



Town of Wascott Comprehensive Planning Process “Public Participation Plan”

02/04/03

**Prepared by the Town of Wascott Planning Committee
And reviewed by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission
02/03/03**

**To be recommended by the
Town of Wascott Comprehensive Planning Committee
01/28/03**

**To be approved by the
Town of Wascott
02/04/03**

INTRODUCTION

Public participation is the process through which people who will be affected by or interested in a decision by a governmental body have an opportunity to influence its content before the decision is made.

Recognizing that the Town of Wascott Comprehensive Plan must reflect the people it serves, the Town of Wascott encourages citizen input throughout the development of the plan.

The Town of Wascott's Public Participation Plan forms the basic framework for achieving an interactive dialogue between local, state and federal decision-makers and the citizens of the Town of Wascott. The creation of the Public Participation Plan is the first step in meeting the requirements of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation and will apply throughout the local planning process leading to the adoption of the Town of Wascott Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Wascott will comply with the Public Participation Plan as appropriate to the situation as required by State statute 66.1001 (4)(a).¹ As the planning process develops, it should be expected that deviations from the plan might be warranted.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

General

The main goal of the Public Participation Plan is to make the citizens of the Town of Wascott aware of the progress of the comprehensive planning process and to offer the public opportunities to make suggestions and comments during the process. The plan activities, which the Town of Wascott has adopted, are designed to provide a broad-based dissemination of information and maximize the opportunity for citizen involvement and comment.

The majority of the public participation activities will focus on public information, education, and input. Public meetings will provide opportunities to discuss comprehensive planning issues with planning committee members and town board supervisors. Formal public hearings will also be conducted to allow public testimony either verbally, or written including postal or electronic mail, and fax.

Provisions for Open Discussion

The Town of Wascott will ensure that public meetings allow for an open discussion of relevant issues and those public hearings allow for appropriate testimony. To accomplish this, the following actions will be implemented:

1. An agenda will be established that clearly defines the purpose of the public meeting, or hearing, the items to be discussed, and any actions that may be taken.
2. The scheduled date, time, and place will be convenient to encourage maximum participation by the town residents and property owners.
3. A facilitator or chair will conduct the meeting or hearing in an orderly fashion to ensure that all attendees have an opportunity to comment, discuss issues, or provide testimony.
4. The facilitator or chair will outline the purpose of the meeting, or hearing, and the procedures attendees should use and how the public input will be used.
5. An overview of documents or proposals to be considered will be discussed.
6. All persons attending the meeting or hearing that desire to participate should be allowed to do so. However, specific factors, such as the meeting or hearing purpose, number in attendance, time considerations, or future opportunities to participate may require that appropriate constraints be applied. These constraints will be clearly outlined by the facilitator or chair if the need arises.
7. All attendees will be encouraged to sign in using a provided sign in sheet
8. Meetings and hearings will be recorded by appointed committee members.
9. Summaries will be transcribed and made available as soon as possible following a public meeting or hearing.
10. Special arrangements will be made under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with sufficient advance notice.

Opportunity for Written Comments

Detailed comments can most often be better expressed through written format. To encourage written comment throughout the planning process, the following steps will be taken:

1. All meeting and hearing notices will include the name, address, and e-mail address (if applicable) of person(s) to whom written comments should be sent along with any deadlines for submitting comments, when warranted.
2. Persons speaking or testifying will be encouraged to express their comments and provide specific details in written format.

Consideration of and Response to Public Comments

The following steps will be taken to ensure that public recommendations and comments are taken into consideration by the planning committee when developing the comprehensive plan:

1. Time will be reserved subsequent to the close of a meeting, hearing, or comment deadline and prior to the actual decision or recommendation being made to ensure that planning committee can adequately review all relevant materials or comments.
2. Planning committee may reconvene a public hearing for the purpose of addressing public comments.
3. The record (written comments or testimony, tape recordings, or transcripts) of hearing and meeting summaries will be compiled by appointed committee members and made available to planning committee for their review and consideration.
4. Substantive comments pertaining to studies, analysis, or reports, along with appropriate responses, will be included in the published documents themselves.
5. Relevant comments or testimony will be addressed through the findings-of-fact portion of the planning committee's written decision or recommendation.

Public Meetings

The Town of Wascott will hold public meetings to assimilate information collected relevant to the nine elements of the comprehensive plan.

1. By participating in meetings citizens can aid the planning committee in creating a vision for their community's comprehensive plan.
2. Interested citizens can also become involved in the planning process as members of their community's planning sub-committees.

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Meeting Notices

Official meeting notices will be prepared for any of the above public meetings or hearings conducted pertaining to the comprehensive planning process.

1. At a minimum, the requirements of state statute §19.31 pertaining to public meetings and notification will be met.
2. The town staff will place meeting notices at the town's designated posting locations.
3. Meeting notices will be posted at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.
4. All public hearings will be published as per a Class II notice.

Mailings

Interested citizens will have opportunities to place their name on a mailing list to receive additional information regarding the planning process via direct mail or e-mail where applicable.

1. The consultant will compile and maintain this mailing list.
2. Names to be included on the mailing list will originate from meeting and hearing sign-in sheets, written correspondence, and individual requests. This list may also be used for newsletter circulation, special mailings, and notices as appropriate.
3. An annual newsletter will be developed and mailed to inform residents and property owners about comprehensive planning issues including a list of contacts from which citizens can gain additional information and an address or e-mail where comments can be sent.
4. Interested citizens may request more detailed information on land use related topics. To provide more detail to these citizens, articles may be prepared from time to time by the consultant or Planning Committee.

Planning Document Distribution

Any proposed comprehensive plan documents, policies, maps and recommendations will be available for public review ten (10) calendar days prior to any public hearing scheduled for their discussion or a decision.

1. Documents may be distributed by posting digital versions on consultant's website, a copy will be at the town hall, and a copy will be available at the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, 1400 S River Street, Spooner, WI 54801 during normal business hours.

Public Hearings

Once the final draft of the Town of Wascott Comprehensive Plan is completed, the Town of Wascott with assistance from the consultant will conduct a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed plan. As plan development progresses, a schedule for these meetings will be prepared.

1. The Town of Wascott will place legal notice of hearings in the official newspaper. Hearing notices should be published as required by local and state requirements.²

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Town of Wascott Comprehensive Plan Adoption Process

The Town of Wascott will follow the procedures for adopting the comprehensive plan as listed in §66.1001(4)(a). The first step in the adoption process is being met by the adoption of this document that details written procedures that are designed to foster public participation throughout the comprehensive planning process.

Bernard Bergman, Town Chairperson

Steve Balcsik, Town Supervisor

Charles McCann, Town Supervisor

Attest: _____
Val Bremanis, Clerk/Treasurer

Approved by the Town of Wascott, Board of Supervisors on: _____

¹The governing body of a local governmental unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended elements of a comprehensive plan and shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments.

² Prior to the town enacting an ordinance approving the comprehensive plan, a hearing shall be conducted preceded by a Class 1 public notice that is published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. The town may also provide notice of the hearing by any other means it considers appropriate. According to the comprehensive planning legislation 66.1001 (4)(d), the Class 1 notice shall contain at least the following information:

1. The dates, time, and place of hearing.
2. A summary, which may include a map, of the proposed comprehensive plan or amendment to such a plan.
3. The name of an individual employed by the local governmental unit who may provide additional information regarding the proposed ordinance.
4. Information relating to where and when the proposed comprehensive plan may be inspected before the hearing and how a copy of the plan may be obtained.