

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

January 23, 2024

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. Public Comment (5 minutes)
- II. Review Meeting Summary from December 19 (5 minutes)
- III. Overview and Discussion of Draft Future Land Use Plan and Town Priorities for Goals, Policies, and Strategies (80 minutes)
- IV. Timeline to Adoption (30 minutes)
- V. Adjournment



To: Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
From: Erin Zwirko, Director of Planning & Development
Re: Background for January 23, 2024, Steering Committee Meeting
Date: January 17, 2024

Please see the following notes to help you review and be prepared for the January 23, 2024, Steering Committee meeting.

Review Meeting Summary from December 2023

Attached is the December meeting summary for the Committee to review and approve. Please let me know if you have any revisions to the meeting summary.

Overview and Discussion of Draft Future Land Use Plan and Town Priorities for Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Since the December meeting, the staff and North Star Planning have worked on the future land use plan and developing goals, policies, and strategies as well as starting to put together an **early** first draft of the full comprehensive plan.

[Comprehensive Plan First Draft: https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:a8645d35-1b6f-47a4-93ce-56fd7bf9f4ee](https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:a8645d35-1b6f-47a4-93ce-56fd7bf9f4ee)

Please focus your review on the Interconnected Town Priorities (p.5-15) and the Future Land Use Plan (p.16-22). You can comment in the PDF as you did to review the inventory chapters.

A few notes:

- In the local goals tables, you'll see columns for responsible party, timeline, and if the goal is related to the Climate Action Plan. We are still working with staff to fill those out.
- Staff is still working on incorporating Vision Statement updates.
- This is presented as an unformatted draft - layout, additional photos, and updated graphics will be completed for the final draft in February. You'll also see some highlighted incomplete page references - those will be finalized in the layout stage.

The Interconnected Town Priorities section contains the local goals, policies, and strategies. Those are all incorporated into the full Goals, Policies, and Strategies matrix along with the state goals. If you'd like to see how those all fit together, you can review the full table and make comments in the PDF.

[Full Goals, Policies, Strategies Matrix: https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:e2694542-5587-4f2a-8a02-0ae0d58dfdd2](https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:e2694542-5587-4f2a-8a02-0ae0d58dfdd2)

Erin Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP | Director of Planning & Development
207-846-2401 | ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us | yarmouth.me.us
200 Main Street, Yarmouth, ME 04096

As you'll see in the timeline memo, also attached, Town Boards and Committees will have the opportunity to comment before the full draft is released to the public. Please note that I will be preparing a memo for the Town Council and Planning Board transmitting this same information so that they have an early preview of the work to date.

Please let me know if you would like a printed copy.

Timeline to Adoption

This memo was provided to the Steering Committee last week, and we'll discuss it in a little more detail at the meeting. Please be prepared to consider adding an additional Steering Committee meeting in February, so have your calendars handy!

Com-plan-ion Event

We are pleased to announce the live Community Storytelling Event to be held on Friday, March 15, 2024! Inspired by live storytelling events such as The Moth and the power of creative expression to bring community together, the Town is soliciting submissions to be performed (without paper preferably) at a live community event on Friday, March 15, 2024 around the theme of:

Power of Place: Prepare a 5 – 10-minute story about a memory or feeling that connects or disconnects you to a place, perhaps Yarmouth, or about the power of a place that connects you even from afar. Some prompts: Did something happen at a particular location? Do you have story about Yarmouth that has been passed down generations, like when I-295 came through? Is there a special place that you keep coming back to? Are there sensory features that conjure up a memory in town? Is it a natural or a cultural environment that speaks to you? What does to be "from" or "rooted" in a place?

Submissions are for ages fourteen (14) and up. We encourage a broad range of individual experiences that illuminate the diversity of human connections to community and place. Whether you are a member of the Yarmouth High School Playmakers or a trained actor, a nascent or practiced storyteller, a dabbling or established writer, or a new voice to Maine whose stories often go unheard – all are welcome to submit!

