

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN for WESTWOOD

**Public Forum:
Visioning**
**Saturday, May. 18,
2019**

**Thurston Middle School
Cafeteria**



Comprehensive Plan Update Team

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

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Community Circle



Consultant Team

Daphne Politis, Community Circle

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Westwood Planning Department

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WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ?

A basis for decision-making for future development

A process leading to a plan of action based on a town's shared values and goals

A set of priorities for addressing the full range of issues facing a town

What to preserve?

What to change?

Concerns?

Improvements?

Ensure that Westwood's desirable features are preserved and challenges are addressed.

WHY PLAN ?

- Take stock, review objectives, direction and priorities
- Examine resource allocation: existing and optimal
- Last complete plan - 2000
- Be proactive and affect future decision making
- Support eligibility for grant programs and public funds

A Comprehensive Plan is an important opportunity to think about:

How can we make Westwood an even better place to live, work and play?

But I like things the way they are...

Doing nothing doesn't mean
nothing will change

WESTWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Prepared for the Westwood, Massachusetts Planning Board
By the Westwood Master Plan Steering Committee
Herr & James Associates, Planning Consultants

February 4, 2000

THE PROCESS

- What do we have?
- What do we want?
- What is most important?
- How do we get there?

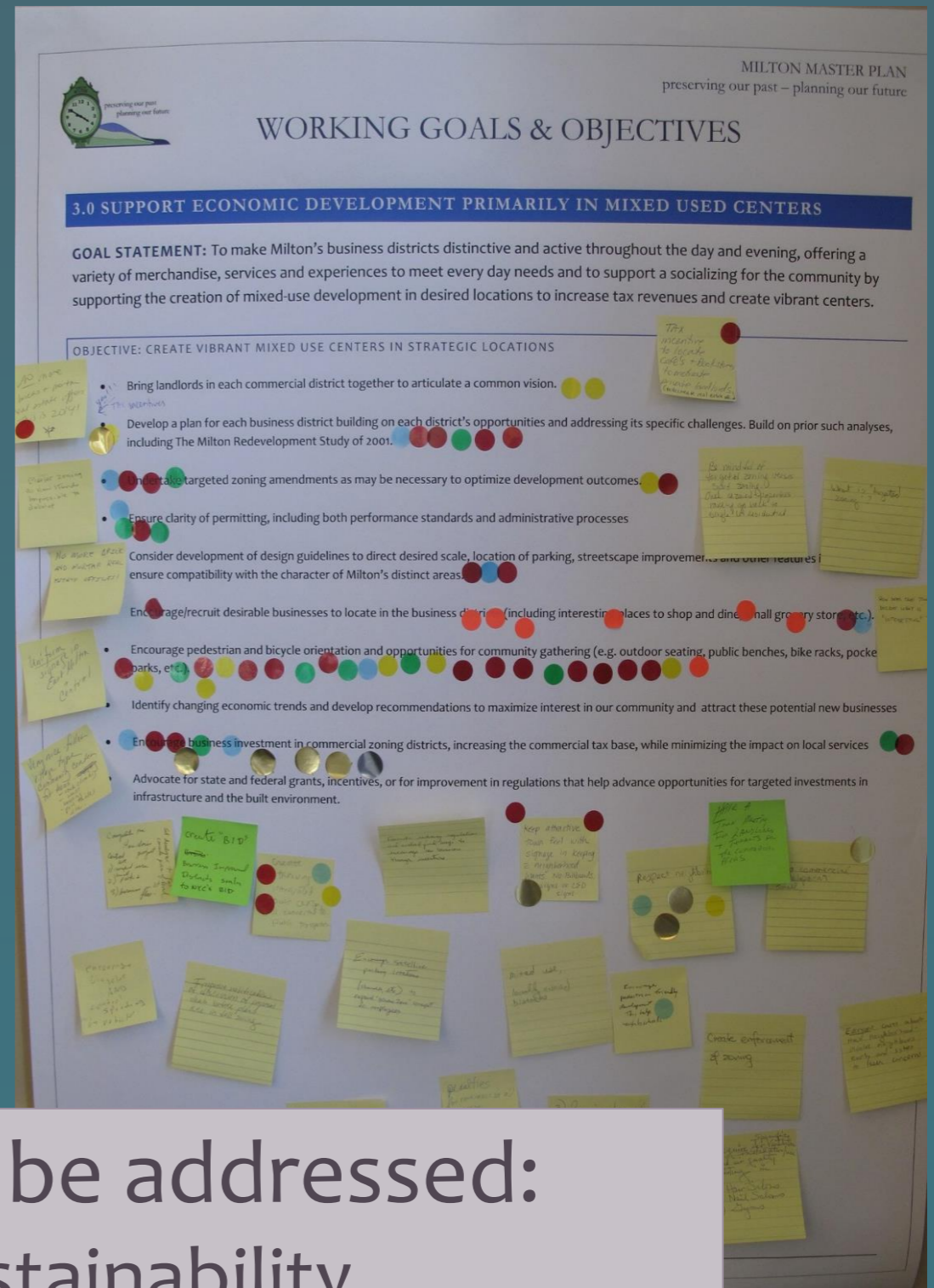
The **Community Conversation** starts today and continues throughout the process



