



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: CONSULTANT SEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

PRESENTED BY: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

MARCH 29, 2022

Thank you for having me!

Before I begin, I want to thank the Town Board for its support of this important project.

I also want to thank my fellow volunteer Committee, Council and Board members, who have put a great deal of thought, time and effort into this project thus far – and we're really only getting started!

In the past year, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has had roughly 3 dozen meetings and spent countless hours setting a course for the Comprehensive Plan update project and working through the introductory steps to get it started.



Tonight, I will be giving a high-level overview of the same report that our Committee provided to the Town Board earlier this month.

With this document, the Steering Committee has provided its recommendation for hiring a consulting firm for the Town to partner with on the Update to the 1985 Comprehensive Plan and Amendments to Town Zoning Code project.

The Town Board is the ultimate decision-maker and will hire the consulting firm to proceed with the project.

The Steering Committee will provide any assistance required during the Board's decision-making process.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COMP PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

- Report pages 2 - 6
- Steering Committee's formation & early work (page 2 - 3)
- Mission statement (page 3)
- Work to date (page 3 - 6)

In the first section of the report, which is found on pages 2 – 6, we introduce the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee has been working on the Comprehensive Plan update project for over a year now – we kicked off our work in March 2021. These pages of the report walk through the work in great detail. Early on, we focused on

Committee operational/organizational guidelines

Lewisboro's 1985 Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Planning best practices

Neighboring towns and their Comprehensive Planning practices

Project timeline and project objectives

We began publicly broadcasting our meetings via YouTube in April 2021 – during the first public meeting we highlighted our commitment to transparency – which has remained consistent throughout the project. There are a wide range of materials, including agendas, minutes and meeting recordings, on our page on the Town website. We also have a range of educational materials and the recordings of our public education sessions to date.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

- ***Engage the Lewisboro community in order to inform the future of our town and capture this vision in an updated Comprehensive Plan.***
- ***Ensure fair and equal opportunities for all members of the community to provide input throughout the multi-year process.***

One of the early tasks of the Committee was to finalize the mission statement that would guide our work. Our mission statement is

To engage the Lewisboro community in order to inform the future of our town and capture this vision in an updated Comprehensive Plan.

And to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all members of the community to provide input throughout the multi-year process.

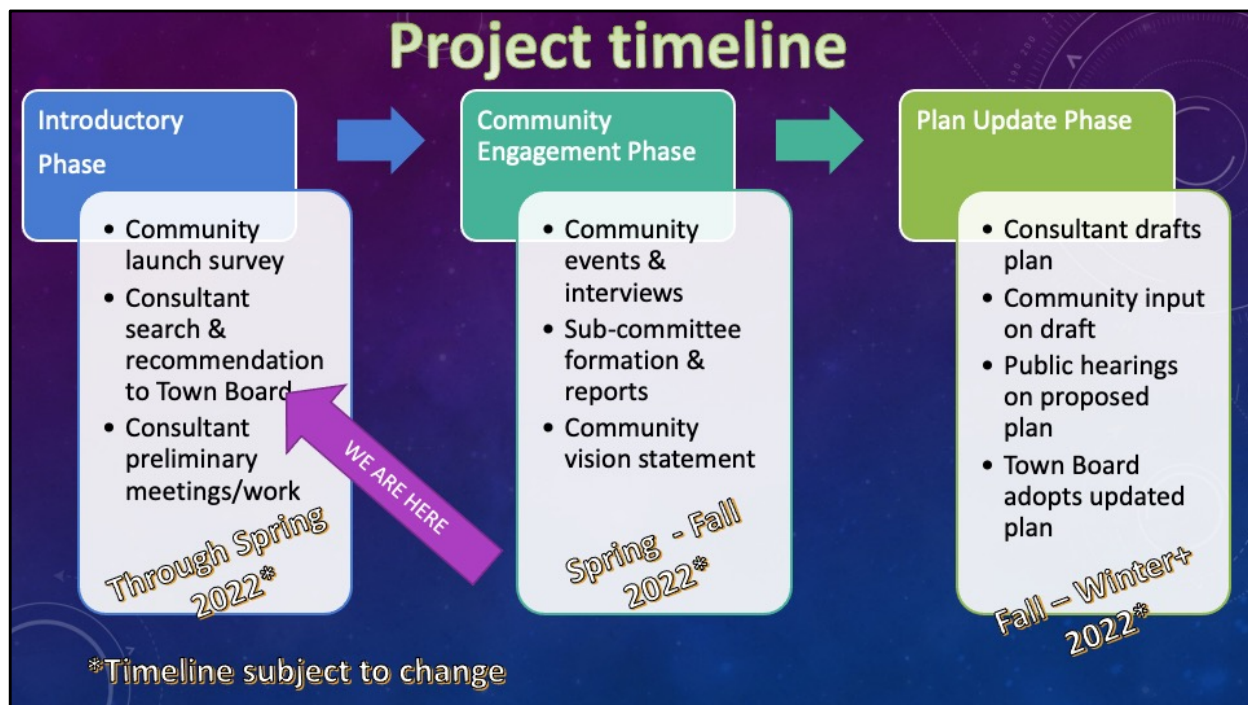
SECTION 2: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROJECT OUTLINE

