

Walsh Property Community Planning Committee (WPCPC)
Summary for Meeting #4

May 26, 2021 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM
Zoom Webinar

Meeting in Brief

The Walsh Property Community Planning Committee (WPCPC) met virtually on May 26, 2021, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM on the Zoom webinar platform. This fourth meeting of the WPCPC included a discussion on how to further develop and refine the WPCPC's Community Engagement and Outreach Plan, a revisitation of the Committee's data needs, and a discussion on planning for a site visit of the Walsh Property.

Action Items

Who	What
WPCPC Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send comments / corrections for this (May 2021) meeting summary to Maggie Osthues, CBI by Thursday, June 24, 2021• If interested, volunteer for and participate in Sub-Committee Meeting to develop/refine Community Outreach & Engagement Plan.
Planning Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Once approved in the June 2021 WPCPC Meeting, post this meeting summary on the Town of Truro website along with the recording of this meeting (available to watch here)• Update the WPCPC Operating Protocols with new guidance about Co-chairs speaking on behalf of the Committee to the media• Schedule a meeting of a Sub-Committee before the June WPCPC Meeting to advance the Community Outreach & Engagement Plan• Work with Town Staff to plan a site visit to kick off the June WPCPC Meeting• Develop an overview of Bang the Table web platform• Address the Town Charter requirement that town committees contain an odd number of members by adding a high school member

Find details on upcoming WPCPC meetings, as well as prior agendas and materials at <https://www.truro-ma.gov/walsh-property-community-planning-committee-0>

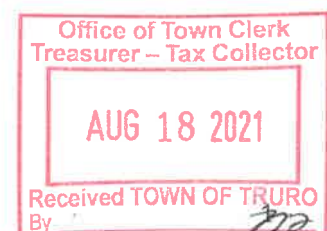
WPCPC Members in Attendance

Russ Braun
Eileen Breslin
Morgan Clark
Fred Gaechter
Kevin Grunwald

Susan Howe
Hannah King
Jane Lea
Christine Markowski
Craig Milan

Kenneth Oxtoby
Ryan Schmidt
Todd Schwebel
Paul Wisotzky
Steve Wynne

Town of Truro Select Board Liaison Stephanie Rein; Town of Truro staff Barbara Carboni, Darrin Tangeman, and Kelly Clark; and Consensus Building Institute (CBI) facilitation team Stacie Smith and Maggie Osthues were also in attendance.



I. Welcome

Due to impacts from COVID-19, Governor Charlie Baker issued an executive order on March 10, 2020, suspending certain provisions of Massachusetts's Open Meeting Law, allowing for online meetings open to the public in lieu of in-person gatherings. Meeting #4 of the WPCPC took place on the Zoom online webinar platform, with access information shared in the agenda posted with the public meeting notice on the Town of Truro's website.

Following a brief review of how to engage effectively on the Zoom webinar platform, WPCPC Co-chairs, Fred Gaechter and Paul Wisotzky, opened the fourth meeting of the WPCPC, welcoming attendees, calling roll, and calling a vote to approve the meeting summary from the third meeting on April 28, 2021, available to view on the Town website [here](#).

CBI Facilitator, Stacie Smith, reviewed the topics to be addressed in the meeting as well as the roles of the Committee's co-chairs, facilitators, and Town staff. Mr. Wisotzky highlighted that co-chairs will keep their personal views separate from their duties as co-chairs, and Ms. Smith suggested clarifying that co-chairs will continue to participate in WPCPC meetings as members to the list of the co-chairs' roles. One member raised concerns about confidential conversations between facilitators and WPCPC members between meetings, indicating a preference for such conversations to happen in the Committee forum.

Select Board Liaison Stephanie Rein updated the group on the Select Board discussion about the even number of WPCPC members, which does not comply with the Town Charter. The Select Board decided to create an additional seat to be filled by a high school student – this provides an odd number of members and brings in a youth voice. While this member may not be able to vote due to age requirements, they could provide input during deliberations and serve as a conduit to the student body. The Town will begin that application process soon.

