

Town of Red Hook Comprehensive Plan - Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2025 7:30-9:00pm
Red Hook Town Hall

In Attendance

Committee: Laurie Husted, Dennis Kanuk, Jennifer Mañón, Chuck Mead, Hart Migdal, Sam Phelan, Tricia Reed, Julia Solomon (Chair), Doug Strawinski

Liaisons: Sarah Imboden (Liaison, Village of Tivoli), Melkorka Kjarval (Liaison, Village of Red Hook), Taun Toay (Liaison, Bard College)

Guests: Eric Pierson (Pattern for Progress)

Regrets

Ben Shute, Christine Kane (Liaison, Red Hook Town Board)

Minutes

Minutes from the September 23rd meeting were approved.

Community Engagement Subcommittee Appointments

Zoe Evans, Kristin Larson, David Mimeles and Courtney Zwart were appointed to the subcommittee. Several additional individuals have expressed interest and may be recommended for appointment at future meetings.

Updates & Discussion – Community Engagement & Outreach

Laurie updated on two Kitchen Table Conversations, one of which was held at Bard College. Data were submitted to Pattern for Progress via the Kitchen Table Conversation form. The committee discussed methods and timing for engaging Bard students.

The Town of Red Hook Planning Board held a Special Meeting on October 27th to discuss the comprehensive plan visioning questions. Questions were discussed by the Board and members of the public who attended were invited to participate. Eric took notes, which will be incorporated with other community engagement data.

Next steps for community engagement are:

- 1) Broad promotion of the online Visioning Survey
- 2) Hosting Kitchen Table Conversations and assisting community groups/members in hosting these to encourage a wide range of perspectives including those that may be underrepresented in other parts of the process
- 3) Continuing other specific engagement activities (e.g. high school student engagement)

Committee members are encouraged to participate actively in all of these activities and can reach out to Julia and Eric with any questions or for assistance/support with an idea.

The visioning phase of the comprehensive planning process will continue for the next several months. At the November meeting the committee will discuss timing and criteria for shifting to the goal-setting phase.

Visioning Workshop Debrief

The first public workshop was held on October 21st in the Red Hook High School Cafeteria. All Steering Committee members and liaisons attended, along with approximately 70 members of the public. Eric stated that in Pattern for Progress's experience, this is a very strong turnout for an event like this. Committee members generally felt that the logistics of the event functioned well, attendees understood and followed the instructions, and conversations were lively and constructive.

The committee discussed to what extent the audience was representative of the broader Red Hook community and what perspectives may not have been well represented. There was also discussion about whether the facilitation style ensured that quieter voices had a chance to be heard. It was also discussed that although children were welcome, a childcare option and/or a different time of day might have made the event more accessible for families with young children and could be considered for future workshops.

Community Engagement – Preliminary Themes

Eric presented on emerging themes from community engagement to date, which should be considered very preliminary since analysis of already-collected data is not complete and community engagement is in the early stages.

Some emerging themes include:

- Tension between existing residents and “new” residents/visitors
- Questions about long-term balance of growth and preservation
- Balancing potentially conflicting priorities (e.g. housing, open space protection, historic preservation, alternative energy)
- Housing affordability
- How to respond to shifting demographics

The committee discussed these themes, which will be the basis of discussion at future meetings as additional information is collected and analyzed. The committee also briefly discussed the role of focus groups around specific topics.

Next Steps

Next meeting: November 25th, 7:30-9:00pm

The November meeting will include discussion of ongoing and planned community engagement, including focus groups, and review of preliminary themes and data.