



PRELIMINARY INPUT

Overview

This booklet has been prepared for Norfolk residents and other persons interested in the formulation of the 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Norfolk, Connecticut.

This booklet summarizes results from some introductory exercises which were conducted to provide input and guidance for the POCD update. These exercises included:

- A kickoff meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission where issues of concern / interest were expressed.
- A listening session where local boards, commissions, organizations, and officials were invited to provide input to the POCD.
- A survey of individual members of local boards and commissions.

An on-line survey of Norfolk residents is in process and the results will be shared at a later date.

Listening Sessions

The Planning and Zoning Commission had a kickoff meeting on March 22 where issues of concern / interest for the POCD were expressed. In addition, the Commission invited local boards, commissions, organizations, and officials to attend a listening session at Town Hall on April 26 to get their perspectives on issues of concern / interest for the POCD. Input received is organized below by Plan topics:

Conservation-Related Topics

Open Space	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is "open space"?2. Can we become more like Steep Rock Association in Washington where people drive there specifically for the open space?3. Should Norfolk create an "open space fund"?4. Can we use a conveyance fee to fund open space?5. Can we expand trails to connect open space areas?
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"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."

Margaret Wheatley
Writer

Development-Related Topics

<p>Village Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. POCD should revisit the village center 7. Should we have aesthetic controls in the village center? 8. Are the boundaries of the business district OK (some lots are split and most restrictive zone applies)? 9. How can we make the Village center more attractive for business? 10. How can we improve the village center in terms of parking, circulation, streetscape, etc. 11. How can we connect the business area to Battell Stoeckel Estate and other adjacent areas? 12. How do we make the Town Center stronger? 13. How can we improve downtown parking and walkways? 14. Can we improve access between downtown and Town Hall? 15. How can we bring trails into the center of Town so people can come in here and go out there?. 16. How can we connect all parts of the Center and adjacent areas together physically and organizationally (so they are not working independently)?
<p>Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Economic Development Commission is active in a lot of little things but it has been hard to attract significant new investment in economic development 18. May need more money for EDC to be able to accomplish more
<p>Residential Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Can we explore converting single-family homes to two+ family homes or mixed use? 20. Can we regulate short term rentals (lodging)? 21. POCD helped get affordable housing developed in Town Center and Foundation For Norfolk Living would like to continue this effort

Infrastructure-Related Topics

Community Facilities	<p>22. Library is a key part of the community and seeks to continue in that role</p> <p>23. Perhaps it is time for Norfolk to consider the need for a community center</p> <p>24. Safety and security of facilities (Town, school) is becoming an issue of concern</p> <p>25. Fire station needs to be addressed</p> <p>26. Fire service is always seeking to expand membership</p>
Transportation	<p>27. Can we do more to attract bicyclists?</p> <p>28. Can we attract bikers to park to park at Town Hall rather than in the downtown?</p> <p>29. We need to look at how we maintain local roads</p>
Utility Services	<p>30. The sewer plant needs ore flow to reduce operating costs and spread the burden over more properties / uses.</p> <p>31. Sewer system needs to be looked at</p> <p>32. Sewer system is suffering from inflow / infiltration and are looking to get approval to address this issue</p> <p>33. Availability of water service and sewer service is key to Norfolk's ability to strengthen the village center</p>

Other Topics

Fiscal	<p>34. How can we adapt to decline in revenue from the State and rising tuition costs at the regional high school?</p> <p>35. Do we need to revisit school consolidation with Colebrook or other solutions?</p>
Yale	<p>36. Can we encourage Yale to establish a year-round campus here (forestry, agriculture, music)?</p> <p>37. Can we encourage more public use of Yale facilities?</p> <p>38. Can we encourage year-round faculty and student housing with classrooms, auditorium, etc.?</p>
Other	<p>39. Who are we? What is our "brand"? How do we express Norfolk to others? How will people know us?</p> <p>40. How will changing demographics affect us? How can we attract younger people? How will we attract people who want to live and work here?</p> <p>41. We should celebrate and promote the organizations that hold the community together.</p> <p>42. Historical Society is looking to help Norfolk</p> <p>43. Norfolk Foundation is looking to help Norfolk</p>

Survey Of Board / Commission Members

In March and April, an on-line survey was made available to members of local boards and commissions in order to give them an opportunity to identify issues for consideration in the POCD. Responses are presented below.

Q1 – Please tell us which board / commission you serve on.

Planning & Zoning Commission	6
Economic Development Commission	4
Conservation Commission	2
City Meadow Committee	2
Board of Finance	2
Inland Wetlands	2
Land Trust	2
Other / Secondary	15
Totals may not add due to some people serving on multiple boards now or in the past	Total Responses
	31

Q2 - What do you particularly like about Norfolk?