In collaboration with the Royal River Community Players, a panel of acclaimed local writers, communications professionals, community volunteers, and the New England-based and local publishing company, Islandport Press, will be reviewing submissions and will select five (5) pieces to be read aloud before a live audience. To commence our upcoming event, the Royal River Community Players will be hosting a captivating storytelling workshop on January 21, 2024, from 9:45am – 10:50am at their Playhouse located at 305 US Route 1 in Yarmouth, with Kent Pierce, a writer and New England Executive Director of Spirit Series. Participants will engage in a variety of creative warm up games, visioning exercises, and free writing. Further details about the workshop can be found on the Royal River Community Players' website at www.rrcp.me after the new year. To register, please email admin@royalrivercommunityplayers.com.

Attachments:

1. Draft December 19, 2023 meeting summary
2. Comprehensive Plan Six Month Timeline to Adoption, Memo dated January 10, 2024
3. Power of Place and Community Belonging Flyer and Press Release

Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC)
December 19, 2023
7:00 PM
Meeting Summary

Name	Attendance
John Auble	Y
Daniel Backman	Y
Crispin Bokota Bolese	N
Emily Bryson	Y
Judy Colby-George	N
Hildy Ginsberg, Co-Chair	Y
Kevin Hartnett	Y
Miriam Markowitz	Y
Tim McGonagle	Y
Tred McIntire	Y
Neena Panosso	N
Todd Rich	N
Bill Richards, Co-Chair	Y
Lynne Seeley	Y
Sophie Wentzell	N
Jamie Whitemore	N
Sarah Witte	N
Karin Orenstein, Town Council Liaison	Y
Erin Zwirko, Planning Director	Y
Julie Dubovsky, Assistant Planner	Y
Ben Smith, North Star Planning	Y
Kate Burch, North Star Planning	Y

I. Public Comment

None received. No members of the public were in attendance.

II. Review Meeting Summary from November 28

The Committee unanimously approved the meeting summary from November 28, 2023.

III. Small Group Work on Developing Goals and Policies

Ben and Kate reintroduced the connection to goals, policies and strategies discussed at the last meeting in November. The focus of the meeting was the higher-level goals and policies, and the next meeting will be focused on strategies and outcomes. The discussion will help to provide a framework for NSP to fill out the policies further and mockup the specific strategies. Kate explained the handout to facilitate the discussion around big ideas and outcome, and clarified that they can be place-based specific strategies.

IV. Discussion on Goals and Policies

a. Small group report out to full Committee

Group 1: Tred, Bill, Hildy, John and Erin

The group liked how Bill talked about managing change and proposed setting aside the Vision Statement and focus instead on the values. They found that the "big themes" were: Balance, Connectivity, Vibrancy, Resiliency at all scales of the community and for all stakeholders. Their outcomes were: a population that is culturally diverse and supported locally, housing that supports the whole economic spectrum (including Affordable Housing) while balancing open space preservation, economy that is more diverse and satisfies local needs "a business-friendly town," and enhanced pedestrian network for local connectivity and resiliency.

Group 2: Lynne, Emily, Miriam and Ben

The group's "big themes" were: Choices for All and included transportation, education/services, resiliency and connecting all. Specific outcomes would be Affordable Housing, walkable/bikeable streets, preserving and sharing history and multi-generational opportunities to come together in all seasons and in various places.

Group 3: Dan, Tim, Kevin and Kate

The group's "big themes" were: balancing open space and housing, that open space kept pace with growth and preservation of networks for humans and wildlife. (the aspect of wildlife corridors was agreed as a common element from public too). Specific outcomes would be: promoting small businesses on Main Street, enhancing Route One w/people centric design, and easier to build housing with greater choice of type and affordability.

b. Committee discussion and deliberation

The group discussed aspects of "resiliency" and whether that meant being strong or prepared or having more choices. It was also suggested that CPSC members re-read the inventory chapters prior to the January meeting to see if any other themes come up. The group also discussed how the current draft Vision Statement and Statements of Values reflect the themes heard during the public engagement process. The group liked the framing around the Future Land Use Workshops "preserve, enhance, and transform," and felt that the current draft language didn't have a call to action that would help the Town achieve the desired outcomes that have been expressed. Similar to the discussion in March 2023, around Ben's question of "Whether the statement is about Yarmouth today or Yarmouth of the future?," the group decided to revise these statements to be more concise and reflect the present values and themes, and future goals.

