



CONSULTANT SEARCH

Update of 1985 Comprehensive Master Plan for the Town of
Lewisboro and Amendments to Town Zoning Code

Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee

March 2022

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Formation of the Steering Committee

The Town Board by [Resolution dated January 11, 2021](#) authorized a Steering Committee be formed to begin the work of updating the 1985 Comprehensive Master Plan. One of the charges of the Committee is to prepare a Request for Proposal seeking to engage such professional service of qualified planning consultants to review and update the Town's 1985 Comprehensive Master Plan in accordance with vision determined by the Town Board after an inclusive, thorough and transparent engagement process with the residents of the Town.

The Town Board appointed 5 members of the Steering Committee by [Resolution dated February 22, 2021](#):

- Charlene Indelicato (also a member of the Planning Board)
- John Wolff
- Katherine (Katie) McGinn
- Larry Mango
- Mark Robbins

The Town Board also appointed Ciorsdan Conran as the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Administrator. (She is also the Administrator for the Planning Board and Architecture and Community Appearance Review Council.)

The members attended the Town Board's [March 8, 2021 remote work session](#) in order to introduce themselves and discuss the Steering Committee's responsibilities and future direction. During this meeting, the Board stressed the importance of community engagement and participation. Also, during this meeting Town Attorney Gregory Folchetti stated that the Steering Committee is advisory in nature, and therefore is not legally required to notice meetings or comply with the Open Meetings Law.

Steering Committee: Early Work

The Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, held its first meeting on [March 12, 2021](#) and agreed to hold meetings via Zoom on 3 Tuesday evenings each month (to start) and elected Katie

McGinn as the Committee Chair. In the early meetings that followed, the Committee focused on the following topics:

- 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
- Committee mission statement

The Committee opened its meetings to the public on [April 27, 2021](#) by broadcasting its Zoom meeting via Lewisboro's YouTube channel. During this meeting, the Committee highlighted its commitment to transparency by discussing the materials it will be making available on its Town webpage (<https://www.lewisborogov.com/cmpsc>). This includes, but is not limited to, all meeting agendas and minutes, current project timeline, useful educational resources, and contact information for the Committee.

Mission Statement

During its public, April 27, 2021 meeting the Committee also finalized its mission statement as follows.

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee's mission is to:

- ***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.***

Work to Date

As of this documents' publication the Steering Committee has accomplished the following (in order of date).

- March 2021
 - See Early Work section, above
- April 2021
 - See Early Work section, above
- May 2021
 - Began researching and drafting initial survey

- Discussed public outreach strategy and kickoff meeting presentation
 - Began advertising for June 8 kickoff presentation - via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media
 - Continued research on scope of project, based on national best practices and local Towns
 - Began drafting RFP
 - Engaged Record Review to facilitate article on Committee kickoff meeting and survey
 - Town Board approved Survey Monkey subscription for the Steering Committee initial survey (by [Resolution dated May 24, 2021](#))
- June 2021
 - Hosted *Planning 101* [public education session, June 3, 2021](#) with Jan Johannessen, Lewisboro Town Planner
 - Hosted public [project kickoff presentation, June 8, 2021](#)
 - Launched survey
 - Began advertising survey via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media, flyers around Town
 - Stocked paper surveys and flyers in all Lewisboro Post Offices, Lewisboro Library, Town House, Planning Office
 - Began work on drafting NY State Consolidated Funding (CFA) Grant
 - Continued drafting RFP (Steering Committee feedback and edits)
- July 2021
 - CFA Grant submitted (requested \$40K)
 - Presented [quarterly update to the Town Board](#)
 - Continued survey advertising via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media, flyers around Town
 - Stocked paper surveys and flyers in all Lewisboro Post Offices, Lewisboro Library, Town House, Planning Office
 - Continued drafting and collecting feedback on RFP (Steering Committee, Town Planner & Attorney to Planning Board)
- August 2021
 - Town Board approved town-wide postcard mailer to alert residents to survey (by [Resolution dated August 9, 2021](#))
 - Reminder about survey placed on back page of Parks & Rec Fall Catalog
 - Continued survey advertising via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media, flyers around Town
 - Stocked paper surveys and flyers in all Lewisboro Post Offices, Lewisboro Library, Town House, Planning Office
 - Identified and began to research Hudson River Valley Greenway Community Grants opportunity

