

# Town of Windham

Planning Department  
8 School Road  
Windham, ME 04062

voice 207.894.5960

fax 207.892.1916

## MEMO

DATE: October 14, 2014

TO: Windham Town Council  
THROUGH: Tony Plante, Town Manager  
FROM: Ben Smith, Planning Director *BWS*  
Cc: Comprehensive Plan Review Team  
Planning Department

RE: Q3 2014 Project Update – Comprehensive Plan Update

The Planning Department has been tasked with managing the project of drafting an update to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan that will meet the state goals of the Growth Management Act. The Plan will develop a Vision for the community, and include goals and strategies for implementing that Vision.

When the Town Council approved the charge of the Review Team on March 25, 2014, the Council also approved a project timeline that showed the delivery of a plan document for Town Council review in Q4 2016. That timeline is included below. The blue cells indicate the anticipated times for each task, and items that have been completed to date are noted with a checkmark in the quarter they were completed.

Tasks	2014				2015				2016				2017			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
Appointment of Planning Review Committee		☑														
Selection of Consultants		☑														
Inventory and Analysis																
Public Involvement Outline																
Development of Vision Statement																
Goals and Strategies																
Action Plan																
Public Review																
Revisions																
Review Team Feedback on Revisions																
Review Team Recommendation																
Town Council Review and Referral																
Planning Board Public Hearing & Recommendation																
Town Council Public Hearing and Vote																

Note that the “Appointment of Planning Review Committee” (the Review Team members) and “Selection of Consultants” tasks were completed in Q3 2014 but were anticipated to be completed in Q2 2014. The project tasks “Public Involvement Outline” and “Development of a Vision Statement” were anticipated to be completed in Q3, but are still ongoing.

Starting in 2013, and running through June 2014, staff began setting the stage for the project by soliciting preliminary public input through idea boards in the Town Office and Library, using online interaction tools such as MindMixer, and hosting a booth at Summerfest 2014. Staff released RFPs for professional services including facilitation of the visioning process and services related to a Town wide survey. Adam Higgins, a graduate student in the Community Planning and Development Program at USM’s Muskie School of Public Service, joined the Planning Department as an intern in June to start working on data collection and inventory needs. He continues to assist the department for several hours each week on tasks related to the Visioning process and the upcoming Community Visioning Forums in November.



Even though staff has been gearing up for this project for over a year, it is still early in the overall project timeline. The Review Team is still getting to know each other and understand the work the Team is responsible for. It is tempting to try and make up for lost time right out of the gates, but it is important for staff not get too far ahead of the Review Team’s comfort level with the work. As such, I expect that the project will remain about one quarter behind the February 2014 schedule for the next 2-3 quarters, and staff may need to have a discussion with the Town Council sometime next year regarding an adjustment to the schedule.

## **Comprehensive Planning Activity Highlights – Q3 2014**

### July

- Council's Appointment Committee begins interviewing Review Team applicants
- July 22 – Review Team members appointed by the Town Council

### August

- August 14 – Critical Insights, Inc. selected to provide survey services to gauge community values, determine attitudes toward a wide variety of topics, and measure satisfaction levels regarding Town services.
- August 19 – Town Department Head interviews commence
- August 22 – Planning Decisions, Inc. selected to provide facilitation services related to the Visioning process

### September

- September 17 – Critical Insights ran two (2) focus groups at the Town Office to get information on issues important to Windham in order to help inform the design of the survey instrument.
- September 25 – 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Review Team

### Ongoing

- Data Collection and Inventory work
- Build-out analysis in support of the Visioning process