1. The peace and quiet, the small New England town feel, the clean environment compared to much of the rest of the world.
2. music, art, history, nature
3. rural nature of the town, but mostly the openness and friendly people
4. The cultural opportunities; e.g. the Library, concerts, Infinity Hall, etc. Additionally, the sense of community.
5. Protected open space, Strength of community, a distance from malls and box stores...
6. Rustic but not primitive
7. The sense of community
8. The small town comfort and safety. The people (mostly).
9. Rural character, that's what you wanted to hear, right? I do like the rural and historic character of Norfolk
10. Country! The rural setting is the highlight followed by the unique history, architecture, and lack of sprawl. The strong community bond/pride is also excellent.
11. Almost everything
12. The beauty of the area
13. Smallness Very caring and generous community.
14. open space
15. The safety, the community feel you get when out and about.
16. Low population density and high quality of life.

17. That it is an inclusive community
18. outdoor activities, people
19. character of the town and the people
20. Everything plus all the people. There may be squabbles amongst but in the end everyone rallies to preserve what Norfolk is.
21. Its physical setting, outdoor recreation, its range of people, its size, its cultural offerings (music, art, books) -- and the presence of people who like such things.
22. Interesting mix of people, town's picturesque landscape, small town Americana feel
23. I love the enthusiasm of the people who live here and the natural beauty around us.
24. grew up here
25. Natural beauty
26. Small size, rough terrain, pretty nice people
27. Rural nature, friendly, small population, activities of its many private institutions that are community minded, natural beauty, four seasons.
28. Everything
29. The town drainage ditch has now been turned it's a drainage boardwalk
30. beautiful undeveloped outdoors

Q3 – Is there anything about Norfolk that you do not particularly care for?

31. village commercial area is hidden. if you didn't know it was there, there'd be no reason to stop
32. One building in the center looks out of place.
33. I wish there were a few more businesses/stores/ etc in the center.
34. High taxes and the difficulty in accepting and implementing change.
35. Taxes. The 85% forest and pasture don't anti-up well in that regard and there isn't the commercial base to carry the burden. I don't expect there will ever be a commercial base to take the tax burden off the residences, but creating a way to garner some income from the forest & pasture sure would help.
36. high taxes compared to what we get in return.
37. Expensive place to live; the older I get the longer the winters seem!
38. Dearth of some retail services
39. Lack of amenities
40. That we no longer have a resident trooper
41. We haven't had good pizza in a long time.
42. April snow.
43. winter too long
44. Winter road conditions on state roads
45.
46. The efforts to make Norfolk into something it isn't. Growth should occur organically from the ground up.
47. Farmers market
48. A distinct lack of risk taking and thinking outside the box!
49. Really needs a full time Planner, other than that, no, I like Norfolk very much

50. Not enough housing for people who have children
51. Lack of diversity
52. lack of cell service / too much lighting outside village center / speed of traffic on Rt 44 through town
53. There is a division of groups or one might say a town vs gown kind of undertone. Which I think is more of a misconception than reality
54. The long winters, the lack of people in their 40s and 50s, which is not quite the same thing as the preponderance of older people
55. Disuse or only partial use of our assets, both natural and man-made.
56. Country Club attitude among our exclusive New Yorkers, High cost of living (probably inevitable), pretty restrictive Zoning
57. management of traffic on Route 44
58. Some of the weekenders
59. can't think of anything

Q4 – What do you see as the greatest challenge or need facing Norfolk in the next 10 to 20 years?

Age Mix / Population	60. Need more young people in town. Need more kids to support the school. Need more volunteers for boards and Fire/EMS.
	61. aging population
	62. aging population, small number of young people due to limited opportunities
	63. Enticing well educated young families to town, by positioning our town as an alternative to modern day suburban living.
	64. Botelle is going to have no kids because no one can afford to move/live in the town. Need young ppl.
	65. School enrollment is shrinking Need more young families in town. Need more affordable housing & employment opportunities in the area.
	66. keeping young people in town
	67. ability of younger families to either remain or move to Norfolk
	68. retaining young residents
	69. bringing young families to this town
	70. If we don't get some younger people in this town it's going to turn into a senile rest home with no one around to run things or produce new thoughts
	71. Population and employment
	72. Loss of population
73. Bringing in new residents who will embrace the community...the population has been around 1600 for more than a century and will most likely stay there but we need new families that will call Norfolk home for the next generation.	