- Collected formal feedback from Town Board, Planning Board, ZBA, ACARC on RFP (see Methodology section below for details)
- Hosted [August 10, 2021 public information session](#) with Town Tax Assessor, Lise Robertson
- September 2021
 - Published final RFP (see Methodology section below for details)
 - Hosted Lewisboro Library Fair table to spread word about survey and website resources
 - Hosted [August 28, 2021 public education session](#) - *Intro to Planning, Zoning & Land Use*, recorded presentation from the NY Planning Federation
 - Received guidance on Greenway Community Grants opportunity - wait until early 2022 to apply (request approximately \$20K)
 - Continued survey advertising via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media, flyers around Town
 - Stocked paper surveys and flyers in all Lewisboro Post Offices, Lewisboro Library, Town House, Planning Office
- October 2021
 - Presented [quarterly update to the Town Board](#)
 - Fielded questions from RFP respondents – all questions and answers posted to Town RFP page
 - Began developing due diligence process and materials (see Methodology section below for details)
 - Continued survey advertising via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media, flyers around Town
 - Stocked paper surveys and flyers in all Lewisboro Post Offices, Lewisboro Library, Town House, Planning Office
- November 2021
 - Collected RFP responses (see Methodology section below for details)
 - Finalized due diligence process and materials (see Methodology section below for details)
 - Continued survey advertising via Town email newsletter, Parks & Recs department, social media, flyers around Town
 - Sent out stand-alone email reminders for survey, via Town list-serv and Parks & Recs list-serv
 - Stocked paper surveys and flyers in all Lewisboro Post Offices, Lewisboro Library, Town House, Planning Office
 - Closed initial survey as of November 12, 2021

- December 2021
 - Hosted [December 7, 2021 public information session](#) featuring Lewisboro Census results, presented by Norma Drummond, Commissioner of Westchester County Department of Planning
 - Began consultant search due diligence process (see Methodology section below for details)

- January 2022
 - Continued consultant search due diligence process (see Methodology section below for details)
 - Presented [quarterly update to the Town Board](#)

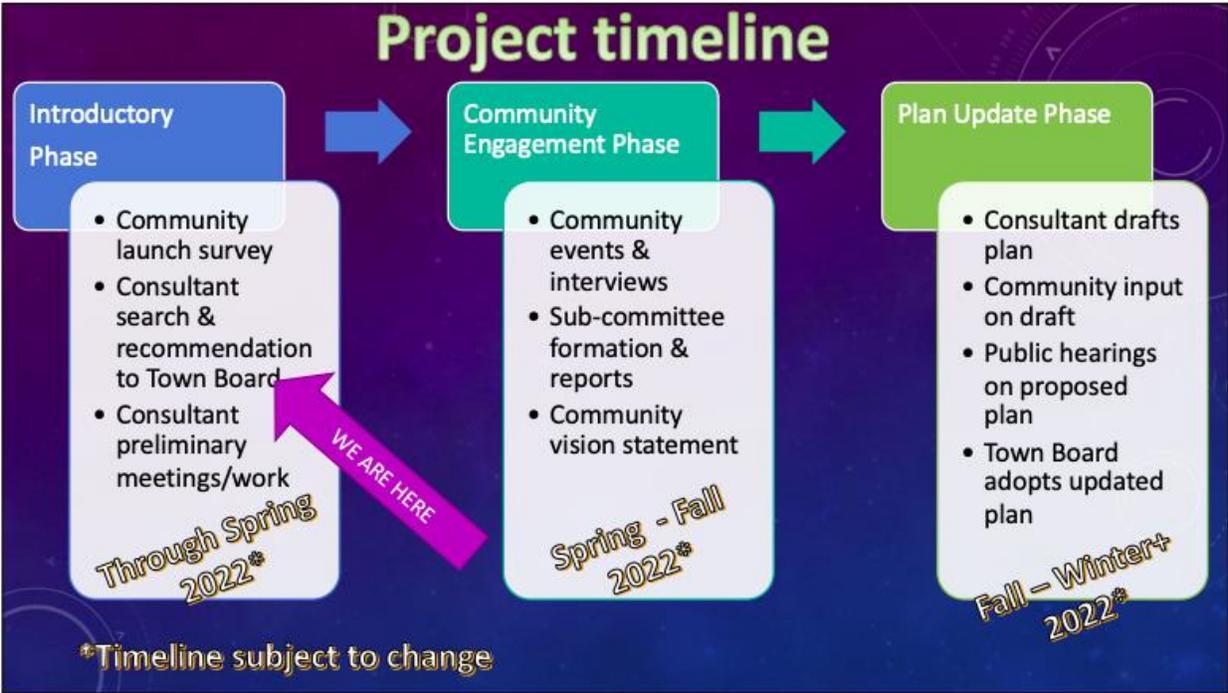
- February 2022
 - Continued consultant search due diligence process (see Methodology section below for details)

- March 2022
 - Finalized consultant search due diligence process (see Methodology section below for details)
 - Finalized recommendation to Town Board

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROJECT OUTLINE

Comprehensive Plan Project Phases

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*, as shown in the graphic below.



A Note on Community Engagement

The Committee spent a great deal of time discussing and developing the project phases with an eye towards consistent application of its mission statement. As a reminder, part of the Steering Committee’s mission is to:

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

During the *Introductory Phase* of the project, the Committee chose to focus on the initial survey as the key community engagement strategy. 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 (see Work to Date section above for additional details).

The survey was open from June – November 2021, and available in paper and digital form (see Work to Date section above for additional details). Of note, the Committee committed to stocking Post Offices in each Hamlet with paper copies of the survey and flyers advertising. The Committee saw the survey as the best way to ensure that all members of the Lewisboro community had an equal opportunity to participate in the initial phase of the process.