- Report pages 7 - 11
- Project phases (page 7)
- Focus on community engagement throughout project (page 7 - 8)
- Working timeline (page 8 - 11)

In the second section of the report, which is found on pages 7 – 11, we walk through the 3 distinct project phases and the working timeline

The Committee spent a great deal of time discussing and developing the project phases with an eye towards consistent application of our mission statement – I'll discuss this focus on community engagement in moment

Please note, that one of the early tasks for the project consultant will be to refine the project timeline and establish regular (i.e. monthly, quarterly) goals. The consultant will also set a regular schedule for communicating project progress with the Town Board and the Steering Committee.



As I mentioned, the Steering Committee has designed the Comprehensive Plan Update project to function in 3 distinct phases.

With the submission of this recommendation document to the Town Board, we are nearing the end of the *Introductory Phase*.

Phase 2 will focus on community engagement and Phase 3 will focus on the updating on the Plan. During the remaining phases of the project, community engagement will take a front and center role in the Comprehensive Planning process.

The Committee will seek the expertise of the project consultant in the complex task of collecting community input and synthesizing it into a cohesive vision and actionable recommendations.

APPLYING OUR MISSION DURING THE INTRODUCTORY PHASE

Survey summary

- *Goal: Ensure all members of Lewisboro community had an equal opportunity to participate in initial phase*
- Digital/Hard Copies at post offices
- Emails, town website, social media, direct mail, Parks & Rec brochure, Town email newsletters
- June – November 2021
- 13 questions - multiple choice & open ended
- 897 respondents

One aspect of Phase 1 I'd like to highlight here.

During the *Introductory Phase* of the project, the Committee chose to focus on the initial survey as the key community engagement strategy. Our goal was to *Ensure all members of Lewisboro community had an equal opportunity to participate in initial phase*.

The survey was widely advertised, online and with flyers around Town. During August/September 2021, a postcard was delivered via postal mail to residents and property owners throughout Town.

The Committee stocked Post Offices in each Hamlet with paper copies of the survey and flyers advertising.

Based on Comprehensive Planning best practices, the Committee set a goal of 800 responses. I am very happy to report that the survey returned 897 responses – a turnout that the Steering Committee and the Town can be proud of. A summary of survey responses is available on our web page.

Again, I'd like to point out that during the remaining phases of the project,

community engagement will take a front and center role in the Comprehensive Planning process. The survey will provide a jumping off point for the consultant as they guide us through the remaining project phases.

SECTION 3: CONSULTANT SEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Report pages 12 - 22
- Request for Proposals (page 12 - 14)
- Due diligence process (page 14 - 22)

In the 3rd section of the report, which is found on pages 12 – 22, we walk through the consultant search methodology – step by step. This is the longest section in the report, as developing and finalizing the Request for Proposals and designing and implementing the due diligence process has been a big focus of our work of the past year.



In drafting the RFP, the Committee solicited input from each of the bodies listed here. The Town Board, ACARC, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Town Board approved by Resolution the Committee's request for these bodies to review the draft RFP. It also approved the final RFP and its publication. Details about this process and links to the appropriate meeting minutes are found on pages 12 – 14 of our report.

Of note - The Town Clerks office sent the RFP directly to 17 consulting firms, whose names are provided in the report. The RFP was also published in the Record Review and publicly available (and still is today) on the RFP page of the Town website. The RFP was advertised on the American Planning Association, New York Chapter and New York Planning Federation websites.

The RFP itself outlines the due diligence process and stipulates how the ACARC, Planning Board, and ZBA would participate.

DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS

Round 1 review (page 16 - 18)

Round 2 initial interviews (page 18 – 21)

Round 2 reference checks (page 21)

Round 2 follow up interviews (page 21 – 22)

Recommendations (page 22/next section)

The Committee spent several months designing a robust due diligence process based on Comprehensive Planning best practices and Committee members' experience in their various fields. The report walks through the methodology used for each step in the process on pages 14 – 22.

I will very high level here – as you can tell from the page numbers, there's a lot of content to get through in this section of the report. Our hope is that it is clear the level of commitment and the attention to detail that has gone into this process.

5 consulting firms responded to the RFP and entered Round 1 Review.

After Round 1, which took place over a period of nearly 2 months, the group decided to schedule interviews with 3 out of the 5 consulting firms.

