Norwich Planning Commission
REGULAR meeting
November 10th, 2026, 6:30pm

To be Held in person in the Tracy Hall Multipurpose Room and via Zoom
Zoom Information:
Topic: Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Time: November 10th, 2026, 6:30 PM
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81307504748
Meeting ID: 813 0750 4748
888 475 4499 US Toll-free

AGENDA

1. Open Meeting; determine quorum
2. Approve Agenda
3. Public comment or correspondence on items not on agenda
4. Chair's report
5. Jeff Lubell to discuss and answer question on AHSC memo on Missing Middle Housing
6. Short Term Rental Ordinance – Status and Enforcement
7. Capital Planning
8. Village Master Plan update
9. 2028 Town Plan Discussion Working Session
10. Approve minutes from October 13th regular meeting
11. Adjourn

Enclosures:
Minutes from October 13th
Village Master Plan Flyer
Village Master Plan – Public Participation Plan Plan

Norwich Village Master Plan

Bite-Sized Planning Workshop

>> December 3, 6-8pm @
Marion Cross Multi-Purpose Room

>> Food provided and "Parents Night Out" sponsored by the Rec Department

This event will feature short introductions on 6 topics, followed by group discussions. Topics are anticipated to include:

- Local Housing Needs
- State/Regional Approaches to Housing
- Wastewater and Infrastructure
- Active Transportation and Safety
- Community Building in the Historic Village
- Village Development Success Stories across Vermont

Join us to discuss and plan how to meet the values, hopes, and concerns you have for the Village!

Learn more and RSVP at the project website: www.norwichvtvillageplan.com or scan the QR code.



About this Project

The Town of Norwich is laying the foundation for future planning and development in the greater Village area through the creation of a cohesive Village Plan that will guide future planning through specific and measurable goals, strategies and actions. This plan will link the physical, natural, and social infrastructure of the Town so that these elements thrive as parts of an integrated system. The Plan sets out to:

1. Make quick progress on a few selected priorities.
2. Create a long-term plan that prioritizes town projects and spending within a holistic vision of the Village's future.
3. Establish a lasting engagement process, including for the 2028 Town Plan.

Norwich Village Master Plan – Public Participation Plan

Elevator Pitch/Project Introduction

The Town of Norwich is laying the foundation for future planning and development in the greater Village area through the creation of a cohesive Village Plan that will guide future planning through specific and measurable goals, strategies and actions. This plan will link the physical, natural, and social infrastructure of the Town so that these elements thrive as parts of an integrated system. The project process will include diverse community engagement to develop ideas that are publicly vetted and supported. Priority topic areas include, but are not limited to:

- Housing and Infrastructure
    - Infrastructure supports housing, business, and recreation goals
- Bike, Pedestrian, and Road Safety
    - Walking and biking in the village feels enjoyable and safe and can be an effective means of transportation to Village destinations.
- Community Building and Downtown Vibrancy
    - The historic Village feels like and serves as a vibrant community center.

The Norwich Master Plan Steering Committee engaged consulting firm DuBois & King to assist with this process.

For more information or to join the mailing list to receive regular project updates and invitations, please contact Town Planning Director, Steven True, at strue@norwich.vt.us.