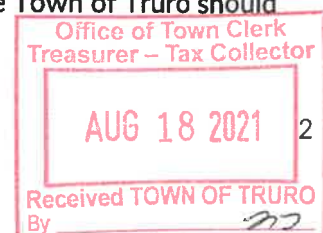
Regarding contact with media, Mr. Wisotzky and Mr. Gaechter presented a proposal to amend the Committee's operating protocols to allow WPCPC Co-Chairs to speak on behalf of the Committee to the media only about decisions that the Committee has made and content the Committee has approved (e.g., content in approved meeting summaries). Members did not raise any objections or concerns, and the Committee's operation protocols will be updated.

II. Discussion: Community Engagement and Outreach Plan

Stacie Smith, CBI facilitator, opened a committee discussion to develop and refine a community engagement and outreach plan, engaging members on the "who, what, where, when, and how" components of what a plan should include. Members were invited to provide suggestions directly onto a Google Document that was displayed during the meeting or contribute ideas verbally. Below is a brief synthesis of member inputs, organized by topic.

Who should the WPCPC be working to engage?

- WPCPC members stressed that the Committee should strive to reach all community members, including those that are not always represented at public meetings. Some named specific community groups, including families, trade workers, low-wage workers, part-time residents, retirees/seniors, students, employers, etc.
- To ensure inclusivity and diversity, WPCPC could target different groups based on different characteristics/demographics (e.g., age, visitors, homeowners, renters, families with children, etc.). One member suggested developing a methodology to ensure that WPCPC is reaching a representative audience by gathering information on who members are talking to.
- Members noted that businesses and the departments comprising the Town of Truro should also be included in outreach efforts.



What should the WPCPC be engaging people about?

- Some topics the WPCPC members could engage the community on included: their awareness of the process, ideas for the Walsh Property, favorite thing that could happen at the property, thoughts on the Truro community's broader needs and what could be appropriate on the property.
- WPCPC could engage the community around draft ideas that the Committee develops for the property, as well as the broader WPCPC process and progress to date.
- Members noted that the community has already identified some of their wishes and worries for the future of the Walsh Property, which the WPCPC could further evaluate and educate themselves about through presentations from experts.
- Members suggested creating a short questionnaire to guide community engagement efforts. Some proposed questions included: "When you think about the future of Truro, what concerns/excites you the most?" "What opportunities do you think the Walsh property presents for [topic]? What concerns do you have about [topic]?"

Where should community outreach and engagement efforts take place?

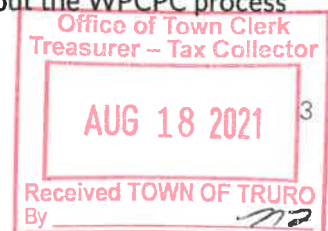
- Members emphasized the importance of meeting members of the community in places where they gather (e.g., schools, parks, places of worship, Truro Motor Inn, coffee shops, transfer stations, Truro Library, community events, etc.) Members noted that any engagement efforts on private property would need to secure permission in advance.
- WPCPC members suggested that they could split up and conduct engagement in different areas at assigned times, which could be complemented by online engagement efforts.
- Members raised concerns about how to reach homebound residents that may not be able to complete an internet survey or participate in in-person engagement. Suggestions to address that concern included cold-calling or accepting written input.

When should WPCPC conduct community outreach and engagement?

- Some suggested locations and times included a table at Town Meeting or specific times in different areas of town based on where people are already gathering (e.g., Truro Treasures in September, the Farmer's Market on Monday mornings, etc.).
- Some noted that summer was an important time to reach seasonal residents and visitors, but also could be a tricky time for year-round residents, who often work extensively during the summer.

How should WPCPC conduct its community outreach and engagement?