Based on Comprehensive Planning best practices, the Committee set a goal of 800 responses. 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 in the January 2022 [quarterly update to the Town Board](#) presentation.

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.

Comprehensive Plan Project Timeline

The timeline on the following pages was developed as a jumping off point for reference. It is a dynamic/working document and is subject to change as the Steering Committee continues to refine the Comprehensive Plan project process. This version has been updated as of January 8, 2022 and is posted to the [Committee website](#).

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.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee – Working Timeline - Current Version, As of January 8, 2022

Please note, this timeline is meant to serve as a jumping off point for reference. It is a dynamic/working document and is subject to change as the Steering Committee continues to refine the Comprehensive Plan project process.

	2021										2022									
	A p r	M a y	J u n	J u l	A u g	S e p	O c t	N o v	D e c		J a n	F e b	M a r	A p r	M a y	J u n	J u l	A u g	S e p +	
Steering Committee Setup and Project Management Discussions	x	x																		
Assemble and Review Existing Data/Lewisboro Comprehensive Plans	x	x																		
Gather Expertise from County, Town and Outside Experts	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x											
Informational/Educational Webinar(s) for Public			x	x																
Gather Preliminary Feedback (Survey)			x																	
Identify Issues and Potential Areas of Focus (Potential/Broad Scope for RFP)				x	x															
Develop/Issue RFP to Consultants		x	x	x	x	x														
Review RFP Responses/Interview Consultants										x	x	x								
Recommend Consultant to Town Board/Town Board to Engage													x							
	<i>Note, timeline from this point forward may need to be adjusted based on timing of engagement with the consultant.</i>																			
Consultant Kickoff Meeting(s) Internal with Steering Committee													x							
Consultant Review of Town Data/Plans and Field Visits														x	x					
Consultant Report to Steering Committee on Recommended Timeline/Project Details and Engagement/Outreach Plan															x	x				

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee – Working Timeline - Current Version, As of January 8, 2022

Please note, this timeline is meant to serve as a jumping off point for reference. It is a dynamic/working document and is subject to change as the Steering Committee continues to refine the Comprehensive Plan project process.

	2021										2022								
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	
	p	a	u	u	u	e	c	o	e	a	e	a	p	a	u	u	u	e	p
	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c	n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	+	
Adoption of Final Comprehensive Plan and Potentially Zoning Amendments																			x
Steering Committee Progress Reports to Public & Town Board (TB Meetings)				x			x			x			x			x			x

CONSULTANT SEARCH METHODOLOGY

Request for Proposals

One of the tasks set forth for the Steering Committee in its founding [Resolution dated January 11, 2021](#) was to draft a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a planning consultant. Early on in its research into Comprehensive Planning best practices, the Committee found that a consultant would be crucial in guiding the complex process.

The Committee worked hard to create a robust RFP that would represent the Town's needs and desires for the Comprehensive Plan update. The process of drafting and issuing the final RFP spanned May – November 2021 and involved several Town Councils & Boards.

Drafting the RFP

The Committee began drafting the RFP May 2021, drawing on member Charlene Indelicato's experience in municipal governance and its research into Comprehensive Planning best practices. Early edits and comments from the following individuals helped shape the draft:

- Janet Andersen, the Planning Board Chair
- Jan Johannessen, Town planning consultant, and
- Judson Siebert, Planning Board counsel

During its meeting on [August 9th, 2021](#), the Town Board approved (by Resolution) the Steering Committee's request for ACARC, Planning, Town and Zoning Boards to review the RFP for consulting services. The Boards had approximately 1 month to review the RFP and provide feedback.

During the Architecture and Community Appearance Review Council meeting on [August 11th, 2021](#), the group confirmed that they would each review the RFP and submit comments via email.

During its meeting on [August 17th, 2021](#), the Planning Board reviewed and discussed the RFP. They noted that Jan Andersen, along with Jan Johannessen and Judson Siebert had already submitted comments on the current draft. The Board submitted a formal letter indicating they had no further comments on the draft and that the Board endorsed the proposed RFP process and the hiring of a consultant to lead the Town's comprehensive plan process. (View letter [here](#).)

During the month of August 2021, the Zoning Board of Appeals discussed the RFP and submitted contents via email.

During its meeting on [August 23rd, 2021](#), the Town Board discussed the RFP and compiled a list of suggested edits to share with the Steering Committee.

Finalizing the RFP

Upon receipt of the comments and suggested edits from the ACARC, Planning, Town Board and Zoning Boards, the Steering Committee worked to incorporate all feedback. The Committee compiled a document showing all feedback and noting how/where it was incorporated into the document and shared this document with the various Boards. (The document is available [here](#).)

During the Steering Committee's [August 31st, 2021](#) meeting, the group confirmed it was comfortable with the final draft and discussed final steps for issuing the RFP. The Committee also confirmed the list of consulting firms that would receive the RFP directly. This list was compiled after looking through a range of New York and neighboring states RFPs, noting best practices and special recognition (i.e. awards) given to consulting firms for their Comprehensive Plans.