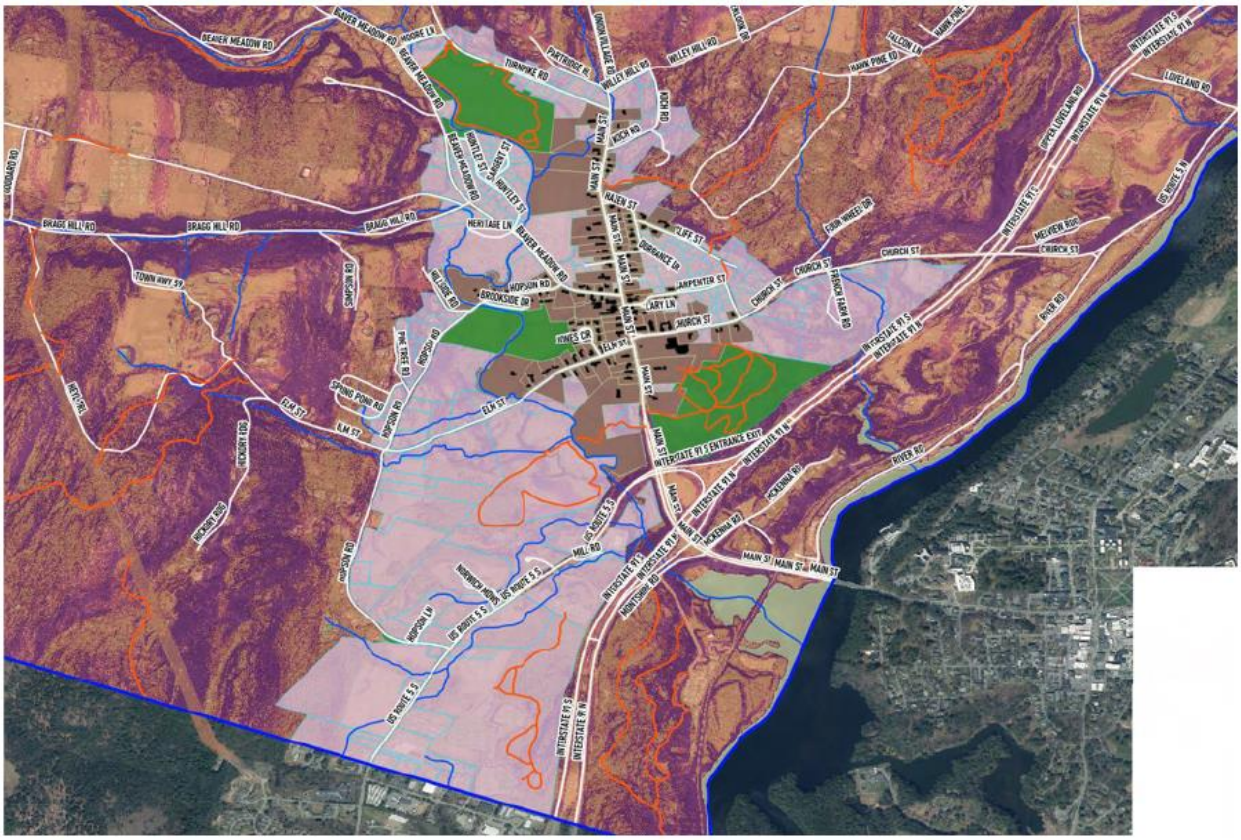
Priority Goals

- Find achievable solutions to problems people care about in the village. Select a few and get them done. Demonstrate successes at solving resident's concerns.
- Create a long term plan, including but not limited to a capital plan, that prioritizes town activity and spending, placing individual projects within a holistic view.
- Develop a process for resident engagement and planning that becomes an ongoing tool, including for the 2028 town plan project.

