



VILLAGE OF
PORT CHESTER
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MEETING MINUTES

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) Meeting
May 28, 2026, 7:00PM
Meeting #2

Attendees

- CPAC Members Present
 - Sylvia Dundon, Trustee
 - Juliana Alzate
 - Joseph DeVita
 - Gustavo Passarelli
 - Michael Scarola
 - Kieran Tobias
- CPAC Members Not Present
 - Philip Dorazio, Deputy Mayor
 - Jessica Berkowitz
 - Jake Borden
 - Monica Fonseca
 - Brian Sullivan
- Village Planning Department
 - Greg Cutler, AICP, Director
 - Curt Lavalla, AICP, Assistant Director
- BFJ Planning
 - Sarah Yackel, AICP, Principal-In-Charge
 - Emily Tolbert, AICP, Project Manager
 - Mark Freker, Senior Associate, Transportation Planner

BFJ Planning facilitated the meeting with a presentation that can be viewed on the project website here: [View CPAC Meeting Presentation](#).

BFJ Planning provided an update of ongoing work over the prior month, including the drafting of Part I chapters, stakeholder outreach through calls and questionnaires sent to about 30 organizations, and publicity efforts for the Vision Survey and Public Workshop.



I. Draft Part I Chapters

Emily Tolbert and Sarah Yackel of BFJ Planning reviewed the contents of the first four chapters and asked committee members for their initial thoughts. CPAC members were sent drafts of each chapter on May 22 and have until June 11 to provide feedback.

- Chapter I-1. Introduction and Vision
 - BFJ: Chapter includes introduction, vision, goals, and planning process. Several components of the chapter will need to be updated as the planning process moves along, including goals and public engagement summaries. The Vision is a working draft. The plan goals will begin development at the Public Workshop.
 - CPAC Member: I like the theme of “moving forward” and the carry over from the 2012 Comprehensive Plan.
 - CPAC Member: The language “regional connections” in the Vision is unclear.
 - BFJ will change the language to be clear that “regional connections” refers to the transportation network.
- Chapter I-2. Regional and Historic Context
 - BFJ: Chapter includes regional location, history of Port Chester, relationship to other plans, and key implementation milestones (since the prior 2012 Comprehensive Plan).
 - CPAC member: It stood out that the *Form-Based Code Study Committee Report (CD-5, CD-6, CD-6T Districts)* is included here. How much influence will the Comprehensive Plan have on the form-based code?
 - BFJ: Part of our contract is to take a deep dive into sections of the code. The state just passed changes to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) which also may require us to look at the structure of fair share mitigation fees.
 - CPAC Member: The CD-5W district is the next focus for development. Will the CPAC take a stance?
 - BFJ: CD-5W is a district that we have been having discussions with the Port Chester Planning Department staff. Particularly the concern that redevelopment under the CD-5W district could further cut off the waterfront from the public. Jonathan Martin, a Principal and Urban Designer at BFJ Planning, is very familiar with this issue and is developing recommendations for consideration by the CPAC.
 - CPAC Member: Under “Economic Development,” there is a *Village-Wide Property Inventory and Conditions Assessment*, the condition of properties in Port Chester is a topic that should be discussed further. There are some areas of the village that need attention.
 - Planning Staff: The survey was not accurate, and we are uncertain about the methodology that was used to document and categorize the level of properties.
- Chapter I-3. Village Population
 - BFJ: Chapter discusses available data sources used, population, and socioeconomic indicators. Additional statistics that were included in [Port Chester Today](#) on housing and employment will be included in the later Housing and Economic Development chapters in Part II.