Issuing the RFP

During its meeting on [September 13th, 2021](#), the Town Board approved (by Resolution) the RFP for publication and distribution. It also approved (by Resolution) the RFP cover letter and notice of publication and authorized the Town Clerk to transmit/mail the RFP to identified recipients.

The following consulting firms received the RFP directly from the Town Clerk's office (in alphabetical order):

- AKRF
- Barton & Loguidice
- BFJ Planning
- Claire Weisz Architects LLP
- Delaware Engineering
- Divney Tung Schwalbe
- Ferrandio & Associates
- HDR
- LaBerge Group
- Langan
- Nelson Pope Voorhis
- Nelson/Nygaard
- Pace University Land Use

- Sam Schwartz
- The Chazen Companies
- Weston & Sampson
- WSP USA

In addition, the RFP was 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 following New York planning websites:

- American Planning Association, New York Chapter
- New York Planning Federation

In order to keep the process fair for respondents, the Committee included in the RFP a deadline for respondent questions and a commitment to post all questions and answers to the Town's RFP page. The RFP itself and the respondent Question & Answer document are available [here](#).

RFP Responses

The Committee received 5 responses to the Request for Proposal on or before the final deadline of November 15, 2021.

Due Diligence Process

Overview

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. As outlined in the RFP, the due diligence process consisted of 2 rounds. (Please see above RFP section for details on how the RFP itself was reviewed and approved by the various Town Boards and Councils.)

- Round 1 – Review of submissions
- Round 2 – Interviews

Participants

As outlined in the RFP (please see above RFP section for details on how the RFP itself was reviewed and approved by the various Town Boards and Councils) the due diligence rounds were designed to incorporate feedback from the Steering Committee and the following Boards & Councils:

- Round 1 – Steering Committee and Chairs of the ACARC, Planning and Zoning Boards

- Round 2 – Steering Committee and the Planning Board

During October and November 2021, the Steering Committee began designing the full due diligence process. During November and December 2021, the Committee partnered with the following Chairs to finalize the structure of the due diligence process, encompassing Round 1 and Round 2 procedures:

- Janet Andersen, Chair, Planning Board
- Robin Price, Chair, Zoning Board of Appeals
- Rose Bonanno, Chair, Architecture & Community Appearance Review Council

Given their familiarity with the RFP responses and their contributions to the due diligence process, the Steering Committee invited Robin Price, Chair, ZBA and Rose Bonanno, Chair, ACARC, to continue participating throughout Round 2.

At its meeting on [December 21, 2021](#), the Planning Board discussed and approved the formation of a Planning Board subcommittee for the purposes of conducting interviews during the Round 2 due diligence process. The subcommittee, consisting of Charlene Indelicato (also a Steering Committee member) and Janet Andersen, agreed to report back to the Planning Board after the interviews were completed and to discuss making the Planning Board's recommendation to the Town Board. All members of the Planning Board were given access to the RFP responses and encouraged to review and share any questions or concerns they would like addressed during the interview process.

To summarize, the following individuals participated in both Round 1 and Round 2 of the due diligence process:

- Katie McGinn, Chair, Steering Committee
- Charlene Indelicato, Steering Committee & Planning Board subcommittee
- John Wolff, Steering Committee
- Larry Mango, Steering Committee
- Mark Robbins, Steering Committee

- Janet Andersen, Chair, Planning Board & Planning Board subcommittee
- Robin Price, Chair, Zoning Board of Appeals
- Rose Bonanno, Chair, Architecture & Community Appearance Review Council

Please note, Rose Bonanno, Chair, ACARC, was not able to participate fully in the Round 2 interviews due to personal reasons. She therefore did not participate in the final deliberations.

Going forward in this document, the collection of 8 individuals listed above will be referred to as the “due diligence group” or “the group.”

Round 1 Review

The goal of Round 1 was to determine which consulting firms would move forward to the Round 2 interviews. The due diligence group agreed that there was no limit on the number of firms that could move forward – i.e. if all 5 firms merited further exploration, then all 5 could move forward.

During the November and December meetings, the Steering Committee and additional Chairs finalized a Round 1 due diligence worksheet that would act as a guide for the group as it reviewed the 5 RFP responses over the nearly 2-month period.

The worksheet, available on the following pages, was designed to capture individual group members' impressions and questions as they reviewed the submissions. Each of them assigned 1 – 10 points to the 10 worksheet questions, for a total of 100 possible points.

Completed worksheets were provided to Katie McGinn (Steering Committee Chair) by December 31, 2021. Before meeting as a group during the first week of January 2022, Katie McGinn aggregated the group's scores, rankings and questions and concerns (i.e. "red flags"). Katie McGinn showed the average score and rank, along with a list of "red flags" for each consulting firm to the full group before the meetings scheduled for discussion and deliberation.

Please see the following pages for the Round 1 scoring worksheet.