- One member noted that the WPCPC should, "Meet people where they are, as many ways as we can." Members suggested employing approaches like "office hours" (similar to a Select Board practice), charrettes, opportunities for people to draw and illustrate their visions, and online, asynchronous methods of engaging like surveys and opportunities for written input. The Town of Truro is in the process of setting up a virtual engagement platform through Bang the Table that could be very helpful for WPCPC's efforts.
- Members also highlighted the importance of coordinating with other ongoing Town outreach, such as coordinating with the LCP process, utilizing existing communication channels (e.g., e-newsletters from different Town entities), and inserts in the tax bill.
- Members highlighted Truro schools as a great opportunity to engage families on the Walsh Property and suggested coordinating a poster contest for students and communicating through the weekly email/flyer with updates for school families.
- Background materials could prove helpful for WPCPC members in their engagement efforts. Suggestions included an information sheet with some key details about the WPCPC process



and how to get involved, audio/visual aids (e.g., map of the property, drone video), and a questionnaire to guide discussions.

- Members noted that engagement could take place both organically – in informal conversations between WPCPC members and community members – as well as formally, through targeted outreach with questionnaires and data collection. Members proposed using a central hub to organize data from community engagement efforts.
- One member raised the importance of making space for qualitative engagement through conversations in dialogue and not just relying on quantitative data and data from surveying.

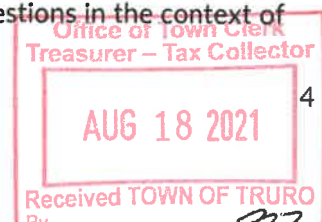
Considerations to Finalize Community Outreach & Engagement Plan:

- Members raised concerns about timing of engagement, noting that there have been many WPCPC meetings dedicated to process concerns, and moving forward on the community engagement may require more timely action than monthly meetings.
- Members proposed forming a volunteer subcommittee to meet prior to the June 30 WPCPC Meeting to further develop and refine a community outreach and engagement plan, to be presented and finalized at the June 30 WPCPC meeting.
- Members noted that summertime and shifting COVID restrictions could pose challenges for community engagement and should be accounted for in the plan.
- One member noted frustration with the pace of the WPCPC process and stressed the importance of planning for iterative community engagement efforts that happen over a longer period of time to capture a range of voices at different points during the process.

III. Discussion: Revisit Data Needs

Stacie Smith, CBI facilitator, opened a discussion to revisit the data needs of the WPCPC. In preparation for that discussion, members were asked to review the resources that have been compiled and posted on the project page based on inquiries made at previous WPCPC meetings: <https://www.truro-ma.gov/walsh-property-community-planning-committee-0> (links to resources can be found in the left sidebar). Ms. Smith asked members to reflect on what they have learned, what they think the Committee needs to know more about, and how the Committee could learn more. Below is a brief synthesis of discussion.

- **Older Reports:** Members raised concerns that some of the data that has been collected is dated and may not reflect the Town's current status, especially given how much has changed in the past 1.5 years. Members also acknowledged the constraint of resources and capacity to update Town assessments and reports.
 - Ms. Smith highlighted the need for WPCPC members to think through what WPCPC and the town absolutely needs to know to inform decision-making.
- **Housing Needs:** Members discussed whether there is adequate knowledge about Truro's current and future housing needs. A Truro Housing Authority member noted that the 2015 assessment provides a fairly accurate sense of Truro's current needs, and that the affordable housing situation has likely worsened since the assessment was released given the continuation of identified demographic trends, including a growing senior community and housing loss for minimum wage workers. Members suggested housing ideas for the WPCPC to explore included co-housing models or dormitory housing for seasonal workers.
- **Legal Uses:** One member raised the need for WPCPC to know what proportions of the Walsh Property will be legally usable for any type of development in consideration of Cape Cod Commission regulations. Barbara Carboni, Truro Town Planner, noted that she has begun conversations with the Commission to better understand what proportion of the property could be developed. The Commission normally responds to such questions in the context of



specific project proposals. With regards to Development of Regional Impact (DRI) requirements, the Commission informed her that some projects could be exempt or might require waivers. She noted that the LCP Committee will also be thinking about these same questions and that she welcomes additional discussion about legal concerns with regards to the property's uses.

