

Chapter X
Public Participation and
Compliance with the
State Land Use Act

West Warwick Comprehensive Plan

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Development of the West Warwick Comprehensive Plan was accomplished through the active participation of Town residents. Citizens were given the opportunity to be involved in its preparation from project initiation to final public hearings through the following activities:

- Public Kickoff Meeting;
- Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee;
- Citizen Attitude Survey (telephone); and,
- Public Workshops;
- Public Hearings.

The following summarizes the participation in and results of these activities.

X.1 Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

Advertisements inviting interested West Warwick residents to participate in the Advisory Committee (CPAC) were placed in the Kent County Times in 1989. Those persons interested in participating were appointed by the Town Council, including the following members:

Member	Affiliation
Kirk Andrews	Planning Board
Richard Aube	Planning Board
Nancy Blessing	Member-at-large
Eileen Carey	Member-at-large
Cyrille Cote	Police Department
George Coyne	Planning Board
James Hart	Planning Board
Maurice Lague	Member-at-large
Jack Lancellotta	Member-at-large
Frederick L. Mason III	Member-at-large
Gunther Neumann	Planning Board, Chairman
Denise Rondeau	Economic Development Commission
Patricia Walker	Member-at-large
Wayne Muschiano, resigned	Member-at-large
Lewis Turner, resigned	Member-at-large

The CPAC has posted and conducted monthly meetings open to the public beginning in February, 1990, at which discussions on various topics regarding the Plan were held. The following lists the meetings conducted by the CPAC and the general topics discussed:

Date	Topics Discussed
2/7/90	Roles and responsibilities of various parties, State Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, Neighborhood delineation
4/4/90	Issues definition



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Date	Topics Discussed
5/2/90	Development of questions for the citizen telephone survey; existing land use and issues
6/6/90	Results of citizen telephone survey; existing land use
7/11/90	Demographics; housing; community services and facilities
7/30/90	Subcommittee meetings
8/1/90	Transportation and circulation; community services and facilities
8/16/90	Subcommittee meetings
9/5/90	Economic development; community services and facilities
9/25/90	Subcommittee meetings
10/3/90	Economic development
11/14/90	Natural resources
1/9/91	Recreation and open space
2/13/91	Cultural resources; land capability
2/27/91	Public workshop
3/7/91	Public workshop
5/8/91	Review of goals, policies and actions
5/14/91	Review of goals, policies and actions
6/12/91	Review of goals, policies and actions
6/26/91	Review of goals, policies and actions
7/10/91	Review of goals, policies and actions
8/14/91	Implementation program
9/11/91	Planning Board public hearing

The responsibility of the CPAC was to review information presented by the planning consultant, Albert Veri & Associates, Inc., to interpret public input, and to distill that information into goals, policies and implementation actions. Midway through the process, the CPAC divided into four subcommittees, addressing specific issues in a smaller group setting. Experts were invited into subcommittee meetings, and subcommittee members prepared draft goals, policies and action statements for each Plan element. Albert Veri and Associates with Siegmund and Associates met with the CPAC on a regular basis and provided technical information and other data for the members.

Data and other information was made available for public review at the Town Planner's office throughout the planning process. The results of the CPAC's efforts are presented as the body of this Comprehensive Plan.

X.2 Kickoff Meeting/Issues Identification

The CPAC held its kickoff meeting on April 4, 1990 in the Town Hall. A presentation of the purpose and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan was given, after which citizens were able to ask questions about the Plan and planning process. A brief questionnaire asking residents to list their ideas and suggestions for the Town was administered, and an open discussion of the some of these ideas was conducted. A summary of the responses is included in Chapter I of this Plan.

X.3 Citizen Attitude Survey

In May, 1990, Alpha Research Associates conducted a poll of 411 West Warwick residents over the age of 18 in a study designed to assist in the development of the Comprehensive



Plan. The questionnaire was designed to elicit residents' opinions about town services, quality of life, development etc., as they currently exist in West Warwick and opinions regarding directions for West Warwick's future development. Appendix I-A includes the full survey report.

X4 Public Workshops

The CPAC advertised, publicized and conducted two public workshops to hear the concerns of Town residents regarding planning issues. The first meeting, held February 27, 1991, attracted approximately 25 attendees, while the second, March 7, 1991 attracted four residents. Posters announcing the meetings were placed throughout the Town, over 800 announcements were delivered in local cable television bills, and advertisements were published in local newspapers.

The format of each meeting included an introduction by a member of the Advisory Committee, and a presentation of findings by a representative of Albert Veri & Associates. The audience was then divided into smaller groups to discuss a series of questions/topics (listed below).

1. Housing

This category includes all types of housing, single family detached and condominiums, multifamily apartments, triple deckers, senior housing, homeless shelters etc.

