spaces.

One of the most exciting events of this past year was the award of a grant in the amount of \$248,136 from the Falmouth Community Preservation Committee to rehabilitate the exterior masonry on the Falmouth Station, including:

- ✓ Remove / replace deteriorated bricks
- ✓ Repoint exterior of building
- ✓ Waterproof building and sidewalk juncture.

The brick on the Falmouth Station building is 88 years old, hence this project will require a contractor who is experienced in historical masonry to appropriately execute the work to maintain the character of the building. This project is scheduled for the spring of 2023.

In 2021 MassDevelopment funded a study to create a master plan of the existing Falmouth Station site, inclusive of the development of the 1.75-acre vacant lot that is adjacent. VHB Engineers and Dream Collaborative were retained to study the property and create conceptual site plans and possibilities. Prior to commencing this work, in October 2021 the Falmouth EDIC held two community stakeholder meetings to solicit input. The initial project goals included but were not limited to:

- ✓ Enhance and improve safety at the station for patrons and visitors
- ✓ Improve bicycle connections from the Shining Sea bike path as well as Palmer Ave (Route 28)
- ✓ Identify location and footprint for potential building for workforce housing and/or mixed-use business
- ✓ Improve and expand parking quantity, access, and overall internal vehicle movement and bus operations.

The Study was completed in late 2021. In January 2022 the Falmouth EDIC shared the study findings and the development potential of the Falmouth Station property with the shareholders and the general public to again obtain feedback. The magnitude and complexity of this project is extensive. It will require a long-term planning approach as many elements of the project will need to be investigated and determined. Some of the next steps will include:

1. Solicit additional feedback from the community and stakeholders.
2. Undertake a zoning analysis of alternatives to understand zoning conformance, required approvals and potential timeline.
3. Educate MassDOT on the Master Plan Study and determine required approvals.
4. Secure public funding sources to advance planning efforts.
5. Collect, evaluate and report out on the community input on the Master Plan Study.
6. Establish a path forward which aligns with community needs and the EDIC objectives and mission.

The Station Grill continues to provide a popular eatery within the facility. The bus and Shining Sea bike path patrons continue to enjoy breakfast, lunch, ice-cream, snacks and beverages throughout the day.

Most notably, the Falmouth Station offers a wide range of bus service to and from Falmouth and the Cape Cod community. Peter Pan Bus Lines has been a long-time and valued tenant at the Falmouth Station and operates a 7-day a week bus service to Boston, Logan Airport and Providence RI. Plymouth Brockton Street Railways bus service who began service to Falmouth last year, also provides service to Boston, Logan Airport, Providence RI and T.F. Green Airport, though bus schedules were reduced by both companies in 2021 and again this year due to continued COVID-19 related events that affected travel and ridership. It is hoped that next year the ridership will increase to support additions to the bus schedules. The Cape Cod Regional Transportation Authority continues to provide bus service to locations to and from Hyannis, and the delightful Whoosh Trolley passes thru the Falmouth Station on its Woods Hole thru downtown Falmouth route, transporting local Falmouth travelers during the summer.

Other notable news is that the Falmouth Station was listed as a historical building by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and was added as a significant building by the Falmouth Historical Commission. This was especially meaningful this year as it was also the 150th anniversary for the Falmouth Station – established in July 1872. It certainly was a year to celebrate!

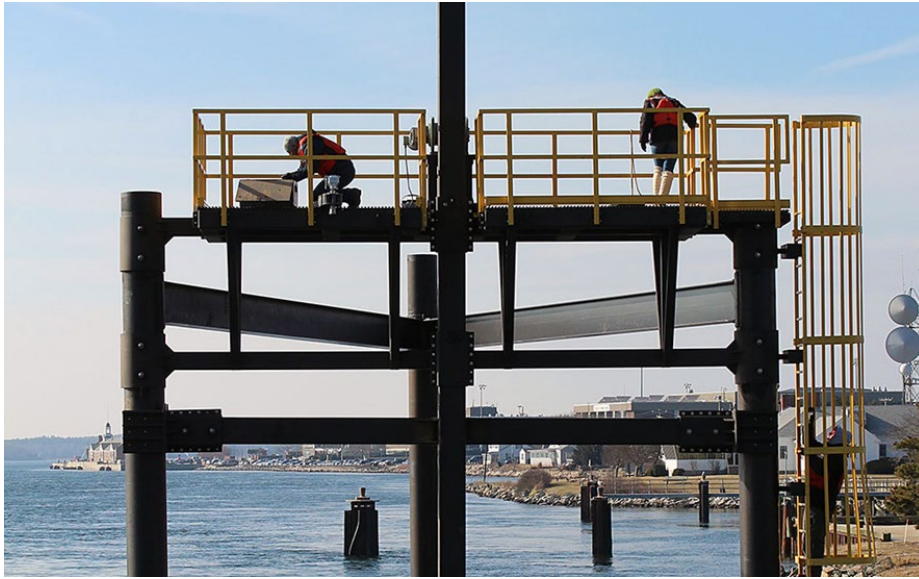
The Falmouth EDIC's goal is to effectively manage, maintain and advance the Falmouth Station facility and its functionality, recognizing it is an important transportation hub as well as a social venue and welcome center for both residents and visitors who use it.

