

**TOWN OF YARMOUTH  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING**

February 28, 2023

7:00 PM, Town Hall Community Room, 200 Main Street, and via Remote Meeting

<https://meet.goto.com/451872165>

Join by phone: 1 (872) 240-3412, Access Code: 451-872-165.

**AGENDA**

- I. Review Meeting Summary from January 23 (5 minutes)
- II. Election of Co-Chairs (5 minutes)
- III. General Discussion on Comp Plan with Planners and Consultants (20 minutes)
- IV. Review Inventory Chapters (30 minutes)
  - a. Historic and Archaeological Resources
  - b. Agriculture and Forestry
  - c. Population and Demographics
- V. Adopt Engagement Plan (25 minutes)
- VI. Public Comment (5 minutes)
- VII. Adjournment



Erin Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP  
E-mail: [ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us](mailto:ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us)

Tel: 207-846-2401  
Fax: 207-846-2438

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**TOWN OF YARMOUTH**  
200 Main Street, Yarmouth, Maine 04096  
[www.yarmouth.me.us](http://www.yarmouth.me.us)

To: Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee  
From: Erin Zwirko, Director of Planning & Development  
Re: Background for February 28, 2023, Steering Committee Meeting  
Date: February 21, 2023

Please see the following notes to help you review and be prepared for the February 28, 2023, Steering Committee meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions. My goal is to provide you with this background information for each meeting.

**Review Meeting Summary from January 2023**

Julie has prepared a meeting summary from the Steering Committee's previous meeting for the Committee to review and approve. Please let us know if you have any revisions to the meeting summary. The Committee will need to approve the meeting summary via a vote at the February meeting.

**Election of Steering Committee Co-Chairs**

Hildy Ginsberg and Bill Richards have agreed to be co-chairs for the term of the Steering Committee. As described to both Hildy and Bill, the role of the co-chairs is to provide meeting facilitation support for the Department staff and our consultants as well as to be a resource between the Steering Committee meetings for initial feedback and advice. The Steering Committee will need officially elect them to these positions via a vote at the February meeting.

**General Discussion on Comprehensive Plan with Planners and Consultants**

At the kick off meeting of the Steering Committee, the Department staff and our consultants provided you with a lot of information regarding the purposes of a comprehensive plan and why it is an important planning effort to undertake. Following a discussion with Hildy and Bill, it was clear that it would be helpful to break down those two questions in a discussion rather than simply reviewing a memo from the Director of Planning & Development. The Steering Committee also has the benefit of a number of individuals who were involved in the preparation of 2010 Comprehensive Plan and its implementation and have a lot more institutional knowledge than I do! So take a look at the [materials from the kick off meeting again](#), and come prepared with a couple of questions that we might be able to help you answer so you feel like you have a solid grasp on the topic.

*"Our Latchstring Always Out"*

As an aside, any member of the Steering Committee is welcome to schedule a meeting with the Department staff to discuss your questions or concerns.

## **Review Inventory Chapters**

You may recall from the kick off meeting that we are front loading the drafting of the inventory chapters to ensure that we have a solid understanding of existing conditions going into engagement over the next 18 months. The first chapters up for review are Historic and Archaeological Resources, Agriculture and Forestry, and Population and Demographics. North Star Planning (NSP) has opted to present the draft chapters using Adobe online, which allows you to comment and markup the draft chapters. Ben and Logan will provide a tutorial on how to use Adobe and deadline for reviewing and commenting, but please feel free to dive in before the meeting.

Please use the following links to access the draft chapters:

- Historic & Archaeological Resources: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:bdeab7ab-cb0e-47d5-b411-a3e491de5c40>
- Agriculture & Forestry: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:c8898ba9-0cb7-33d2-8ac2-047dbba9f23f>
- Population & Demographics: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:fbc30bc-a6a3-32ff-9819-918d4592e901>

A couple of things to note:

- Consider reviewing the chapters alongside the state's [self-assessment check list](#) (this link downloads an excel file) and deciding whether the drafts hit all of the analyses and condition and trends topics per chapter.
- NSP will likely add a section break page with the Highlights & Summary at the beginning of each chapter.
- NSP will add a list of the figure sources to the sources at the end for the final draft and future drafts going forward.
- NSP is still updating the Agriculture and Forestry charts on page 7 with an average trend line.

Inventory chapters will be reviewed again once we put together the full document, so there will be other opportunities to review and provide comments! If you have a particular interest in any of the topics that the comprehensive plan is required to cover, please let us know and we can discuss a deeper dive into the creation and review of these inventory chapters. As a reminder, we are not asking any Committee to draft the inventory chapters, but we want to make sure that you have the opportunity to participate as much as you want to.