Economic Viability / Cost of Living	74. Economic viability and survival; a need to adapt its habits. Being able to financially cope with and increasing state mandates and decreasing amount of state support.
	75. Economic development
	76. Reducing educational budget
	77. High property taxes and stagnant or falling property values
	78. Be more business friendly
	79. Keeping the tax base up with few businesses, and keeping young families in town.
	80. Maintaining our viability both economically and, to a lesser extent, socially
	81. tax base/taxes, lack of young families
	82. Making Norfolk's commercial base ... and cultural base ... fully sustainable year-round. Neither of these has EVER been sustainable.
Other / Multiple	83. Keeping the town rural and pristine yet allow a diverse demographic to be able to afford to live here. It is becoming too expensive for young family's and oldsters.
	84. Remaining rural and content in its own skin.
	85. Controlling traffic on route 44.
	86. Keeping the character yet sustaining some sort of growth - and retaining young involved people
	87. (1) Sustaining a population that will volunteer and be committed to being active members of the community. (2) School costs.
	88. developmental pressure

Q5 – What types of things should Norfolk encourage in the future?

89. programs and activities that bring people to downtown. not necessarily tourism, but perhaps, recreational, cultural events that promote or take advantage the natural beauty of the town
90. develop the town center
91. Support of realistic business drivers -- but how to do so. Compete with neighboring towns to reflect Norfolk's advantages.
92. An influx of small, clean businesses to create employment and to shoulder some of the tax burden.
93. More business opportunities, more young people. More risk taking. More solar and wind generation to generate tax revenue.
94. some kind of commercial enterprise - rails to trails, outdoor x-country skiing venue, brewery...that brings and keeps jobs and people
95. Job growth, more community support from the Battell Stoeckel Estate/Yale University
96. Protecting and relishing in Norfolk's natural resources
97. Recreation, music and art in a pristine natural world. That's what we've been best

at in the past.
98. Attracting affluent, part-time (e.g. weekend) residents, additional cultural amenities (arts and music), high-end restaurants
99. Home based businesses and small farms
100. senior center / book store
101. spontaneity
102. Tourism, recreation, affordable housing, town wide trail system, sidewalks, traffic calming on State highways, elementary school merger, continued bonding with Yale,
103. Careful zoning and this P and Z group have really worked during tempting years to just give in to whatever.
104. Lower income housing; more attention to Botelle School
105. See above Do a better job to advertise town & available programs for young families with children.
106. Route 44 traffic calming, especially at crosswalks / additional Rt 44 crossing points for pedestrians / tourism, attracting new residents / cross-communication among organizations and between individuals and town government
107. Affordable places to live, jobs
108. Anything that will keep residents engaged and bring visitors to our town to enjoy it's small town charms
109. rail trail development, activities and fun/safe "hangouts" for our teenagers
110. Year-round cultural and recreational activities; a truly great elementary school program; refurbishment of older housing stock
111. affordable housing, rental housing,
112. Investment in infrastructure; enhance common areas in the downtown core, marketing in relation to special events (WIN, cycling & marathon races, etc) and unique assets (Yale schools, curling, etc), and enforcement of codes in the village proper.
113. More work at home opportunities, more shop work permitted in residential areas, more "accessory" apartments. Regionalization of elementary schools.
114. (1) Regionalization wherever possible. (2) Build the tax base. (3) Maintain town infrastructure including its local sanitary sewer system.
115. Community participation, which it already has plenty of and possibly a fiber optics facility that would encourage new comers...

Q6 – What types of things should Norfolk discourage in the future?

116. promotion of the town as the "icebox" of CT
117. Inertia and believing that things will always stay the same.
118. housing developments, commercial development
119. Commercial and residential development that changes the rural and cultural character of the town, simply to increase the tax base.
120. Buildings and other structures which are inconsistent with historic Norfolk.
121. More tax exempt land or buildings
122. Elephants and gangs
123. How about less land conservation and less regulations & policies that allow properties to come off the tax rolls.
124. snivilization, unnecessary noise, air/water polluting development,

125.N/A
126.Forgetting the working class people
127.Commercial development along route 44 corridor. Small retail stores that have close connection to town is best. Berkshire country store got it right.
128.x
129.Building more houses; excessive gov't rules-zoning in particular
130.Anything that would change the small town character or the rural beauty of our landscape
131.big box stores
132.commercialization
133.Windmills.Some day they are going to devise windpower that is harnessed from small structures and like the original satellite TVs we will be force to deal with giant windmills that no longer function efficiently.
134.Standard issue suburban ranch house development
135."Affordable" housing, deteriorating countryside beauty caused by excessive road signage, guard rails, street markings
136.Any village growth outside strict zoning guidelines
137.That would be getting personal- maybe elections will take care of that if #7 comes to fruition
138.Let's be careful and prudent re creating/encouraging tax exempt property. Balance.
139.Drug dealers moving into town
140.development in rural areas

Q7 – As you think about Norfolk, what do you feel should be the major community focus during the next 10 years?