INVENTORY OF EXISTING RESOURCES:

Comprehensive Plan Topic Areas

- Population & Housing
- Historic, Natural & Cultural Resources
- Open Space & Recreation
- Economy & Economic Development
- Housing
- Transportation & Circulation
- Community Services, Facilities & Utilities
- Land Use & Zoning
- Town Centers



PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What were some of the key community priorities?

- Preserve Open Space
- Manage Growth
- Diversify Residential Development
- Increase Commercial Tax Base
- Preserve Historic Character
- Improve Town Centers

What has changed since then?

- population
- technology
- improved transparency
- new private investment and development
- greater awareness regarding health, wellness & resiliency

PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has changed since then?

Population

- 14,117 (2000)
- 14,618 (2010)

Technology

- Social Media
- New website
- Electronic communication (e.g. email, wireless internet in town offices, schools, libraries)

Improved transparency for projects

- Planning Board webpage & Facebook page
- Westwood Wire monthly email
- Email notifications for all board/commission/committee meeting agendas)

New Development/Private Investment

- University Station 121 acres zoned for office, retail, residential and hotel uses
- Route 1 corridor; new Prime Motor Group car dealerships
- Islington Center along Washington Street
- Business improvements and new mixed-use buildings

PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has been implemented?

Some examples:

Land Protection: Land Trust established



Rules/Regulations/Policies: Zoning and Bylaw Changes to allow mixed-use, new stormwater policies, performance standards, energy code

Organization: A Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Committee established. The Committee meets to:

- intake residents' concerns
- identify and priorities pedestrian and bike safety needs
- makes recommendations to the Planning Board, Select Board, and Public Works

Westwood Land Trust – over 220 acres have been acquired and protected.

PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has been implemented?

Some examples: **Housing**

Enacted zoning bylaw changes to promote diversifying the housing stock



Affordable Housing

- In 2015 Westwood met the 10% minimum “target goal” for the MA Chapter 40B
- 2000 Westwood had 492 units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)
- Westwood has 588 currently & more units to be added this year.

PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has been implemented?

Some Examples: **Infrastructure & Transportation Improvements:**

- Shared Use Path
- Bike Lanes
- Complete Streets Policy
- Intersection Improvements
- New Sidewalks and Crosswalks
- Traffic Calming Improvements
- New Turf Fields, Park and Playground
- New Railroad Station and Garage
- New Blue Hills off ramp
- East Street Bridge Replacement Project



PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has been implemented?

Some examples: **Community Facilities**

- New High School
- New Fire Station in Islington
- New Police Station Headquarters
- New Library, Islington Branch Renovation in progress
- New Carby Street Municipal building
- Colburn School
- Fisher School moved and restored
- Obed Baker House



PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has been implemented?

Some examples: **Economic Development**

- Approximately 1,650 jobs added with the development of University Station
- Over \$5 million additional tax revenue from University Station
- Another 600 jobs with Citizens Bank
- Islington Center Rehabilitation Project
- Prime Dealerships



PREVIOUS PLANNING IN WESTWOOD

Review of 2000 Comprehensive Plan

What has been implemented?