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Town of Lewisboro

ROUND 1 SCORING WORKSHEET (HIGH LEVEL/ADMINISTRATIVE/PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOCUS)

Your Committee or Board Name:

Your Name:

CONSULTANT NAME:

Category	Description	Score 1 - 10 POINTS
Scoring: 1 = Poor, 5 = Average, 10 = Excellent		
1. Overall level of detail	<i>How much effort, care and thought did the team put into the proposal?</i>	
2. Understanding of Lewisboro	<i>Did the team research our Town? Did they demonstrate an understanding of the history, especially as it relates to the Comp Plan? Did they demonstrate an understanding of challenges residents face, especially re: new/post COVID life?</i>	
3. Understanding of Lewisboro government	<i>Did the team research the various departments, Boards, Committees and Councils? Did they demonstrate an understanding of their various roles and how each interacts with the residents & Town Board?</i>	
4. Understanding of my role in project	<i>How well do you feel the team understands and/or envisions your Committee or Board's potential participation in the project?</i>	
5. Demonstration of creative thinking and innovation	<i>Do you feel confident the team can think creatively about the project in order to produce better results? Did they share a vision for WHY innovation and forward thinking is important? Did they show how they've innovated to find smart solutions in the past?</i>	
6. Focus on community engagement	<i>How would you rate the team's willingness and ability to engage residents & stakeholders in a way that's effective and fair and equal for all? Did they provide examples of using a wide range of methods to generate community participation and community & Town Board buy-in?</i>	
7. Focus on effective project management	<i>How well can the team organize the various tasks and information, manage deadlines and communicate with the various Boards, Committees and the public? Were they conscious about creating a pricing menu and flexible implementation options for the project?</i>	
8. Experience with similar projects	<i>Did the team effectively explain their experience with similar projects (i.e. communities of our size & character, with hamlets) and demonstrate how and why the experience is useful? Does the leader have specific, useful experience?</i>	
9. Experience & qualifications of proposed team	<i>How well is the team organized? How would you rate the experience, qualifications and accolades/awards of the team, with an eye towards how they would benefit the project?</i>	
10. Any red flags?	<i>If you didn't see any glaring issues (AKA red flags), assign 10 points. (Please describe any issues on page 2.)</i>	

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Town of Lewisboro

ROUND 1 SCORING WORKSHEET (HIGH LEVEL/ADMINISTRATIVE/PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOCUS)

Your Committee or Board Name:

Your Name:

CONSULTANT NAME:

	TOTAL SCORE (100 POSSIBLE POINTS)	
Please list any questions you would like to ask this consultant team if they proceed to Round 2/Interviews:		
Please describe any "red flags" here:		
FEES FOR SERVICES and RANK:		

The group spent a total of 3 hours during its January 4, 2022 and January 6, 2022 meetings discussing the RFP responses. The average score and average rank served as a useful jumping off point for discussion - these figures alone did not determine which of the consulting firms moved forward to the next round. Each member of the group was able to share their observations of each consulting firm and then participate in a discussion about which should move forward and why.

Conclusion – Round 1 Review

Ultimately, the group decided to schedule interviews with 3 out of the 5 consulting firms.

The group also decided to ask the remaining 2 firms to hold dates for *potential* interviews, in case any of the 3 firms were later deemed unfit by the group.

Round 2 Interviews

The goal of Round 2 interviews was for the due diligence group to determine which consulting firm(s) could be confidently recommended to the Town Board. Please note, the Steering Committee would ultimately make a recommendation to the Town Board. The Planning Board would also be making a recommendation based on its subcommittee’s findings.

Initial Interviews

Initial interviews were scheduled with 1 hour devoted to each of the 3 firms and conducted remotely via Zoom. Prior to the interviews, the consulting firms were required to fill out a basic Conflict of Interest Questionnaire, designed by the Steering Committee. None of the firms (or their sub-contractors) declared any real or perceived conflicts of interest that could be an issue if they were selected for the project.

Also prior to the interviews, the consulting firms were asked to prepare a 20-minute presentation. The due diligence group chose to leave the content of the presentation open-ended, in order to assess the firms' abilities in summarizing information and creating engaging presentations.

Consultants were informed that the interview would follow a strict timetable as follows:

Agenda: Consultant Initial Interviews

I. CONSULTANT PRESENTATION (20 MINUTES)

- A. Introduce team
- B. Share highlights you feel are most important regarding your proposed approach to the project

II. MODERATED Q&A (40 MINUTES)

- A. Topic 1 (15 minutes MAX)
- B. Topic 2 (15 minutes MAX)
- C. Topic 3 (10 minutes MAX)
- D. Additional questions (If additional time, or at second interview as needed)

The due diligence group chose not to share the topics and specific questions ahead of time, in order to better assess the candidates time management skills and ability to speak extemporaneously. Provided below are the topics and specific questions the due diligence group had agreed to ahead of time. Katie McGinn acted as the moderator and timekeeper during each of the interviews. Please note, some of the consulting firms addressed some of these questions during their presentations, and therefore were able to cover more questions during their 40 minutes. Each of the interviews started and ended on time.

Initial Interviews: Q&A Outline

- A. Recent experience (15 minutes MAX, may be less if presentation has already highlighted these)
 - 1. How was the project team selected and why are they the appropriate professionals for this project?
 - 2. Please highlight a RECENT Comprehensive Plan project THIS TEAM has worked on that is similar or applicable to Lewisboro.