## **Adopt Engagement Plan**

At the January kick off meeting, we discussed elements that the Steering Committee would like to see as part of the engagement plan. As previously discussed, the engagement plan must include a mix of persistent engagement and focused events that follow along the phases of this planning process. In particular, we would like your feedback on the listening sessions planned for September 2023. Does the Committee want the listening sessions to be topic based or place based? For example, four sessions on topics such as Housing, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation and Natural Resources, and Transportation or four sessions on places such as Route 1, Village, Islands, and Rural. What else are we forgetting that you feel strongly about?

The Steering Committee members will play an important role in the engagement plan through supplementing the town's efforts to get information out into the community through a variety of methods. On that note, please tell your networks about the launch of the project website, [planymouth.com](http://planymouth.com)! You can sign up to be on the mailing list, and updates are coming as we finalize the engagement plan.

## **Public Comment**

The Steering Committee meetings are open to the public, and as such, we will always reserve time at the end of the meeting for public comment.

Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee  
 January 23, 2023  
 7:00 PM  
 Meeting Summary

Name	Attendance
John Auble	Y
Daniel Backman	Y
Crispin Bolese	Y
Emily Bryson	Y
Shanna Crofton Mitchell	N
Judy Colby-George	Y
Hildy Ginsberg	Y
Miriam Markowitz	Y
Tim McGonagle	Y
Karin Orenstein	Y
Neena Panosso	Y
Todd Rich	Y
Bill Richards	Y
Lynn Seeley	Y
Sophie Wentzell	Y
Jamie Whittemore	Y
Sarah Witte	Y
Erin Zwirko, Planning Director	Y
Julie Dubovsky, Assistant Planner	Y
Ben Smith, North Star Planning	Y
Logan Capone, North Star Planning	Y

I. Welcome and Introduction

The Steering Committee members, staff and consultants introduced themselves and shared how many years they'd lived in Yarmouth, their favorite places in Yarmouth and favorite things to do on snow days. There are new members of the community on the committee, decades-long residents, and those who've only known Yarmouth. Many residents highlighted natural and community resources, like Royal River Park, as well as small, intimate settings like the cemetery behind the Meeting House.

II. New Committee Information

Erin provided an overview of the technical aspects of the steering committee, which included the committee's role and responsibilities, open meetings requirements, and the maintenance of public records. The meeting date of the fourth Tuesday was confirmed; it was discussed that potential calendar conflicts, like Halloween and Christmas, will be resolved later. It was mentioned that the group may wish to consider electing a chair and vice chair at a future meeting as a best practice. The Chair and/or Vice Chair would work

more closely with the Department of Planning & Development and the consultants in between meetings to set agendas and help facilitate the Committee meetings.

The Committee unanimously adopted a remote participation policy affording in-person and remote access to Committee members and the public.

III. Comprehensive Planning Introduction and Overview of 2010 Comprehensive Plan

Erin gave an overview of comprehensive planning and the requirements of the State. It was asked who would be tasked with drafting the actual plan, which predominantly falls to North Star Planning in collaboration with the Town staff. Ben Smith of North Star Planning explained that their team is comprised of specialists and subject matter experts who will assist in collecting information and drafting elements of the plan, which will be reviewed with and by the committee. The consultant's primary role is to facilitate the comprehensive planning process and to provide project management so that they product, the Plan, is done on time and in compliance with the State's requirements under the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF). It was also recommended by a committee member that everyone review the 2010 Comprehensive Plan and that there was merit in conducting this as an update rather than starting from scratch.

IV. Review Workplan and Schedule

Erin and the North Star Planning team explained the workplan for the next 18 months. The committee's participation extends over 2 years in order to wrap up the effort locally and potentially transition to an implementation committee. In general, the committee will meet monthly, but there may be opportunities for working groups and more frequent and focused collaborations, particularly for outreach and engagement events. Ben added that we are currently in Phase 1: Inventory and Analysis, in which the consulting team and Town are working to collect all the State required data and draft a blueprint for consistent and persistent public participation. Ben indicated that the public participation blueprint would be drafted for review by the Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting in February.

V. Discuss Engagement Strategies

Logan shared what North Star Planning had originally proposed during the RFP response and how it was revised based on lessons learned by the Town staff during the visioning process. A revised framework focuses on persistent communications and engagement throughout all four phases of the process: inventory, visioning, future land use mapping, and drafting, review, and adoption of the plan. Different types of tools could be used, such as direct mailings, and varying levels of engagement could be provided, based on the [International Association of Public Participation \(IAP2\) Spectrum of Public Participation](#): inform – consult – involve – collaborate – empower.