Other examples:

- Invasive Species Removal
- First Phase of Hydro-Raking Perry Crouse pond (second phase planned for 2019)
- Haslam Pond Dam Repair and Clean-up
- Westwood Cemetery Expanded
- Deerfield Field Renovations
- Safe Routes to School Programs
- Westwood Community Trails



PUBLIC PROCESS

Engage community throughout the process

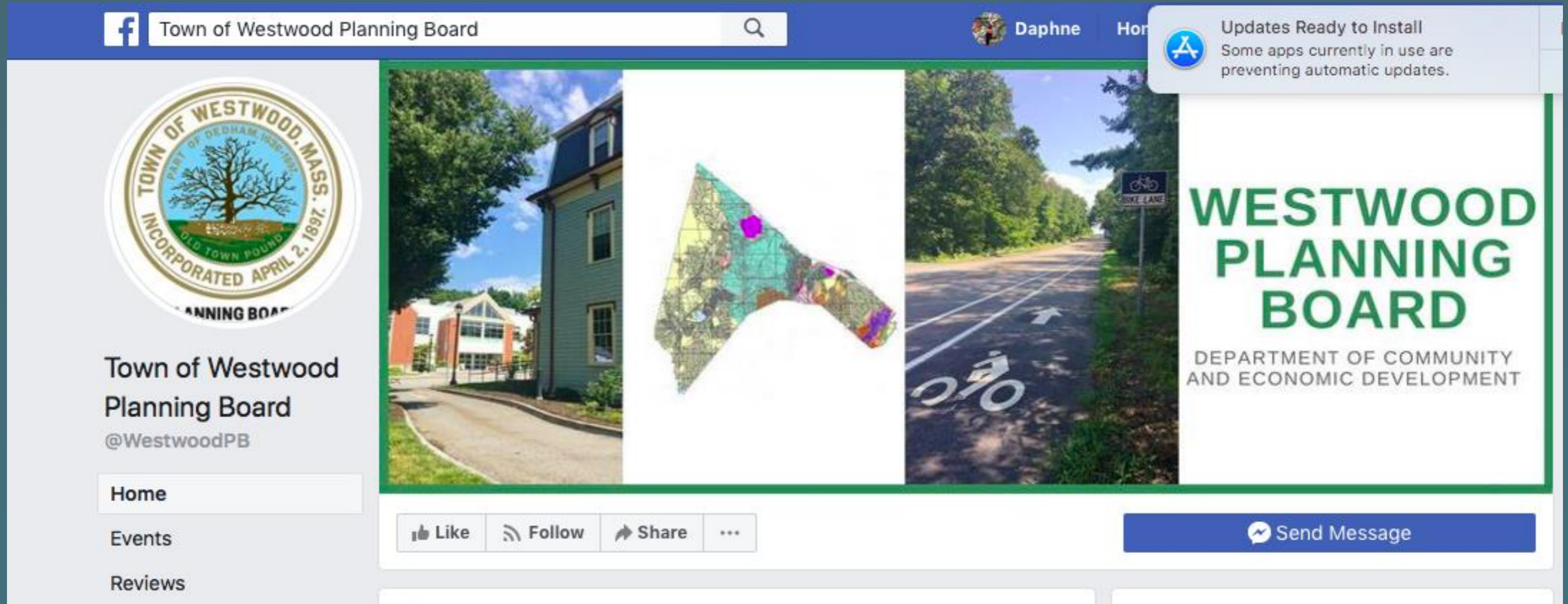
Goals of public process:

- Identify critical issues
- Define shared values & goals
- Establish priorities for the future
- Build support for Plan

Community engagement starts today and continues throughout the planning process



PUBLIC PROCESS: Continues On-line



Social Media:
Existing Facebook pages

Town website: postings, updates, project summaries

PUBLIC PROCESS

Recent survey

811 Responses

Favorite things of Westwood:

- Safety, Schools, Location, Good Place to raise a family

Prioritize:

- Preservation of Open Space & Natural Resources,
- Pedestrian Infrastructure: (crosswalks, sidewalks, bike paths, walkability)
- More Restaurants & Dining Options

APPROACH

What features should be protected and enhanced

Identify and define what makes Westwood unique

- Special Places
- Other features
- How do you define the town's character?

What makes Westwood, Westwood?

Fill out the THREE SLIPS OF PAPER and place on purple sticky wall at the end of the session

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Break out into small facilitated Discussion Groups
- All groups will be discussing the same questions
- Summarize the group's priorities
- Report back to the Large Group
- (Maybe win the) **RAFFLE!!**



Stay Involved

Our Town. Our Future.



WWW.BIT.DO/WWCOMPREHENSIVEPLAN



Community Circle

Consulting Team