- CPAC Member: How dense is Port Chester compared to other municipalities in the state? Is it in the top 10?
- BFJ: We can add language to quantify the village’s density in comparison to the state.
- CPAC Member: Are the income statistics adjusted for inflation?
- BFJ: Yes.
- Chapter I-4. Land Use and Zoning
 - BFJ: Chapter includes an overview of existing land use patterns and of the form-based zoning code.
 - CPAC Member: the chapter reviews existing conditions, we have more comments about issues and opportunities.
 - Discussion of zoning issues and opportunities:
 - R2F and CD4 Zones
 - CPAC Member: boundaries should be reconsidered. Overlay zone for upzoning – idea from the last comprehensive plan that should be further discussed. Rather than waiting for individual properties to improve, allow them to be assembled and redeveloped.
 - Planning Staff: There was a period from 2020-2023 where R2F was CD4, but that led to the establishment of the CD4 committee which resulted in going back to R2F – concerns were related to the further division of units and parking. CD1 is another zone that reverted back from the former zoning code.
 - CPAC Member: Public is concerned about the height of buildings.
 - CPAC Member: We need a unified vision aesthetically about what we want downtown to look like- new development looks disjointed, ugly, lack of character, issues with the use of materials. We have no “tool” such as a 3D model or vision in the planning process to show people what a building would look like in context.
 - CPAC Member: In the main downtown area, from Boston Post Road to Mill Street, there are 12 developments in the pipeline. From the train trestle to the Greenwich border is the next area to be developed. What do we want that area to look like?
 - BFJ: Something missing from the form-based code is a well-planned cohesive streetscape, requirement for civic green space, sidewalk widths, and other public realm elements.
 - CPAC Member: A big part of creating a more unified look is consistency in design. Some downtown areas require every awning to be the same. We need some vision for when people open businesses or build new.
 - CPAC Member: In the form-based code we have “character districts.” What is the character of our community? Do you see more of a coastal, New England flavor reflecting Port Chester’s shipbuilding/woodworking/saw pit history, or do you see more of a hip, eclectic, Williamsburg-type, not over-sanitized, arts, cultural, creative vibe? We need visuals to express our vision.
 - CPAC Member: In the form-based code, illustrations for the signage are extensive, but there is a lack of illustration for the streetscape. The buildings look cookie cutter.



- Planning Staff: During Plan-the-Port, the Village spent a lot on developing visuals, but we don't really use them.
- Planning Staff: We should look at the 2018 Design Guidelines and see if there is a way to integrate them into the form-based code.
- Planning Staff: We should also have a professional architecture review committee to review applications, rather than the Architectural Review Board (ARB).
- CPAC Member: In the core area of CD-5W, the form-based code wanted to concentrate the density downtown and have civic space on the waterfront. The big parking lots on the waterfront could be developed as high-rise housing – it should not be allowed there.
- BFJ: Could Costco be redeveloped?
- Planning Staff: Do not think so, however we will see when their lease is up.
- CPAC Member: There was a previous design for decking over the cove area of the waterfront. It would be nice to find a way to do that while satisfying the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). We should have an amphitheater there.
- Planning Staff: In the new waterfront design, there are plans for an amphitheater. The decking is not permitted by DEC because of aquatic life and habitat.
- BFJ clarifies that zoning changes would come after the comprehensive plan.

II. Vision Survey

Emily Tolbert, BFJ Planning, provided results of the Vision Survey as of Tuesday, May 26, and summarized initial responses. About 30 additional responses have been submitted since Tuesday, likely due to the Village Facebook post.

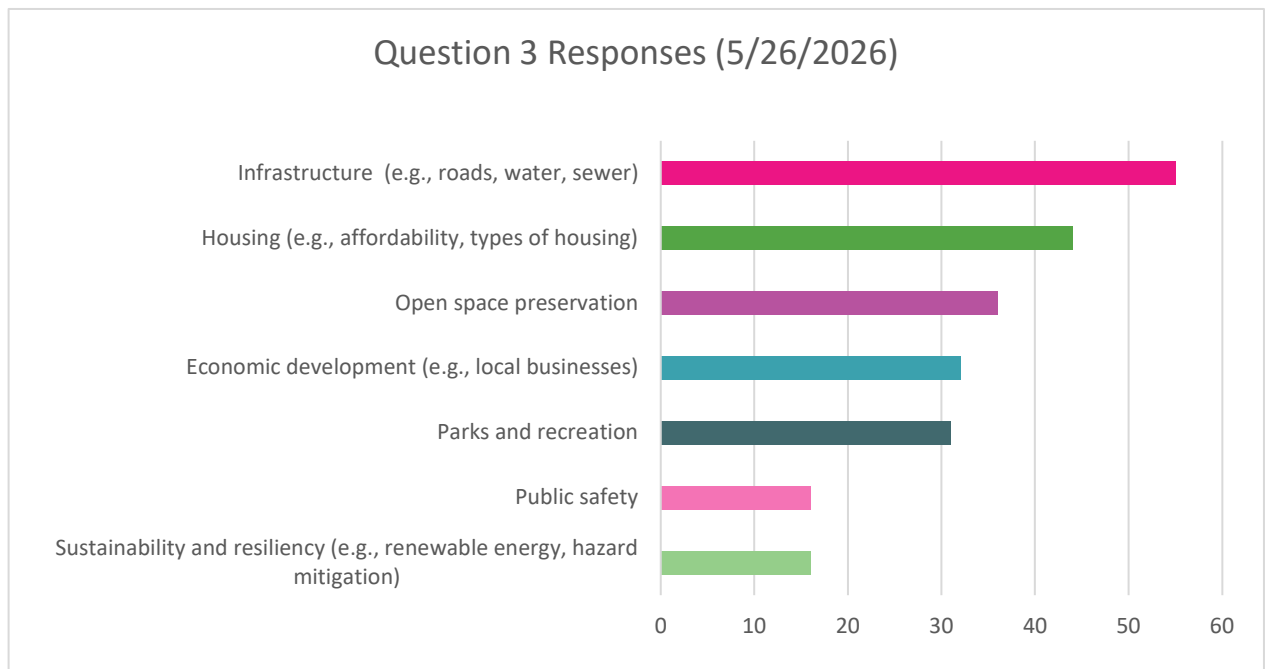
- Extended deadline to June 19 – after the workshop.
- As of 5/26/2026, there were 85 submissions, including 3 in Spanish language.
- Question 1. What does your ideal Port Chester look like in ten years? Please provide three aspirational words to describe your vision.
 - Top words and phrases in order of frequency
 - Clean, Vibrant, Walkable, Affordable, Diverse, Safe, Uncrowded, Parking, Greenery, Historic, Parks, Beautiful, Community, Modern, Better Roads, Vital, Arts, Family Friendly, Green, Less Congestion, Open, Pretty, Small Town Feel, Waterfront, Welcoming, Pedestrian, Refurbished, Connected, Cool, Events, Fun, Honest, Inviting, A Melting Pot, Organized, Quaint, Shops, Small, Sustainable, Transportation, Developed, Inclusive
 - Additional insights
 - What people envision:
 - Vibrant, active, and attractive village
 - Walkability and less car dependence
 - Affordability, particularly housing
 - Diversity, inclusiveness, community feel