3. Please highlight your experience working with Towns made up of multiple Hamlets or districts and how that experience can apply to Lewisboro.
 4. Please describe how your team has adapted its approach to creating a Comprehensive Plan as a result of the pandemic. We're interested in hearing about changes to your thinking and your methodology.
 5. Please describe how your team has applied the concepts of Social Equity and Sustainability to recent plans and how this is applicable to Lewisboro.
 6. Please describe the project manager's approach to managing the team's deliverables and schedules. What tools will you use to manage workflows?
- B. Community engagement (15 minutes MAX, may be less if presentation has already highlighted)
1. What do you define as the groups that may be hard to reach - and how do you plan to engage them?
 2. Some issues can be very divisive. When you encounter these kinds of issues, what is your technique or strategy to resolve this?
 3. How do you envision the completed Comp Plan documents being used long-term by the community? What can you do to make sure this happens during the Plan process?
 4. How could you help the Steering Committee form sub-committees in order to implement or expedite community engagement? What sub-committees would you propose be formed and how would you populate them?
 5. What do you view as the role of education in community engagement/outreach?
- C. Land use (10 minutes MAX)
1. How does Lewisboro's lack of open land/land available for development impact your approach to the Comprehensive Plan?
 - a) Potential follow up: Are there any land use and associated zoning changes that you foresee needing to be investigated?
 2. Lewisboro has very limited commercial properties, most relegated to the hamlet centers and most struggling due to lack of a wide customer base. In addition, parking at the train station is limited. How will these specific issues impact your approach to the Comp Plan?
- D. Additional questions (If additional time available)
1. Please highlight how you've helped other Towns find funding for the ongoing Comp Plan project work and long-term implementation, and how this would be applicable for your work with Lewisboro.
 2. Please discuss the location of your offices and team members, and how this may impact your implementation of the project.

Conclusion – Initial Interviews

After the initial 1 hour interviews were completed, the group spent 1 hour discussing and answering the following questions:

- Do the 3 candidates interviewed represent a robust selection group, such that we can release the 2 firms holding dates for *potential* interviews?
- Which of the 3 candidates should move forward to a follow up interview?

During this discussion, the group decided that all 3 candidates should move forward for a second interview, consisting of 45 minutes. The group also agreed to tell the other 2 firms they would not be asked to interview. Finally, the group also honed in on what questions to ask and agreed to share the questions with the firms ahead of time.

Reference Checks

After informing the 3 finalist firms that they would be required for another interview, the Steering Committee set out to connect with the references each firm listed in their RFP response. Katie McGinn, as Steering Committee Chair, emailed every reference and requested feedback. Most individuals that responded provided detailed references via email, while a few requested to speak over the phone. Katie McGinn showed all email responses and/or notes from the phone calls to the full due diligence group in advance of the follow up interviews.

Follow Up Interviews

Prior to the follow up interviews, candidates received the following agenda and were informed that the interview would follow a strict timetable. In sharing the agenda ahead of time, the due diligence group aimed to assess the candidates' abilities in synthesizing information and communicating efficiently and effectively. Katie McGinn acted as moderator and timekeepers during the follow up interviews. Each of the interviews started and ended on time.

Follow Up Interviews: Agenda and Q&A Outline

I. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION and IMPLEMENTATION (30 MINUTES)

A. Timeline

1. Please elaborate on your proposed project timeline and how you plan to interact with the Steering Committee and the Town Board throughout.

B. Budget

1. Please clarify/elaborate – does the proposed budget include (or not) possible zoning code changes?
2. Are the zoning code changes suggested, or actionable in some way?
3. If not, could you give us a ballpark for how much it would cost and how long it would take to include actionable zoning code changes in the full project scope?

4. Please clarify/elaborate – does the proposed budget include (or not) all aspects of SEQR compliance?
5. If not, could you give us a ballpark for how much it would cost and how long it would take to include a Long Form Environmental Assessment Form (EAF)?
6. In general, please describe situations where the Comp Plan project as you've proposed would end up costing more than your proposed budget.

II. ADDITIONAL Q&A (15 MINUTES)

A. Additional/technical questions

1. How will you use the results from our initial survey?
2. What do you see as the role of GIS in developing the plan? Since our town lacks an employee skilled in GIS, what should be done to ensure that the GIS tools that you develop remain accessible and relevant to the Town as we move forward?
3. Please describe how your team has adopted the concept of resiliency in Comprehensive Plans and what is the scope of resiliency (town functions, infrastructure, computer systems and data, town services etc.)?
4. Do you have any experience with the topic of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs and if/how they can be integrated into the Comprehensive Planning process?
5. Please highlight how you've helped other Towns find funding for the ongoing Comp Plan project work and long-term implementation, and how this would be applicable for your work with Lewisboro. (If you have not previously answered this question.)
6. Please discuss the location of your offices and team members, and how this may impact your implementation of the project. (If you have not previously answered this question.)

