

Project Status and “Next Steps”

The first phase of the project has been completed. This “project initiation” included field work by the consultants, meetings with Town staff, meetings with various community “stakeholders” and a public community meeting where the consultant was introduced, information was presented on the project work program, and initial input was solicited from members of the general public. That information and other research will now be used to proceed with the next phase of the project.

Next Step: The “Assessment Report”

The consultants will now prepare an objective and independent assessment of the Town’s current land use regulations, and determine how those regulations might be revised to help the community implement adopted land use policies. This report will identify land use regulations that are outdated, inappropriate or insufficient, as well as hopefully identify practices and approaches that the Town’s land use agencies are using which are already helping us achieve our community objectives. The report will attempt to assign some order of priority and offer some conceptual options in terms of potential new regulations.

This report will be presented to the public after it is reviewed by the land use commissions, and the public will have an opportunity to comment on its findings and recommendations. Prior to the next community meeting when the report will be presented, the report will be made available to the public via a web link on this page, and hard copy will be available in the Town’s Office of Planning and Development Services (“OPDS”), in the Town Clerk’s office and in the local Libraries. Everyone is encouraged to review the report and to provide comments to OPDS or directly to the consultants at the upcoming community meeting.

That community meeting is tentatively scheduled for late July. When a specific date is determined, advance notice will be posted on this link, as well as in the local news media. This assessment report is an important part of the overall project. The consensus developed through the report will help the land use agencies, the consultants and Town staff prioritize the work program. This will help assure that the limited project funds are allocated in the most effective and efficient manner.

Development, Review and Adoption of Regulation Amendments

The above steps represent about 1/3 of the project budget. The remaining budget and effort will be focused on developing, reviewing and adopting specific revisions to the land use regulations. This process by law requires a number of formal “referrals” to various agencies, as well as public notice and formal public hearings. In fact, the public engagement encouraged prior to the “review and adoption” phase is well above and beyond what is legally required for land use regulation amendments, but when taken together with the consultant’s independent and objective analysis, this early public input should help the community develop a broad-based consensus, representing a wide variety of interests and perspectives. The regulations that are eventually drafted and offered for adoption should reflect that broad-based consensus.