

Town of Windham

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MEMO

DATE: December 31, 2014

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

RE: Q4 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.

Town of Windham Comprehensive Plan Timeline

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																

The “Inventory and Analysis” task is complete, meaning the majority of the data is in hand, and writing of these plan sections is ready to begin, though there will likely be additional data required or data to update once staff starts putting pen to paper. The project task “Public Involvement Outline” has been discussed with the Review Team but has taken a backseat to the visioning work this quarter. This task, along with “Development of a Vision Statement,” are anticipated to be completed in Q1 2015.

The focus of the work this past quarter has been on obtaining input from the community in order to create a draft vision statement that reflects the values and aspirations of the community. Two important components in this work are the town-wide survey administered from mid-October through November and the Visioning Forums held in November. December has been a month to complete summaries and reports of this work, and compile these with other inputs into a draft vision statement.



Looking ahead, I expect that the project will remain behind the February 2014 schedule for the next 2 quarters, even though all of the items meant to be completed by Q4 2014 will be complete. The main tasks for 2015 will be completing a draft of the plan which includes goals, strategies to implement the goals, and an action plan indicating which parties would likely be responsible for the implementation components. The current timeline calls for a draft to be ready for public review in Q4 2015. If an adjustment to the schedule is required, staff would likely approach the Council with that request in Q3 next year.

Please check the [Comprehensive Plan Update page](#) on the Town’s website for reports, summaries, Review Team meeting packets, meeting notes, and draft plan materials as they become available.

Comprehensive Planning Activity Highlights – Q4 2014

October

- Comprehensive Plan Review Team Meetings
 - October 9 – Meeting #2
 - Conducted a couple visioning exercises in preparation for Community Visioning Forums
 - Discussion of Forum logistics (dates) and update on survey process
 - October 23 – Meeting #3
 - Forum logistics, primarily discussion of location & dates.
 - Assignments were made for recruiting attendees from the “official family” as well as key stakeholders.
- Town-wide Survey
 - Invitation letter started hitting mailboxes on October 23. The survey effort was supported by advertising and stories in all 3 local papers, publicity on Facebook and the Town website, and the RSU email listserv.

November

- Town-wide Survey
 - Continued to be publicized through November including a table-top display at the exit to the polling station on Election Day, and a reminder postcard mailed out after Election Day. The survey period ran through the end of November, with 1,066 responses received.
- Community Visioning Forums, November 13 and 22.
 - These open community events were heavily publicized and well attended. Along with the results from the community survey, the information offered by attendees will be inputs into the crafting of a draft Vision Statement for the Plan.

December

- Visioning mini-Forums. These forums were held with select “interest groups” that have a stake in the planning process, but were either not represented or underrepresented at the Community Visioning Forums.
 - Agriculture mini-Forum – December 11.
 - Youth Sports/Recreation mini-Forum – December 16.
- Town-wide Survey
 - Draft report received from Critical Insights on December 15, Council presentation on highlighted findings given on December 23.
- Community Visioning Forums
 - Draft report received from Planning Decisions on December 23.