141.promotion of recreational and cultural activities to interest people in Norfolk. encourage mixed-use housing/commercial in village area to create a more vibrant center
142.see 4 above
143.community
144.Bringing young well educated families to town. With the ability to work full or part time from home, let's market to Hartford and Fairfield County as an alternative to suburban living. At the same time continue to support our demographic,(older, bridge playing active retiree's and working well educated), by creating a more easily accessed village with lighting and sidewalks, etc. etc
145.Encouraging more volunteerism.
146.Attracting young families and encouraging home businesses
147.Bringing more young people into the community.
148.Attracting business and young families.
149.infrastructure maintenance
150.Tourism, recreation (trail system), affordable housing, traffic calming,
151.My focus would be on completing Pete Anderson's vision of the downtown, making Botelle a model school, providing more housing for both young families and an aging population
152.Affordable housing, new businesses, and small farms.

153. Affordable housing, encourage community involvement. Assistance for the need, like Norfolk Net, Children's foundation, etc.
154. trying to create an inflow of new residents, especially including young families that will help populate the school and swell the volunteer pool
155. keeping businesses in town
156. Not changing much of anything
157. To preserve the unique architecture and character of our village while incorporating aspects that will keep us current & viable with the 21st C. and looking into the future
158. affordable housing + jobs
159. not sure. though we do need more volunteers for our ambulance and fire squads
160. We need to get serious about regionalizing the elementary school with Colebrook and build a stronger less vulnerable school community that is fiscally sound.
161. None of the above will happen in a neglected and run-down town center, so a vibrant and attractive town center is essential -- and this requires bringing the townspeople together in a common belief in the town's good future. Over the next 5 - 10 years, incorporating the activities of the Stoeckel estate into those of the town will be very important.
162. Closing Bottell School, improving the aesthetic appeal of the town
163. attracting people to town to live and/or visit and spend money and support the few businesses we have (Infinity concerts, Yale concerts, etc)
164. Traffic calming
165. Every person in town should be encouraged to do something for the town- serve politically, athletically, artistically and so on. Doesn't have to be huge- just something.
166. Sustaining population and perhaps encouraging a bit of growth. Maintaining infrastructure. Otherwise cutting costs.
167. Perhaps a few more businesses.
168. upgrade the sewer system, maintain the town center, encourage businesses in the town center

Q8 – What other topics or issues do you feel should be given attention in the POCD?

169. energy self-sufficiency / improving infrastructure for outdoor recreation
170. education costs as % of budget. Insure quality education to distinguish from other towns and encourage younger people to move here. do we really need a superintendent and principal for < 100 students?
171. see 4 and 5 above
172. encouraging small, home-based, low-impact, entrepreneurial businesses in the center of town and even elsewhere.
173. What is the best use of the town farm? / Solar Field? Community Farm? Or?
174. Elementary school consolidation
175. Dwindling population of young people
176. Under the heading of recreation, a large scale, daytime, recreational entity that would more aggressively draw sports enthusiasts. Mountain bike trails, zip line course, e-bike touring, bear tipping
177. Keep town roads and infrastructure in good condition.

178.x
179.Excessive cost of education
180.A stronger emphasis on the maintenance of what we already have which really needs more care and attention, from historic buildings to our open spaces and public parks, the more care we can bestow on these the message that we are a town that cares will be a natural draw for visitors and a pride for its residence.
181.not sure
182.Public protection. This needs to be addressed in legislation. The state police have a feifdom stranglehold on communities....either we pay their officers salaries and benefits or we go without service. These laws need to change - maybe have county police to service municipalities that are properly trained but not outrageously paid with benefits.
183.Norfolk is a small town in the process of shaking off its doldrums. We can see where we've been and have a new sense of energy. To keep the energy flowing, we'll need a continuing series of success stories. A handsome annotated rendering on permanent public view would be useful -- especially if it's kept up to date, with accomplishments and modifications noted.
184.Close the school, close the school, close the school
185.Access to Norfolk via train service to Canaan; anything to attract more home based businesses and the arts; more families in town
186.-Revise the Business District / -Revise traffic pattern in town / -Fire Dept- see 4 & 7
187.Seeking ways to encourage private investment in the town.
188.The Norfolk ambulance should always be supported
189.natural resources preservation