- **Town Needs:** Members suggested that WPCPC better understand the needs of the Town of Truro's government related to the Walsh Property, as well as the future capacity of the Town to provide municipal services. WPCPC will need more information on the existing structures on the property and the costs to pursue potential uses of them or to remove them.
- **Budget Expectations:** A member asked whether the Town and taxpayers had expectations about whether development on the property would need to recoup the cost of buying the property. Members noted that greater clarity is needed on what is possible and what is expected with regards to budgets and costs.

To close, Ms. Smith encouraged those WPCPC members that had not yet reviewed the compiled reports and information to do so and reflect on next steps for the WPCPC in terms of data needs and additional information.

IV. Planning for Walsh Property Site Visit

Stacie Smith, CBI facilitator, presented the Planning Team's proposal for a WPCPC Site Visit to the Walsh Property. Members had previously shared their availability and scheduling preferences for a site visit via online survey, and Wednesday afternoons were indicated as a popular time. Therefore, the Planning Team proposed incorporating a site visit into the June 30 meeting date for the WPCPC, shifting the meeting from 6:30-8:30 PM to 3-6 PM ET, with the first half of the meeting being a group site visit. The Planning Team will work to arrange an itinerary for the visit to best move the Committee around the site and set up an on-site (or site-adjacent) meeting and debrief following the visit.

Below are member clarifying questions and comments posed following Ms. Smith's presentation. WPCPC member questions are **bolded**, answers from Truro staff and/or CBI are *italicized*, and any further comments or questions made by members are in regular text.

- **I am disappointed because I'm not going to be able to go. Was there any thought about having a supplemental visit on the weekend for those unable to meet that Wednesday meeting?**
 - *The Planning Team hopes to get as many possible WPCPC members there for the June 30 meeting and could also try to set up an alternative for those unable to attend.*
- **The Truro Town Meeting is on June 26, which most people will be present for. Could the tour be then?**
 - *No, Town Committees are not supposed to schedule any other meetings on the day of Town Meeting.*
- **If the site visit is the major component of the June 30 meeting, are we not going to discuss the other things we talked about today at our next meeting?**
 - *Sounds like it's time sensitive to talk about outreach. We can do that by ending tour and going home and get on our Zooms, or we can try to do it onsite.*
- **The State of Emergency in Massachusetts that allows for virtual public meetings ends on June 15. Is the plan for the WPCPC to engage in-person following June 15?**
 - *Truro does not have a firm answer or plan yet and is actively tracking legislation that could extend virtual public meetings. Truro should be prepared to transition back to fully in-person engagements, but there is definitely value in remote and hybrid participation.*



- I would prefer to have a full committee meeting and for the site visit to be an individual activity as a self-guided tour. It does not seem to make sense to host a public meeting at the site.
 - *Site visits can be accomplished in compliance of Open Meeting Law as long as there is not discussion and deliberation between members. The Planning Board does do their site visits as public meetings at scheduled times. At the Walsh Property specifically, there are safety concerns, and there does need to be a plan in place and some safety measures for people touring the site which would be best accomplished in a structured, group visit.*
 - *There has been great value in groups visiting sites together and seeing them through the eyes of their fellow committee members.*

V. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comment.

VI. Next Steps

Stacie Smith, CBI facilitator, described the next steps for the group. The next meeting of the WPCPC is Wednesday, June 30, from 3-6 PM ET, with a site visit incorporated. The volunteer sub-committee will meet to further develop and refine a draft Community Outreach & Engagement Plan in advance of the June 30 meeting. WPCPC members will then have an opportunity to independently review the draft plan over email and will discuss and finalize the plan together at the June 30 meeting. Ms. Smith encouraged WPCPC members that had not yet reviewed the compiled reports and information to do so and reflect on next steps for the WPCPC in terms of data needs and additional information. She noted that the Town will hope to present an overview of the community engagement online platform Bang the Table at the July WPCPC meeting. WPCPC co-chairs adjourned the meeting, thanking WPCPC members for their time and participation.

Respectfully submitted,