- Safety and quality of life
- More green space, parks, and beauty
- Balanced development modern and historic
- Small town feel with strong amenities
- Frustrations and Concerns:
 - Overcrowding, overdevelopment, and scale of buildings
 - Traffic, parking, and congestion
 - Rising costs and affordability pressure
 - Need for cleanliness, maintenance, and safety
 - Lack of green space and public realm
 - Loss of character and small town identity
 - Infrastructure and services need improvement
- CPAC Discussion
 - What do we think is meant by “Clean”?
 - More people equals more trash?
 - DPW is picking up a lot of trash downtown, but the neighborhoods are harder to address.
 - Could also refer to unkempt properties where people are storing things on their front porches and lawns.
- Question 2. What makes you feel connected to your neighborhood and the Village?
 - Top words and phrases in order of frequency:
 - Community Events, People, Local Businesses, Restaurants, Walkability, Families, Neighborhood, Born and Raised, Diverse Population, Neighbors, Parks, Safety, Schools, Celebrations, Culture, Diversity, Food, Friends, Longtime Residents and Neighbors, Lyon park, Music, Nothing, Services, Small Town Feel, Walking, Activities, Capital Theatre, Community, History, Holidays, Hometown, Offerings, Port Chester Day, Security, Shops, Village Feel,
 - Additional insights
 - What connects the community:
 - People, relationships, and familiarity
 - Community events and shared experiences
 - Walkability, accessibility, and daily interactions
 - Local businesses, restaurants, and amenities
 - Diversity and inclusiveness
 - Small town feel and sense of belonging
 - Institutions and shared places
 - Frustrations and Concerns:
 - Overdevelopment and changing character
 - Declining sense of connection



- Lack of communication
- Quality of life concerns (e.g., safety, cleanliness, enforcement)
- Parking strain and traffic
- Tension between newcomers and longtime residents
- Discussion
 - We are going through an evolution because of what is being built and who we are building for.
 - Can't stop growth, can't bring back what the old downtown was—the army navy store, the flea market—but we can bring a new more relevant downtown.
 - We need density downtown to support a vibrant commercial environment.
 - There is also a counternarrative that comes out that renters aren't invested in the community, which is not true.
 - We are welcoming thousands of new people into Port Chester, and we should give them a reason to stay – renters may become owners or long-term renters.
 - How to connect the old and new populations?
- Question 3. In which areas do you think Port Chester has the greatest opportunity to improve? Please select up to three.



- Discussion:
 - Planning Staff: There is a flaw in how this question was asked because Port Chester does not have an open space preservation program or much open space like other communities in New York State. There is the potential that the options for open space preservation and parks and recreation



would cause some confusion in the selection of choices. Need to interpret them as a broader desire for parks, green space, and recreation as the Village.