Town staff will work with NSP to revise the community values and vision statement to include actions and circulate that for revisions for the next meeting. Ben outlined a tentative timeframe moving forward: NSP will be polishing up the inventory chapters with the feedback previously received, all of the FLUW and CC information will be composed into a FLU map and narrative, and in:

January: more specifics on policies for the CPSC to respond to

February: a preliminary draft unformatted will be shared

March: Review

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

DRAFT



To: Yarmouth Town Council, Town Manager, and Assistant Town Manager
From: Erin Zwirko, Director of Planning & Development
CC: Planning Board, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and North Star Planning
Re: Comprehensive Plan Six Month Timeline to Adoption
Date: January 10, 2024

I am pleased to announce that the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Town Staff, and North Star Planning are in the final stages of drafting the new Comprehensive Plan. The Steering Committee has spent the last year first establishing the baseline through development of the inventory chapters and then shifting to forward thinking and engaging the community through a series of three Community Conversations and the Future Land Use Forum. We are also grateful to Meddy Smith and the Climate Action Task Force for the ongoing coordination between the comprehensive plan work and the development of the Town's first Climate Action Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee is currently working to establish the Future Land Use (FLU) Plan and the proposed goals, policies, and strategies to achieve the FLU Plan, including development of an implementation plan.

Spring 2024 will be a busy time for the Council and the community, so I would like to provide an early outline of milestones and the anticipated schedule for the next six months and through the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan:

January 2024:

- Town staff/consultants complete inventory edits
- Town staff reviewing FLU plan and Goals, Policies, Strategies
- First draft of plan to CPSC, including FLU plan and Goals, Policies, Strategies

February 2024:

- CPSC to review plan (potential for additional meeting or workgroups during the month)
- Town committees to provide input into Goals, Policies, Strategies
- Full draft of plan presented to CPSC for final edits

March 2024:

- Full draft plan presented to Council and Planning Board and request made to the Town Council to authorize state submission (please see note about state submission)

Erin Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP | Director of Planning & Development
207-846-2401 | ezwirko@yarmouth.me.us | yarmouth.me.us
200 Main Street, Yarmouth, ME 04096

- Public presentations to be scheduled for Council meetings and a Planning Board meeting
- Begin 45-day public comment period with a Town-wide mailing, local news postings, Yarmouth Municipal TV announcements, and social media and newsletter notices, among other outreach methods

April 2024:

- Ongoing public comment period
- Additional presentations scheduled with Town Council and Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, as needed

May 2024:

- Close of public comment period
- Revisions made to draft Comprehensive Plan in response to public comments received and state review
- Request for adoption of Comprehensive Plan made to the Town Council
 - Potential for Town Council to vote to adopt on May 16

June 2024:

- As needed, request for adoption of the Comprehensive Plan continued for Town Council deliberation
 - Potential for Town Council to vote to adopt on June 20

As a reminder, the state must make a finding of consistency with the Maine Growth Management Act. It is my intention to request that the Town Council authorize submission to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry's Municipal Planning Assistance Program in March when we have a completed draft of the comprehensive plan. This is an administrative task and does not mean that the Town Council is endorsing the document. By requesting that this submission is made when we have a completed draft, we can incorporate any revisions required by the state into the final document at the time that we request Town Council adoption of the document.

Over the next six months, I will provide regular updates to the Town Council including changes to the anticipated timeline and early drafts of critical pieces of the comprehensive plan. By sharing this information regularly, my goal is to ensure that the Town Council is engaged and equipped to make a decision on adoption of the next Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan as proposed in this schedule.

I am happy to answer any questions that the Town Council members have, or present at any upcoming meeting.