Conclusion – Follow Up Interviews

After the follow up interviews were completed, the group spent 3 hours discussing and answering the question of which firm to recommend to the Town Board and how to format the recommendation.

Please see the next section for the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section contains 2 separate recommendations, set forth by the Town of Lewisboro Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. (Please see the previous section for detailed methodology.) 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

As discussed in the previous section, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the additional Council & Board participants (“the due diligence group”) underwent an extensive due diligence process in order to arrive at the final recommendation.

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.

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.

The Nelson Pope Voorhis (with Starr Whitehouse) - hereinafter referred to as NPV - project team consists of the following individuals (in the order listed in their RFP):

- Valerie Monastra, AICP, Project Manager
- Bonnie Franson, AICP CEP, PP
- Jonathan Lockman, AICP
- Adriana Beltrani, AICP
- Scott Newhart
- Aleeza Langert
- Osman Barrie, PE, PTOE, PTP
- Michael Haggerty, AICP, Starr Whitehouse
- Chris Anderson, PLA, Starr Whitehouse

In the following tables, the due diligence group has set out to explain why they’re recommending NPV. Table 1 outlines observations the group has 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.

Table 1: Rationale for Recommending NPV

Due Diligence Category	Observations
Attention to detail & understanding of Lewisboro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of Lewisboro’s government, the role of various Committees and Councils, and the role of resident associations/organizations • Acknowledgement of the importance of the Town’s hamlet structure • Careful project design that can incorporate all the various meetings and visioning sessions requested in the RFP • Project design that provides for efficiencies in updating Comprehensive Plan alongside Zoning Code • Proactive background research into the Town, extending to specific Town Board Resolutions and applicable Country resources
Communication methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organized RFP response, clearly articulated project process, deliverables, and opportunities to adjust budget based on total number of meetings • Clear, concise, and engaging presentation and Q&A sessions during interviews • Proactive and timely responses via email • Effective time management during interviews • Multiple team members contributed during interviews
Approach to community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly see their role as facilitators, tasked with engaging and listening to the Lewisboro community, including public and private stakeholders, and finding solutions • Dedicated to creating a community outreach plan designed to promote fair and equal opportunities and engage as much of the Lewisboro community as possible • Recognized the need, as outlined in the RFP, to engage with and solicit input via meetings or workshops with each hamlet • Presented a range of engagement methods, including creative virtual and pop-up events • Highlighted the importance of small/breakout stations or sessions to facilitate in depth discussions • Highlighted Starr Whitehouse’s ability to create conceptual plans, drawings and 3D models to bring community vision to life and use these to confirm if they’ve understood community feedback
Approach to creative thinking and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided examples of how they’ve adapted their approach to Planning and engagement during COVID, and how pandemic related outcomes influence the Town’s future

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated clear understanding of Comprehensive Planning themes outlined in the RFP, such as resiliency (infrastructure, emergency services), sustainability and social equity – and how these are applicable to Lewisboro
Approach to project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighted importance of recurring internal meetings, meetings with the Steering Committee and Town Board for project management • Use Microsoft Teams internally to ensure compliance to project deadlines
Timeline (see next table for more details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed efficient timeline that commences research into proposed revisions to Zoning Code once draft Comprehensive Plan has been prepared (see next table) • Acknowledged need for flexibility in timeline, based on scheduling of Town meetings and public hearings
Budget (see next table for more details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible options presented for project budget, based on total number of workshops and meetings • After adjusting number of total meetings with Town Committees and Councils, project cost falls in the middle of the 3 finalists’ proposals (see next table) • Even after adjustments, project still includes highest number of public workshops, and highest number of Town meetings compared to other finalists (see next table)
Approach to pursuing funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated knowledge and successful experience with a range of grants/funding sources, including NY Consolidated Funding Application grants, NY Greenway grants and Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grants • Project manager has worked as a grant writer for municipal clients • Highlighted Starr Whitehouse’s work creating visual/conceptual plans, drawings and 3D models can help strengthen grant applications
References and experience with similar projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High response rate and multiple team members positively highlighted during reference checks • Successful experience and positive references from Towns with rural character and multiple hamlets • For example, the Town of Carmel, which also consists of multiple hamlets and is in the NYCDEP watershed regulated region

Table 2: Comparison of Project Details – Finalists

Firm (In order of adjusted project cost, low to high)	Firm A	Firm B - NPV	Firm C
Total team proposed hours	1,052 hours	1,221 hours	865 - 995 hours
Project timeline	24 months	13 – 18 months Depending on flexibility in scheduling internal Town meetings	18 months
Project cost	\$138,000	\$163,000 To be adjusted based on number of meetings and workshops: \$2,000 - \$4,000 per workshop \$500 - \$800 per meeting <i>For example, if 17 Town Committee meetings were consolidated to 10 meetings and 12 land use Board meetings were consolidated to 6 meetings – project cost would be between: \$152,600 - \$156,500</i>	\$146,000 To be adjusted based on adding optional creative engagement tools (a la carte menu): \$13,500 Imagination Station w/ 5 outings \$8,500 Imagination Station Activities \$3,800 Youth Outreach Team \$1,200 per Walkshops (1-2 hr) \$10,000 per Newsletter issue \$10,000 - \$14,000 Pop-up Shop <i>For example, if all of the above, with exception of Newsletters and Walkshops, were added – project cost would be between: \$181,800 - \$185,800</i>