Key Talking Points

Project Area

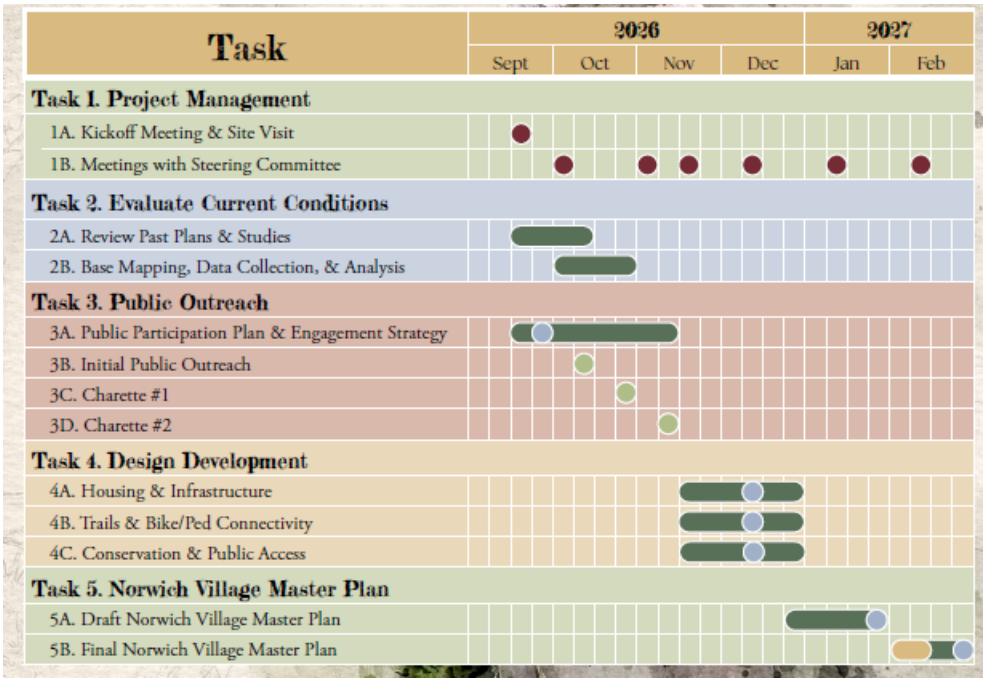
MAP 1. BOUNDARIES OF VILLAGE AREA, TRAILS AND CONSERVED PUBLIC SPACE



Brown indicates the historic village area.

Light pink indicates the full village area for project consideration.

Project Schedule



September 30: Project Kickoff Meeting
October 3: School Picnic Tabling (PZ, SC)
October 6: Project Kickoff Site Visit
October 8: Draft PPP to SC
October 10: Farmers Market Tabling (SC)
October 14: First SC Working Meeting
October 16: Community Survey goes live
Nov ?: Business Lunch
November 2: SC Working Meeting
December 3: Charette #1 "Bite-Sized Planning"
Mid-January: Charette #2
Nov/Dec?: SC Working Meeting
December?: SC Working Meeting

Channels of Publicity and Who is Responsible for Them

Project website

www.norwichvtvillageplan.com

Steven to make updates, D&K to provide information.

All QR codes will direct to the project website for surveys, email signups, summaries, etc.

Town forum/list serve

Intercept at School Dropoff or Pick-up

Project email list

Steven to keep master list; any collected through tabling, surveys, or website will go to him.

Community Organizations or Businesses

- Norwich Public Library
    - Lucinda Walker, Director
- Norwich Business Council
- Affordable Housing Subcommittee
    - Jeff Lubell
- Tracy Hall Working Group
- Norwich Historical Society
    - Sarah Rooker, Director
    - Ann Bauer, President

Mailings

To all town residents for survey, and two charettes. Include RSVP

Events or Tabling

- School Picnic
- Farmers Market
- Transfer Station

Public Engagement Phases

Community Survey #1

Purpose: This survey is an early step in the public engagement process of the Norwich Village Master Plan Project. It will gather background information to guide the design and determination of actionable, publicly vetted, and supported ideas around Transportation and Safety, Housing and Infrastructure, and Downtown Vibrancy and Community Building.

It has X questions and takes approximately X minutes to complete. The survey will be open through DATE.

For more information, please visit our project website: https://norwich.vt.us/steering-committee/

Questions:

Demographic Questions

1. Do you live in Norwich?
    a. Yes, full time
    b. Yes, part time
    c. No, but I work here
    d. No, but I own property or a business here
    e. Other (explain)
2. In which area of Town do you live? (Approximate miles from Dan and Whits)
    a. ½ mile from Dan & Whits
    b. ½-1 mile from Dan & Whits
    c. 1-2 miles from Dan & Whits
    d. More than 2 miles from Dan & Whits
3. How long have you been a resident of Norwich?
    a. Less than 2 years
    b. 2-5 years
    c. 5-10 years
    d. 10-20 years
    e. 20-30 years
    f. More than 30 years
    g. Not applicable
4. Did you grow up in Norwich?
    a. Yes and still live here
    b. Yes, left and moved back
    c. No
5. Who do you live with?
    a. By myself
    b. With a partner
    c. With a roommate
    d. With school-aged children (up to 18)
    e. With adult children
    f. With my parents or relatives
    g. Other (explain)
6. How old are you?

a. Under 18
b. 19-29
c. 30-45
d. 46-60
e. 61-75
f. Over 75

Provide map of the Village for context.