- CPAC Member: We should be thinking about third places that don't require payment to access.

III. Workshop #1 Preparation

Sarah Yackel, BFJ Planning, presented the format of the public workshop, CPAC member roles and responsibilities, and promotion. Emily Tolbert distributed additional flyers to the CPAC members and passed around a working document for the workshop activity.

- Format
 - Short Presentation by BFJ Planning explaining what a comprehensive plan is, the planning process, and the roundtable activity.
 - Roundtable Activity – participants will split into roundtable discussion groups of approximately 6 to 8 people each and will be given 1.15 hours to discuss each of the five comprehensive plan elements (15 minutes per element) or themes: Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Community Resources, and Environment. The handout asks them to identify issues and opportunities and to develop goals and recommendations to address them. Each roundtable should have a designated notetaker and someone who will report back to the wider group.
 - Report Back – a participant from each of the tables will share key takeaways from their discussion.
 - Boards—the draft vision and maps of Port Chester will be displayed and as guests enter they can add their comments on the vision and add points on the map of important places using sticky notes and stickers.
- CPAC Roles and Responsibilities at the Workshop
 - CPAC Members should arrive 15 minutes early (at 6:15) to be briefed on the flow of the workshop.
 - CPAC members will divide themselves amongst the roundtables and assist with the facilitation of the activity.
- Promotion
 - BFJ: We have sent the workshop flyer out to several stakeholders, including Village departments, commissions, and community organizations. We have also asked the school to help distribute the flyers but have not heard back. We will follow up with School District.
 - CPAC Member: I can share the flyer with the school board.
 - BFJ: The Village has posted the workshop and survey to Facebook.
 - CPAC Member: We should consider different social media platforms besides Facebook. Facebook reaches an older demographic, and the Village should consider an Instagram account.
 - Planning Staff: The Village is currently working with a marketing and branding consultant to update our website and social media strategy.
 - BFJ: Please post to your own social media accounts and share the flyers with your networks.
 - CPAC Member: During Plan-the-Port, there was a successful public meeting held at the Salvation Army.



- BFJ: For the fall workshop we are considering using the Carver Center which may be closer to residents.

IV. Issues and Opportunities Discussion - Transportation

Mark Freker of BFJ Planning introduced the contents of the transportation chapter of the plan and asked the CPAC to identify issues and opportunities that should be addressed. He noted that there have been many transportation-related studies and plans in the Village and we should consider what still needs to be implemented from them.

- Chapter II-3. Transportation Contents
 - Roadway Jurisdiction – the Village does not have control over state or county roads, so improvements require collaboration.
 - Crash Analysis – vehicle crashes and pedestrian and cyclist crashes will be looked at separately. We have crash data from the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) through a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request. DOT source their data from local police departments.
 - The pedestrian network
 - Alternative modes of transportation - cycling, micromobility, streetscapes
 - Public Transportation – we have ridership data from MTA, and will look at Westchester County Bee-Line buses and CT buses
 - Parking – changes in inventory, user experience of parking apps and regulations
 - Pick up and drop off areas and deliveries
- Discussion
 - Electric Bikes
 - There are a lot of electric bikes on the streets and sidewalks.
 - We should embrace new forms of mobility, but need to direct where users can go, more restrictions/enforcement are needed.
 - Are there restrictions on who can buy an e-bike? It is often children who are using them on the street.
 - In New York State e-bike riders must be at least 16 years old.
 - The Village has ticketed them. There is some movement towards licensing.
 - Outside of NYC, e-bikes and motorized vehicles need to be registered if they can go above 20mph.
 - Deliveries
 - Amazon and ecommerce deliveries especially downtown are an issue of concern.
 - Pick up and drop off for food deliveries are not counted under ITE trip generation. These cause pedestrian safety issues.
 - In addition to the trips, it is also the physical space the delivery workers occupy.
 - Delivery bikes and motorized vehicles are parked on the sidewalks and streets and in no parking zones to wait for deliveries. There is a law enforcement aspect.
 - Illegal parking
 - Delivery workers and cars are parked in no parking zones, in front of hydrants, etc.