Marine Renewal Energy Collaborative Sponsorship

Last year the Falmouth EDIC successfully applied to the Seaport Economic Council for a grant application for grant funding in the amount of \$197,063 in sponsorship and on behalf of the Marine Renewable Energy Collaborative of New England, Inc. (MRECo). The grant funding was provided by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) and was used to establish the Massachusetts Ocean Sensor Testbed (MOST) located on the Cape Cod Canal in Bourne, MA.

The MRECo Bourne Tidal Test Stand (BTTS) provides an accessible, secure and stable location for sensor testing. Many businesses and agencies have used the platform; however, past usage has been limited due to lack of connectivity. This resulted in the need to use battery power and low data rate wireless communications. This funding was planned to allow power and broadband communications to be extended

to the platform, greatly enhancing its usability for sensor testing and education. It would also allow the BTTS to be grid connected making it more attractive to tidal developers and will assist to support the economic development of this industry.



The MRECo Bourne Tidal Test Stand (BTTS)

The testing platform upgrade began in 2021 and initially went very well. However, in early summer the project ran into roadblocks. Though originally receptive, MassDOT declined to MRECo right of way access along a roadway to the identified power source in early summer. While conversation about this and other viable power source options were taking place, MTC made the decision to not allow an extension on the contract which had an expiration of June 30th. These decisions resulted in the elimination of a significant portion of the unused funds, including items that would have been used if provided reasonable notice that a contract extension would not be forthcoming. This was a disappointment to both MRECo and the Falmouth EDIC.

The Blue Economy is an essential and growing part of the Massachusetts economy and sensors are a critical enabling technology in every segment of this industry. The oceans represent some \$1.5 trillion in annual global value (World Ocean Council, Feb 2018). As a source of minerals and protein for an ever-expanding world population, this economic impact will grow rapidly in the future. For that growth to be sustainable economically and environmentally, it must be carefully managed and management is only as good as the information available. Therefore, the future health of the oceans will be dependent on the ability of sensors and instruments to measure and monitor the physical, chemical and biological properties on an ever-broader scale.

Several legislators, and various business supporters continue to try to facilitate a resolution between the MassDOT, MTC and MRECo. The upgrade for the Bourne Tidal Test Stand is imperative to support the important contributions it provides to to our community and globally. We remain hopeful this project will have the balance of its funding restored and thereby completed.

OpenCape/ Main Street Gigabit Project

In 2019 the Falmouth EDIC and the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce approached OpenCape on behalf of Falmouth Main Street merchants and businesses who were having consistent difficulties related to unstable internet connectivity that were affecting their ability to effectively operate. OpenCape responded with a proposal for the Falmouth Business Gigabit Project, so called because it would connect businesses to a shared Gigabit of Internet. The initial project was designed for just the downtown Falmouth area, but eventually expanded into Woods Hole, Palmer Avenue, Depot Avenue Gifford Street

and other surrounding areas. OpenCape reports that they are working on expanding the service areas within Falmouth.

Fifty fortunate businesses were able to take advantage of the “free connection program”; \$50,000 in funding used solely for the free installation/connection of the OpenCape fiber-optic internet service. This saved each business owner anywhere between \$600 - \$1,700 on the installation charges. Though this program funding has been exhausted, OpenCape remains a very cost-effective internet service provider; in 2022 they reduced their service rate to a low \$80 per month. Very recently they have partnered with the Cape Cod Young Professionals who are offering the CCYP Empower Digital Grant Program, an amazing opportunity which grants qualified businesses up to \$5,000 to connect customers to the OpenCape high-speed internet services.

Contact Steve Tom at (508) 685-3735 or stom@opencape.org to learn more about the CCYP program as well as to inquire about connectivity availability in your area.

The Falmouth EDIC and OpenCape are delighted with the success of the Falmouth Business Gigabit Project, bringing progressive, stable, reliable and affordable internet connectivity to the Falmouth area businesses.



OpenCape Customer