	Firm A	Firm B - NPV	Firm C
Including proposed zoning code updates?	Yes	Yes	No (Typical cost would be \$20,000 - \$40,000 more, and additional 3 – 6 months)
Including all aspects of SEQR compliance?	Yes (No GEIS)	Yes (No GEIS)	Yes (No GEIS)
Number of public meetings	6 public sessions, workshops, open houses (including 3 focused on hamlets) 3 public hearings <i>9 TOTAL</i>	9 public workshops (including 1 for each hamlet) 2 public hearings <i>11 TOTAL</i>	2 public workshops (including 1 focused on hamlets) 1 public work session 1 public hearing <i>4 TOTAL</i>
Number of Town meetings	10 Town Board, PB, ZBA, ACARC, and CAC meetings 4 Town Committee meetings <i>14 TOTAL</i>	6 Town Board meetings 17 Town Committee meetings 11 land use Board meetings (Town Board, PB, ACARC, ZBA, and CAC) 6 Town Board work sessions Can be shifted or Can be reduced during contract discussions, will reduce project price accordingly <i>40 TOTAL</i>	1 Town Board meeting 3 Town Committee meetings (1 with PB, ZBA and ACARC, 1 with CAC, 1 with Chairs of Committees OR separate phone calls with Chairs of Committees) Can be shifted during contract discussions, will not impact project price as long as total hours remain <i>4 TOTAL</i>
Number of Steering Committee meetings	12 meetings	10 meetings	12 - 18 meetings

Recommendations for Next Steps

With this document, the Steering Committee has provided its recommendation to the Town Board. The Town Board is the ultimate decision-maker and will hire the consulting firm to proceed with the Comprehensive Plan project. The Steering Committee will provide any assistance required during that process.

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. As a reminder, a complete discussion of the 3 project phases, along with a working timeline, is available in the second section of this document.

Recommendations

- It is the Steering Committee's hope that the Town Board will be able to decide upon and engage a consulting firm by the end of April 2022. NPV has agreed to extend their committed cost until May 1, 2022.
- According to NY State Law, "Once a comprehensive plan is adopted using the State zoning enabling statutes, all land use regulations of the community must be consistent with the comprehensive plan." ([Quote found on page 10 of this report.](#)) In other words, State Law requires that any change to the Comprehensive Plan is translated into updates in Zoning Code in a timely fashion.

Therefore, the Steering Committee strongly recommends that the Comprehensive Plan update project include proposed Zoning Code updates. If the Town Board follows the recommendation to hire NPV, this dual update is factored into their proposed project plan. The Steering Committee recommends that the Town discuss this matter with the Planning Board attorney, Judson Siebert, to obtain additional insight, and to ascertain whether collaboration between the Planning Board attorney and the project consultant will be covered under the Planning Board attorney's standing contract.

The Steering Committee further recommends that the Planning Board attorney and his firm, Judson Siebert and Keane & Beane, be engaged as the legal advisors for the Zoning Code updates. As the current Planning Board attorney, he is aware of some of the challenges with the current Codes. The firm has many attorneys who can be called upon for their specialized knowledge. The Committee believes extra care will be taken by the counsel who will have to operate under the new Code and explain nuances to both the Planning Board and applicants.

The Steering Committee is aware that the Town Board attorney must advise the Board and ultimately approve as to form.

Please note, the Committee’s recommendation to plan for updates to Zoning Code does not imply any kind of assumptions as to what those updates might be. NPV has stated that their proposed budget does not anticipate a complete rewrite or reorganization of the Code. Instead, following drafting the updated Comprehensive Plan, NPV would work with the Steering Committee and various Town Boards to identify priority zoning amendments that could be implemented within the budget presented.

The Steering Committee also recommends that the Town include in the project contract an option to continue working (i.e. negotiate an extended contract) with the consulting firm on any further Zoning Code updates that are not covered under the original scope.

- Following the hire, the first step would be for the Steering Committee to meet with the consultant for a project kickoff. During this meeting, the group would discuss and confirm project schedule and public outreach goals and aspirations, as well as identify the various stakeholders and hard-to-reach populations within the Town.

The Steering Committee also has a quarterly project update to the Town Board tentatively scheduled for April – the Committee recommends this moving to May in order to accommodate an update made to the full Town Board following the consultant kickoff meeting.

In Conclusion

The recommendations set forth in this section are the result of an extensive due diligence process and, as outlined in the previous sections of this report, the culmination of over a year of work put forth by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee is dedicated to continuing to pursue the Comprehensive Plan update project in alignment with its mission statement and with great care and attention to detail.

The Committee looks 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 visit the following website for contact information: <https://www.lewisborogov.com/cmpsc>.