Village Questions

7. What are the three things you most value about the Village today?
8. What is **one** physical problem or concern you would like to see resolved in the Village?
9. What is an opportunity Norwich should capitalize on in the next one – three years, that might be lost if not acted upon?
10. What changes do you see as necessary to preserve the things you love about Norwich?
11. In the past 10 years, the median home price in Norwich has increased by 97% from $461,000 in 2016 to $850,000 in 2026. Would this impact your ability to purchase or downsize a home in Norwich today? Please explain.
12. If this plan accomplished ONE thing in the next 5 years, what should it be?
13. What haven't we asked that we should? Other comments?
14. If you would like to receive updates on this project and join our mailing list, please add your email below. Your email will ONLY be used by the project team for communications regarding this project and will not be shared.

~~15. Is there something you need or want that you currently have to leave town to obtain? (Or, What businesses would you like to see in the village that aren't there now?)~~

~~16. What makes you spend time in the Village now?~~

~~17. What places or features should definitely be preserved?~~

~~18. What amenities would you like to see in the village that aren't there now, if anything?~~

~~19. Do you spend any of your free time in the Village? If so, where do you like to go?~~

~~20. How comfortable do you feel walking, biking, wheeling, etc. around Norwich?~~

~~21. Something regarding housing (Have you tried to find housing in Norwich? How easy/hard was this? Do you have friends or family who have struggled to find housing in Norwich?)~~

Business Lunch

Could be held during a weekday to engage business owners who may live outside of town.

Point of contact?

Charette #1

Date: December 3, 2026 6:00-8pm
Location: Marion Cross School
Childcare provided by: Parent's Night Out Group – confirmed with Brie Swenson
Food provided by:
D&K Facilitators: Emily Lewis, Dan Mallach, Kait Campbell
Steering Committee Attendees:

Title/Format Ideas:

- Bite-sized Planning
    - Round-Robin format ??
    - Or Lightning Talks?

Topics:

1. Local Housing *(Homes for Norwich/Jeff Lubell)*
2. State/Regional Housing *(VT DHCD/Jeff Dube)*
3. Wastewater and Infrastructure *(D&K - Justin Nalbach)*
4. Active Transportation *(D&K plus Jaan)*
5. Vibrant Businesses *(Business Council Rep? Cole?)*
6. Village/Community Vibrancy *(Grange and Library as examples, Jess Phelps and Lucinda)*

Other Subject Matter Experts:

Agenda Option A: Lightning Talks

6:00 – Enter and settle

- Receive agenda/program
- take a seat at one of 6 tables (1 SC member per table as table "lead")
- get food, settle in

6:15 – Introduction (Emily and Jaan), explain the activity

6:20-7:00 – Lightning Talks

- 6 topics, 5-7 minutes each
- All in a group
- Option for digital presentation

7:00 – 8:00 – Rotating Conversations

- Three groups
- 15-20 minutes on each topic
    - Housing
    - Transportation
    - Community/Business
- Wastewater can shift between topics
- Everyone gets a chance to discuss each topic
- Subject matter experts will rotate between groups

Agenda Option B (Round-robin)

6:00 – Enter and settle

- Receive agenda/program
- take a seat at one of 6 tables (1 SC member per table as table "lead")
- get food, settle in

6:10 – Introduction (Emily and Jaan), explain the activity

6:20 – Round-robin begins!