Do you have a story about Yarmouth that has been passed down generations, like when I-295 came through?

Did something unexpected happen at a particular location in town that has shaped your life?

**SUBMIT YOUR
5-10 MINUTE
STORY ON THE
THEME OF THE
Power of Place
and
Community
Belonging**

Entries for the live
storytelling event in
February are
due by **02/12/24**

Visit
www.planyarmouth.com
to learn more!



PLAN →
YARMOUTH





PRESS RELEASE

The Town of Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the Department of Planning & Development is excited to announce a Request for Submissions for a live, community storytelling event in March 2024 as part of the community's Comprehensive Plan update, known as Plan Yarmouth. Inspired by live storytelling events such as [The Moth](#) and the power of creative expression to bring community together, the Town is soliciting submissions until February 12, 2024, to perform at a live community storytelling event on Friday, March 15, 2024 around the theme of:

Power of Place: Prepare a 5 to 10-minute story about a memory or feeling that connects or disconnects you to a place, perhaps Yarmouth, or about the power of a place that connects you even from afar.

All submissions must follow the following guidelines:

- Submissions are for ages fourteen (14) and up.
- Include your name and age, and a guardian's permission if under 18 years of age
- It must be your non-fiction story to tell
- It must be on theme
- It must be performed within the timeframe of 5 - 10 minutes
- Submissions that contain profanity, offensive or abusive language will not be eligible
- Submissions can be written (PDF or Word Doc format), or Microsoft compatible audio or video formats (3G2, 3GP, 3GPP, ASF, AVI, M2TS, M4A, M4V, MKV, MOV, MP3, MP4, MP4V, MTS, TS, WAV, WEBM, WMA, WMV)
- Submissions (via email, dropped off in person, or mail) are due to Julie Dubovsky, Assistant Planner (jdubovsky@yarmouth.me.us) by **February 12, 2024**, at Yarmouth Town Hall.

To support this upcoming event, the [Royal River Community Players](#) will be hosting a captivating storytelling workshop on January 21, 2024, from 9:45am – 10:50am at their Playhouse located at 305 US Route 1 in Yarmouth with Kent Pierce, a writer and New England Executive Director of [Spirit Series](#). Participants will engage in a variety of creative warm up games, visioning exercises, and free writing. Additional free workshops may be offered to help with editing and public speaking. Further details about the workshop can be found on the Royal River Community Players' website at www.royalrivercommunityplayers.com/workshops. To register, please email admin@royalrivercommunityplayers.com.

We gratefully acknowledge the community volunteers, a panel of local writers, teachers, professionals, and performers, who will be reviewing submissions:

- [Abdi Nor Iftin](#), award-winning author and performer
- Ann Swardlick, [Yarmouth Arts Alliance](#) volunteer and communications professional

- [Betsy Puelle](#), theater director and drama teacher at Yarmouth High School
- [Charlotte Agell](#), author/illustrator and a recent teacher at Yarmouth's Harrison Middle School
- Chris Sullivan, Executive Director of the Royal River Community Players
- [Islandport Press](#), an award-winning publisher dedicated to stories rooted in Maine and New England

As part of Plan Yarmouth, various "companion" events to the planning process have been held in collaboration with community organizations, town departments, and volunteer committees. Director of Planning & Development Erin Zwirko notes "The companion events aim to educate and illuminate facets of the town, celebrate community achievements, foster the town's civic culture, and engage in the big (and sometimes intimidating) long-range planning for 'future policy, growth, and investment,' in fun, dynamic ways."

All these companion events for Plan Yarmouth could not have happened without the civic engagement and leadership of Yarmouth's amazing Town committee volunteers and community-based organizations, who exemplify the town motto, "Our Latchstring Always Out." The Power of Place Community Storytelling event will be the fifth companion event held with more to come in the spring!

To learn more please visit planyarmouth.com and contact Julie Dubovsky, Assistant Planner, by February 12, 2024, via email (jdubovsky@yarmouth.me.us), mail, or phone (207-847-5514 x 214).

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