



July 27, 2025

Falmouth Select Board  
59 Town Hall Square,  
Falmouth Massachusetts 02540

Dear Select Board,

I would like to share some information with you that was not available when the committee reviewed and recommended the disposal of the Town's land asset at 0 West Falmouth Highway.

As you are aware, Mass DOT performed a Road Safety Audit (RSA) of Route 28A from the Otis Rotary to the Route 28/28A intersection in West Falmouth. The Audit Report has just become available, being issued on July 21, 2025. The discussion at the recent public hearing and the article in the July 25, 2025 issue of the Falmouth Enterprise prompted me to look carefully at the Mass DOT's RSA findings and evaluation of the area where Route 28, Route 28A and Palmer Avenue converge.

The property at 0 West Falmouth Highway borders Route 28 to the east, Route 28A to the south and the Virtue Circle neighborhood to the west. Current property lines along Virtue Circle do not allow construction of a road connecting the 0 West Falmouth Highway parcel with Virtue Circle forcing egress onto Route 28A. The location of the curb cut would necessarily be a short distance from where traffic leaves Route 28 and enters Route 28A; probably between Palmer Avenue and Virtue Circle. The intersection of Palmer Avenue and Route 28A, approximately 200 feet from the Route 28 exit ramp, complicates traffic safety at 0 West Falmouth Highway

A few quotes from the Mass DOT RSA report follow:

Page 22 – Road Design and Geometry:  
Palmer Avenue: Although this location (approximately 200 feet west of the Route 28 southbound off/on ramps) is controlled by a stop sign and a pole-mounted flashing beacon on the splitter island at the Palmer Avenue approach, participants raised concerns about driver behavior and the effectiveness of existing traffic controls, leading to high-speed vehicle movements, particularly from vehicles exiting Route 28 southbound directly onto West Falmouth Highway. They noted that the location's proximity to Route 28 limits driver reaction time and increases the risk of conflicts. In addition, similar to the Otis Rotary location, the lack of physical separation between Route 28 southbound off-and on-ramp movements and the speed of those movements increases crash risks. Multiple near misses were noted by the audit team between vehicles exiting Palmer Avenue and those coming from the Route 28 southbound

1

off-ramp. Two crashes were recorded at this intersection; one was an angle crash (Crash #56) and one was a rear-end crash (Crash #17). Both crashes involved vehicles coming from Route 28 the southbound exit-ramp, occurred during non-daylight hours, and resulted in personal injury.

Page 37 – Summary of Road Safety Audit:  
Consider assessing the need for a median installation between Route 28 and Route 28A, particularly near the Otis Rotary and Palmer Avenue, to enhance traffic control and roadway safety.

A lot of good work has gone into studying the 0 West Falmouth Highway site along with the other sites discussed at the recent public meeting. There are compelling arguments for increasing the volume of affordable housing in Falmouth, removing non-performing assets from the town's balance sheet, and the resulting increase to the Town's tax base. These are good objectives.

That said, there are sufficient public safety concerns at the 0 West Falmouth Highway location that I feel compelled to share the recently published Mass DOT information and recommend that the Falmouth Select Board table the decision to issue an RFP for the development of 0 West Falmouth Highway at this time. I believe a formal traffic safety review should be conducted by the Town of Falmouth with input from Mass DOT before finalizing your decision.

Regards,  
  
James E. Gray  
West Falmouth Village Association, President

2