Questions were posed to the committee to help shape the initial blueprint, which will be presented at the February meeting. The committee discussed whether workshops or focus sessions should be virtual, in-person with recordings, or hybrid. Members noted that events, virtual or in-person, should be held multiple times and at varying days/times to meet the

needs of different people. It was also noted that it is very important to have a strong virtual and in-person presence, and for the Town website on the comprehensive plan to be a clear, centralized source of all information because not everyone uses social media. Virtual tools, including the consultants' website for the plan, should be compatible and accessible.

The committee also discussed ideas on communication tools. Support was voiced for a mixed media approach that incorporates various tools throughout the process, across Yarmouth's neighborhoods, and visually throughout the Town. These included:

	1-way out, broadcast information (Inform)	2-way interactions to give and receive information (Consult & Involve)
in-person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colorful flyer for Town Hall and library to distribute</li> <li>• Presentations from subject matter experts (like Celebrate Yarmouth)</li> <li>• Stationary presentations located throughout Town</li> <li>• Use various newsletters within Town (like Chamber of Commerce's)</li> <li>• Town Mascot (like Latchstring Lady)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify neighborhood contacts (like the COVID Neighborhood Taskforce)</li> <li>• Tag-along to community events or association meetings</li> <li>• Work with high schoolers earning community service credit to have tables at community events</li> <li>• Develop waterproof stations throughout Town for people to engage with</li> <li>• Collaborate with school and library on events</li> </ul>
online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town website</li> <li>• Podcast (like Moth radio)</li> <li>• Voicemail line for people to call in, could be used to answer discussion prompts or leave questions</li> <li>• Utilize QR codes for quick access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with existing community discussion boards and their moderators</li> <li>• Surveys/polling (must work with all browsers)</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Texting service for one or two question surveys</li> </ul>

Logan conducted a live poll of the committee for their thoughts on the top five topics (of the Inventory chapters) to have smaller focus groups or community wide workshops on. The results during the evening included (but the survey remains open for the Committee members to consider for the next few days):

1. Housing
2. Parks and Recreation
3. Land Use and Public Policy
4. Economic Development

5. Public Facilities and Services
6. Population and Demographics
7. Natural Resources and Water Resources
8. Climate Change and Sustainability
9. Transportation
10. Historic and Archaeological Resources
11. Marine Resources
12. Agriculture and Forestry

The topic of childhood development and education was also suggested for inclusion. Erin also noted that while the topics of equity and resiliency aren't required by State law, they may also be included in this iteration as overarching themes. Ben noted that many communities have chosen to include public health as a topic following the COVID-19 pandemic.

VI. Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance. No public comments were received.

VII. Adjournment



## Persistent Engagement

(Now - 2024)

Platform for engagement	Frequency	Responsible Party
Website	Updated as needed throughout the course of the project	Kate
Email Newsletter Blasts	Monthly and as needed	Logan Jen to review blasts
Social Media Updates	Condensed versions of the monthly newsletter blasts	Logan to provide graphic /text Jen to review and distribute to Town networks
4 project videos (3 to 5 min videos)	1 - Project kick off (what is a comp plan, why is it important, overview of the process) 2 - Inventory & Analysis key takeaways 3- Vision 4 - Draft Plan announcement, how to review	Kate, Logan, Julie Collaborate w/ YMTV
Press release	As needed	Jen
Flyers	Each phase	Logan
Town-wide Mailing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Late Spring Inventory &amp; Analysis workshop</li> <li>2. Summer to promote topic sessions</li> <li>3. Announce Draft Plan</li> </ol>	Logan, Kate, Erin

## Inventory & Analysis

(Spring 2023)

- Public Meeting in June 2023 (In-person public workshop)
  - Key takeaways, highlights, and trends from the inventory chapters
  - Market study key takeaways
  - Review draft vision statement
- Video #2: key takeaways & overview of the event with an online survey for those who could not attend the workshop

## Vision

(Pop-ups in July, Listening sessions in September 2023)

- 4 Topic deep-dive focused listening sessions & online poll (each session recorded and posted on the website):
  - Housing
  - Economic Development
  - Parks & Recreation & natural resources
  - Transportation
  - OR place-based (Route 1 / Village / Rural / Islands)
- Video #3 - Promoting the listening sessions
- Activities can be packaged and brought to pop-up locations throughout the end of July, August, and September and culminate with Listening Sessions in September

## Future Land Use

(Fall 2023)

- Future Land Use Scenarios Workshop (In person & virtual streaming option)

## Drafting, Review, Adoption

(Jan/Feb 2024)

- Draft Plan Open House
- Video #4 - Draft Plan Announcement / How to review the draft plan