- Timer at each table,
- presenter has 5-7 minutes for a high-level "pitch" of their topic
- 2-3 minutes for quick questions
- At 8 minute mark the presenter rotates to a new table.

6:30 – Round 2

6:40 – Round 3

6:50 – Round 4

7:00 – Round 5

7:10 – Round 6

7:20 – 10 minute break for food and to combine topics

7:30 – Conversation Session 1

- There are now 3 combined topics
- Everyone gets a chance to attend each conversation topic

7:45 – Conversation Session 2

8:00 – Conversation Session 3

Agenda: pull together

Materials Needed:

- Table tents/names
- Program, information, next steps

- Survey summaries
- Posters for Conversation Sessions
- Materials for Subject Matter Expert
- Flip charts for the group conversations

Have a "sweeper" for participants to come talk to one-on-one

Charette #2

Date: Mid-January 2026

Childcare provided by:

Food provided by:

Theme: Norwich Village Master Plan – Design Workshop

D&K Facilitators:

Steering Committee Attendees:

Agenda:

Materials Needed:

TOWN OF NORWICH
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
DRAFT Minutes
October 13th, 2026
Tracy Hall and Zoom

Members present: Jaan Laaspere (Chair), Mary Gorman, Bob Pape, Vince Crow
Members absent: Jeff Goodrich, Miller Nuttle, Christian Spalding (Vice-Chair)
Staff: Steven True, Director, Planning & Zoning
Minute Taker: Steven True
Others Present: Amy Stringer

1. **Meeting opened at 6:30 PM. A quorum was present.**

2. **Approve Agenda:** Vince Crow moved to approve the agenda. Gorman seconds. **MOTION** carries (4-0)

3. **Public Comment and Correspondence:** There was no public comment. Steven True presented an email from Yanmei Lin on behalf of a Vermont Law School research team requesting a listening session about land-use policy and community preparedness for flooding and drought. True will follow up with the team and develop a more specific proposal.

4. **Chair's Report:**
    a. Route 5 Bike/Pedestrian Scoping Study: The state approved the scoping study. True will handle related paperwork and coordination, and the work will be considered alongside the Village Master Plan.
    b. Municipal Planning Grant: True reported that the 2027 grant application is due December 2 and may provide approximately $25,000 for Town Plan or bylaw work. He will obtain model applications from Two Rivers and aim to bring application materials to the November meeting.

5. **Capital Planning:** Members discussed developing a five-year capital plan to identify infrastructure needs and help prioritize projects and spending. Discussion included coordination with the Selectboard and Finance Committee. Members supported Chair Laaspere's proposal to send the Selectboard a memo outlining the Planning Commission's role and requesting participation and Finance Committee assistance. Laaspere will prepare the memo and report back.

6. **Affordable Housing Subcommittee Memo on Missing Middle Housing:** Members discussed the memo as a starting point for further consideration, not a final Planning Commission recommendation. Discussion addressed the scope of potential zoning changes and possible effects on neighborhoods, population, traffic, and infrastructure. No

formal action was taken.

7. **Village Master Plan Update:** Laaspere reported on the steering committee's work with consultant DuBois & King. Key themes include housing and infrastructure, trails and bicycle/pedestrian safety, and the historic village center. The steering committee is developing a public participation plan that includes online project information, stakeholder outreach, a town-wide mailing, and public working sessions. Dates for the public sessions were not yet confirmed.

8. **2028 Town Plan Structure:** Members discussed Montpelier's Town Plan as a possible model for a more concise and action-oriented plan. The Commission will continue reviewing how Montpelier organizes priorities and implementation strategies before considering how to adapt the approach for Norwich.

9. **Minutes from August 11th**
    a. Pape moved, Crow seconds to approve the minutes. No discussion. **MOTION** carries (4-0).
10. **Adjourn**
    a. **MOTION** is made by Gorman, seconded by Pape to adjourn. No discussion. **MOTION** carries (4-0). Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Next Meeting: November 10th at 6:30 PM