



Planning 101

The comprehensive plan is a major village-wide effort that involves a number of diverse participants. The purpose of this paper is to summarize to committee members the roles and responsibilities of those participants so their involvement in the comprehensive plan process is clearly defined and understood.

What is a comprehensive plan?

The comprehensive plan is one of the village's most important planning tools. The comprehensive plan is a long-range planning document that represents the village's view of its future; it is a blueprint for a village's growth and development. Typically, village boards and planning commissions use the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan as a basis on which to guide land use decisions; staff uses the comprehensive plan to guide recommendations on development and decisions about implementation strategies and capital improvements, which in turn, impact operational and budget decisions. As a result, the comprehensive plan will also establish a framework for self-governance for the community.

As a guidance document, the comprehensive plan is anticipated to be reviewed for updates annually with major updates every 10 years or a significant change in the community (i.e. addition or closure of a major employer, a natural or man-made disaster or regional transportation change or shift in growth patterns). It is not a legislative document but the basis for such legislative planning tools as the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

The comprehensive plan will be drafted to reflect the local values and priorities of the village's diverse neighborhoods as well as the unique attributes that distinguish the community from other cities in the region. The comprehensive plan will also develop strategies to sustain the quality of life and economic prosperity desired by residents and businesses.

What is a PAG

The Planning Advisory Group (PAG) is an ad hoc committee established by the village/planning & zoning commission for purposes of the comprehensive plan. The PAG will serve as one of the primary channels for the community to make recommendations to the village board on the updated plan.

In addition, the PAG will also provide recommendations to the planning Commission, Staff and to the JEO consultant team regarding strategic milestones in the process (Vision, Land Use Plan, Focus Areas, etc.). Another crucial function of the PAG is to assist in the formation of village goals. What do people say they want in the community? How can this be translated into a set of compatible, consistent, long and short-range village goals? Through its recommendations, the PAG can help make these goals a part of the decision-making process, recognizing that the determination of what items are included in the comprehensive plan ultimately rests with village board.

Participation by members appointed to the PAG is temporary; the roles and responsibilities of its members will terminate with village board adoption of the comprehensive plan, which is anticipated to occur in 12 months.

Participant Roles & Responsibilities

PAG – Appointed special advisory body on the comprehensive plan

- Agree to attend and participate in the regularly scheduled meetings
- Provides feedback to staff and the consultant team on the planning process and its products.
- Informs staff and the consultant team of information that is valuable to the process or issues/opinions that should be taken into consideration as part of the comprehensive plan preparation.
- Passes on knowledge to the community on comprehensive plan related topics.
- Reviews and discusses items proposed by staff or the consultant team.
- Serves as an ambassador for the comprehensive plan process; provides the village at large with information about the comprehensive plan process.
- Irrespective of individual perspectives or preferences, seeks the benefit of the entire village in recommendations
- Optional: participate in the adoption process of the plan

Participation in the comprehensive plan Planning Advisory Group

The following is a summary of important considerations to keep in mind as you undertake your commitment to the community.

Representing the PAG

Individual PAG members must be careful not to represent their own views or recommendations as those of the body unless the majority has officially voted on the issue. Public statements should contain no promises binding the committee or the board.

Maintaining Community-Wide Perspective

Although PAG members may be selected in part on the basis of representing clearly defined groups or neighborhoods, in order to assume that all interests are voiced and considered, each member should represent the overall public and not that of an exclusive group or interest.

Keeping the Lines of Communication Open

The PAG members will serve as liaisons between the village and the public in helping to educate and receive input from the community. Therefore, each member must serve as a communication link between the public and the village, explaining village programs and recommendations, as well as providing a channel for citizen expression. To properly represent the community, members must be accessible to the public so they can receive input as to the sentiment and opinions of their fellow residents.

Be Conscious of your Relationship to Elected and Appointed Officials and Village Staff

Good relations with elected and appointed officials and village staff are necessary for the successful operation of any committee. It is important that each member respect the authority of those who, in the end, will be charged with the final responsibility for action taken by the village. To avoid placing the village staff in a compromising position and to facilitate effective communication, your actions as a member should be done with the approval of the body. In contacting village personnel on business matters, the proper channel is through the staff liaison appointed to your advisory group.

Establishing a Good Relationship with Other Members

On many occasions, the success or failure of a PAG will depend upon the degree of cooperation among the individual members. In order to build a consensus around common goals and objectives, members will often first have to reconcile contradictory viewpoints and show a willingness to objectively consider the issues.

Another way of developing this cooperation is for each member to do their part to ensure that meetings proceed in an orderly manner. The consultant team is primarily responsible for seeing that meetings are conducted in an expeditious and thorough fashion. However, each member can help by adequately preparing for meetings.

Other Important Points to Consider

PAG participants shall always show respect for other individuals' viewpoints and shall allow other members adequate time to present their views before making comments. It is essential to be open and honest at all times, welcome new members and see that they become acquainted with their duties, and strive to minimize political action among members. Be aware that, in the public's eye, PAG members represent the community they serve. Comments and actions of the PAG, therefore, should express sensitivity to the diverse viewpoints held throughout the community. Membership on the PAG does not entitle participants to exercise undue influence upon individuals in the community.

Official Charge of the PAG

- Ensure village staff and the consultant team is aware of and understands community concerns, values and expectations.
- Assist village staff and the consultant team in identifying critical issues that must be addressed in the planning process.
- Identify areas of existing or potential conflicts and find ways to constructively resolve them.
- Capitalize on the creative ideas and insights within the community for input into the comprehensive plan.
- Keep community organizations and interested citizens informed about the status of the planning process.
 - Provide recommendations to the planning commission and village board supporting the comprehensive plan including the proposed land use plan, which is comprised of the final recommendations associated with specified focus areas and other land uses.

What the PAG is:

- A source of insight on the community, its interests and expectations.
- A source of ideas to achieve a responsible and responsive plan.
- A vehicle for achieving a sampling of community opinions and attitudes.
- A sounding board for ideas and plan proposals presented by staff and its consultants.
- A vehicle for communication to and from the planning process

What the PAG is NOT:

- A replacement for either the village board or planning commission.
- A decision-making body, except as it may offer advice and direction to village staff and the consultant team regarding comprehensive plan policy.
- A forum for political position taking.

- A substitute for the public hearing process required by law.

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