- We should have plexi-sticks, or artwork / mural painted over that space, or seating areas, or short bollards to prohibit people from parking there.
- Concerns about maintenance and snow if there are bollards or other physical interventions.
- Bollards could go up and down at certain hours or when an emergency response vehicle or public works vehicle initiates them.
- Cars are parking illegally on street corners, blocking views of pedestrians and oncoming traffic.
- There are no parking signs on some corners, but not all.
- Ten-foot distance from the corners is too short, we need at least 20’.
- Concept of daylighting discussed to improve safety at corners.
- Lack of crosswalks / sidewalk gaps
 - J-walking, particularly on Main Street, people need to be led to crosswalks/encouraged to use them.
 - Is there a need for midblock crossings on Main Street?
 - Yes, and bump outs to show where the crosswalk is.
 - Lyon Park, Parkway Drive towards Putnam, by the Girl Scouts House, there is no sidewalk or crosswalk.
 - The intersection from Westchester Ave and Main Street (Liberty Square area) between the parking garage and the train station is problematic as it’s a high pedestrian activity area and has a wide intersection.
 - We got a grant from AARP and Hudson Greenway for Liberty Square and North Main to rethink the crosswalks. Jeff Speck Urban Design sketch/concept for the Liberty Square area.
 - Summerfield Place has a good concept drawing.
- Complete Streets
 - What is “complete streets?”
 - Prioritizes the street for all users and modes of transit, ADA accessible, designed for pedestrians.
- Biking
 - Dedicated bike lanes?
 - CPAC member stated that they gave up biking in the Village. The traffic and parking make it impossible.
- Narrowing/Widening of streets
 - There was talk of narrowing Main Street, but it is a state road.
 - Need to adjust traffic lights timing to address increase in pedestrians and traffic.
 - Mill Street Bridge is narrow and presents traffic concerns.
 - Narrow streets mean cars need to creep slowly and reduces speeding.
 - We should have narrower travel lanes, but shared streets, 8-9’ lanes rather than 11-12’ lanes.
 - We need to right-size emergency vehicles to the conditions of the streets.
 - People do not respect emergency response vehicles.



- On-Street Parking
 - On-street parking needs to be rethought.
 - Issues with parallel parking on Main Street.
 - The width of streets is too narrow for parking on both sides.
- Cut-through traffic on local streets
 - Many of the roads connect to neighboring towns resulting in cut-through traffic during rush hours.
 - Port Chester has many arterials which exacerbate issue of cut-through traffic.
- Walkability
 - There is an opportunity for better walkability. It is possible to walk to the train station and the loop around downtown.
 - We are still enabling a heavy dependence on cars.
 - People say “walkability,” but do they mean it?
 - Many people do walk.
- Downtown Parking
 - Getting feedback that there is not enough parking downtown.
 - We could use some more parking, but what people mean is that they cannot get a spot directly in front of a store.
 - For example, the Strip District in Pittsburgh – former industrial district turned shopping – they have parking decks as bookends to the district.
 - Embassy Theater project approved – includes 120 public parking spaces.
 - New restaurants from outside of Port Chester rely on valet parking which discourages people from walking around downtown and visiting other businesses or destinations in the downtown.
 - Is valet allowed in residential developments? Yes, on Abendroth.
 - Does the passport application have something to tell where parking is available? Real time occupancy information?
- Signage and Wayfinding
 - Signage is needed, municipal lots are pockets and one needs to know where they are. Is there an online tool to show where Village parking is located?
 - We have plans for wayfinding signage in the village, but we are waiting for more of the development to come in.
- Buses
 - Westchester Ave – they moved the bus stop at the library.
 - Give bus riders more dignity with shelters and places to sit down.
 - Users are often the elderly who can no longer drive.
 - The County did a study on bus routes and rerouting. Port Chester would be part of a micro-transit zone, but it depends on whether the program is funded. Port Chester is supportive of that program
 - People use the bus to go to White Plains and Westchester Community College.
 - Talk of consolidation of bus locations.



- CT bus – people use it to go to Greenwich library area and on to Stamford.
- Electric Vehicle Charging
 - They are all private, but we got a county grant to put some charging stations outside of the flood zone.

V. Next Steps

- Deadline to Review Part I chapters 1-4: June 11. Send feedback to Greg Cutler and Emily Tolbert.
- Next Advisory Committee Meeting: June 25, 2026, 7:00 pm, Village Hall Conference Room.
 - Agenda will include public workshop debrief, discussion of draft Transportation Chapter, and discussion of issues and opportunities for the Community Resources and Environment chapters.
- First Public Workshop: June 17, 2026, 6:30-8:30 PM, Port Chester Senior Center (222 Grace Church St, Port Chester, NY 10573)
 - CPAC members should attend and arrive 15 minutes early.
- Over the next month, BFJ Planning and Village Planning Staff will be:
 - Continuing stakeholder meetings, gathering questionnaire input, and planning focus group meetings
 - Launching the next online engagement activity
 - Drafting Chapters