- 1.1 Who are the people who have the hardest time affording housing in West Warwick?
- 1.2 Should the Town look at changing residential lot sizes permitted under zoning?
- 1.3 For what reason(s)?
- 1.4 In what parts of Town?

2. Commercial and Industrial Land Use

Commercial land uses include those areas used for shopping, including neighborhood stores, strip malls, and business centers such as Arctic. Industrial land use addresses primarily manufacturing and/or distribution activities.

- 2.1 How can the Town's shopping areas be improved?
- 2.2 Considering the need to expand the Town's tax base to reduce the tax burden on residents, how can the Town attract more industrial and commercial land uses?
- 2.3 Considering the substantial vacant mill space in the Town, what uses do you think would be appropriate for the mills?

3. Community Facilities

This category addresses community facilities and services including water, sewer, police, fire, human services, garbage disposal, schools and library.

- 3.1 Are community services adequate in your neighborhood? (Includes water, sewer, drainage, garbage removal, fire, police, libraries, schools, senior services, social services)
- 3.2 How can they be improved?
- 3.3 How do you feel about recreational areas in Town? Do they meet your families' needs?
- 3.4 How can the Town's parks and recreational areas be improved?



4. Natural/Cultural Resources

This category includes surface water (lakes, rivers), open spaces, groundwater, flood-prone areas, areas of natural beauty, and historical areas.

- 4.1 What natural areas in Town do you feel are important and need to be preserved?
- 4.2 Should the Town consider instituting stronger guidelines for the design and siting of developments?
- 4.3 Should the Town adopt ordinances to help preserve its historical resources?
- 4.4 What historical areas of the Town should be preserved?

5. Traffic/Transportation

This element addresses your concerns for travel throughout the Town, including roads, bridges, intersections and interchanges, pedestrian traffic, bicycle traffic, parking and public transit.

- 5.1 What road improvements are necessary to upgrade existing traffic conditions?
- 5.2 What are the parking problems in your neighborhood?
- 5.3 Do you use public transportation? (RIPTA) How local bus service be improved?
- 5.4 Would you use bicycle or walking trails if they were made available? Where should they be located?

Attendees were also encouraged to discuss other topics. Responses to the above questions and other comments made by attendees were noted and considered during preparation of final goals, policies and actions.

X5 Public Participation Summary

The Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act states:

"In order to encourage citizen participation in the comprehensive planning process, Planning Boards, Commissions or Committees are directed to adopt comprehensive plans only after soliciting and considering public input. Public Hearings by the Planning Board, Commission or Committee and the Municipal legislative body are required to be held prior to the adoption of a comprehensive plan."

The public participation program for the West Warwick Comprehensive Plan was aimed at providing a wide range of opportunities for local residents to present their concerns for the future of the Town. A core group of CPAC members participated regularly in meetings which resulted consistency throughout the process.

X6 Schedule for Compliance with State Land Use Act

Chapter IX establishes the schedule for attaining the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Ordinance and Map will be brought into conformance with the Comprehensive Plan within 18 months of the Plan's approval by the State Department of Administration, Division of Planning.

X7 Comprehensive Plan Checklist

The following checklist is that presented in the Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan for the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, June, 1989, Appendix D.



Section	Response
Municipality	West Warwick
Date of Submission to State	April, 1992
Elements Submitted	Chapter II - Land Use Chapter III - Housing Chapter IV - Economic Development Chapter V - Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter VI - Community Services and Facilities Chapter VII - Open Space and Recreation Chapter VIII - Circulation Chapter IX - Implementation
Form of Submission	Comprehensive report with maps, tables, charts etc.
Content and organization of submission	Goals and policies statement included as part of each element (Elements II - VIII). Implementation program for all elements in one section (Element IX). Citizen participation effort described (Element X). Schedule for zoning compliance with Plan included (Element X). Names of municipalities with which the Plan has been coordinated - Coventry, Cranston, Warwick, East Greenwich.
Citizen Participation Program	a. Citizens Advisory Committee Number of members - 16. Number of meetings - 23 as of 8/28/91. Number of meetings of Committee with Planning Board - 23 (Planning Board part of Committee). Number of reports submitted by Committee to Planning Board - NA. File of meeting notices and minutes maintained - yes. b. Public informational meetings and workshops Number of meetings or workshops held - 3 Attendance - Lowest = 4; Highest = 25 File of meeting notices and records of discussions maintained - yes. c. Meetings with civic and other organizations - members of these groups attended a number of committee meetings throughout the process. d. Other citizen participation activities or efforts Conducted citizen telephone survey.



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Section	Response
Local Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan	Adopted by Planning Board and Town Council
State Assistance	