After the initial interviews and reference checks, the group chose to schedule another follow up interview with each of the 3 firms.

DUE DILIGENCE CATEGORIES

- Attention to detail & understanding of Lewisboro
- Communication methods
- Approach to community engagement
- Approach to creative thinking and innovation
- Approach to project management
- Timeline
- Budget
- Approach to pursuing funding
- References & experience with similar projects

Throughout the due diligence process the group sought to evaluate and compare the firms in each of these categories.

Attention to detail & understanding of Lewisboro

Communication methods

Approach to community engagement

Approach to creative thinking and innovation

Approach to project management

Timeline

Budget

Approach to pursuing funding

References & experience with similar projects

SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

- Report pages 23 - 29
- Recommendation for consulting firm (page 23 - 28)
- Recommendations for next steps (page 28 - 29)

In the fourth section of this report, which is found on pages 23 – 29, the Committee walks through 2 separate recommendations.

First, a recommendation for hiring a consulting firm to guide the Town through the Update of the 1985 Comprehensive Master Plan and Amendments to Town Zoning Code.

The second is a series of recommendations for next steps in moving the project forward.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONSULTING FIRM

- ***The due diligence group recommends Nelson Pope Voorhis (with Starr Whitehouse) for the Update of 1985 Comprehensive Master Plan for the Town of Lewisboro and Amendments to Town Zoning Code project***
- Table 1 (page 24 - 25): Rationale for recommending NPV
- Table 2 (page 26 - 27): Comparison of project details - finalists

In putting forward our recommendation for a consulting firm, we want to highlight that the 3 consulting firms that moved to the Round 2 interviews were all excellent. They all showed a wide body of knowledge and relevant experience.

However, the due diligence group came to a consensus that one firm – Nelson Pope Voorhis (with Starr Whitehouse) – was best suited to the project based on cost, timeline, communication methods, and approach to community engagement. In addition, they included updates to the Zoning Code in their project design and timeline.

In two separate tables, the report sets out to explain why we're recommending NPV. Table 1 outlines observations the group made of NPV throughout the due diligence process.

Table 2 compares the 3 finalists' project proposals, presenting facts from the RFP responses and subsequent interviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

- Decision/engagement date – end of April 2022
- Inclusion of proposed Zoning Code updates in project
- Engage Planning Board Attorney & Firm as legal advisors for Zoning Code updates
- Steering Committee to present next update to Town Board in May 2022, following project kickoff meeting with consultant

As part of the project planning and due diligence process, the Steering Committee has formulated the following recommendations for completing the *Introductory Phase* of the Comprehensive Plan update project.

We recommend that Board target a decision/engagement date of the end of April 2022

We recommend the Board include proposed Zoning Code updates in project

We recommend the Board engage Planning Board Attorney & Firm as legal advisors for Zoning Code updates

And we would like to present our next update to Town Board in May 2022, following project kickoff meeting with consultant

Details on all of these recommendations are found on the last pages of the report

One thing to note - the Committee's recommendation to include updates to Zoning Code does not imply any kind of assumptions as to what those updates might be. State Law requires that any change to the Comprehensive Plan is translated into updates in Zoning Code in a timely fashion.



And with that, we've reached the end of the report and tonight's high level summary. The recommendations set forth in this report are the result of an extensive due diligence process and, as we've covered, the culmination of over 1 year of work put forth by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. In addition, the important time and effort of the Town Board itself, the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and ACARC.

The Steering Committee is dedicated to continuing to pursue this project in alignment with our mission statement and with great care and attention to detail.

We forward to partnering with the Lewisboro community in the coming phases of the project.

To members of the Town Board and the community at large – if you have any questions, concerns or ideas you would like to share with the Steering Committee, please don't hesitate to contact us!

Thank you very much.



APPENDIX: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT THROUGHOUT PROJECT PHASES

How can Lewisboro get involved?

Introductory Phase

- Tune in for project updates
 - *Quarterly Town Board meetings*
 - *YouTube updates*
- Community survey open June – November 2021
- Recommendation to Town Board expected March 2022
- Town Board decision making process to follow

Through Spring
2022*

*Timeline subject to change

How can Lewisboro get involved?

Community Engagement Phase

- Initial consultant meetings with Town
- Join community events
 - *Virtual*
 - *Surveys*
 - *Pop-ups*
- Join a sub-committee
- Tune in for project updates, including quarterly Town Board updates

Spring - Fall
2022*

*Timeline subject to change

How can Lewisboro get involved?

Plan Update Phase

- Provide input
 - *Virtual*
 - *Surveys*
 - *Pop-ups*
- Participate in sub-committees
- Join public hearings
- Tune in for project updates, including quarterly Town Board updates

Fall – Winter+
2022*

*Timeline subject to change