Town of Plymouth
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Steering Committee
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The Plan and Conservation Development Steering Committee Minutes September 24, 2026

Call to Order: Chairman George Castle called the scheduled meeting to order at 5:30 pm, in the Assembly Room, Plymouth Town Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman George Castle led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Fire Exit Notification: Chairman George Castle pointed out the Fire Exit to the committee.

Roll Call: Present were Chairman George Castle, Tony Roveto, Vincent Gualtieri, Jim Ouellette, Sue Muraski, Jerry Milne, Kate Losey – Zoning Enforcement and Joe Sopczeski – Director of Plymouth Public Works.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from July 23, 2026, meeting of the Plan and Conservation Development Steering Committee were approved unanimously.

Chairman George Castle turned the meeting over to Acting Division Director for the Community Planning Division of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, Lana Harrison and Emely Ricci, Community Planner II of the Community Planning Division of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments.

General Planning Process – Lana Harrison reminded the group that we are right in between the end of phase one and moving into phase two. In phase one, we were focusing on community assessment. We have been finding out from you all who lives here, what their needs might be, what are some of the challenges that the town is facing overall, what are some of the opportunities. We also did stakeholder interviews, a survey, and a community survey as well.

Now we are moving into phase two. This is when we're going to articulate our vision, our main themes that we want to look at and explore. And then articulating what are the strategies and actions within those themes that we specifically want to call out into the plan. Once we do that, we'll go into phase three, which is when Emily and I will be doing a lot of writing. There'll be a lot of opportunities for review, formatting, and design.

The last phase is when we bring our findings to the town council, the planning and zoning commission, and the public for review. Then we eventually submit it to the Office of Policy and Management for full adoption.

The first two phases really are where the bulk of the process happens. After that things will move along a lot quicker once we get to phase three and to phase four.

The bulk of what we're going to be doing in Phase Two: Planning and Drafting is crafting a vision statement. And that's what we're going to be focusing on tonight. From there, we're going to determine Action Principles, or those big themes that we want to then have underneath the vision statement. Those might be three or four things that are the big themes that we want to focus on. Underneath the action principles is then when we'll have specific outlines. We can identify specific projects, locations, plans we want to undergo, programs that we want to initiate to make those action principles happen.

Stakeholder Engagement Update and Review – Emely reported first we are looking at the Stakeholder Survey Executive Summary. We have collected about 17 responses from the commissions, department heads and the like, to whom we sent the survey. The engagement was open for about a month. From what we collected, we had some pretty good respondents. We have four major takeaways.

At the top were that there are certain age groups in town whose needs aren't being met by businesses or programs that are currently available. Specifically, that was our 18- to 35-year-olds, and then our 35 to 50 crowd. People who are college age, as well as kind of people who are in the workforce. When we look at other data points, things like restaurants, cafes, places for entertainment, and other businesses that might be missing from the town that people want to see more of to attract visitors, specifically young people. We see that as a major trend.

And then infrastructure wise, the road systems for safety, pedestrian use, congestion, as well as maintenance. We found, through our transportation section of the survey, that people wanted more scheduled maintenance work on the roads, better sidewalk connections and access, as well as accessibility for people to be able to access those sidewalks to their homes and to those commercial cores that fit downtown.

With housing, we saw that housing costs and the need for affordable housing is rising in Plymouth. A couple of respondents, with their open-ended questions tell us that Plymouth is a distressed community in particular areas, and that for younger generations, they might be priced out of housing costs recently, as well as for renters and homeowners. Also, seniors who might not be able to afford their housing fixed incomes.

And then the biggest point that we had was the downtown transformation plan. It is key to the town's future. There was a lot of energy from participants who took the survey. They found there's a lot of potential to reinvent the downtown and to really make that area a place for commerce, for culture, for community gathering, and to affect the surrounding area in getting those sidewalk

networks in, road maintenance, putting pedestrian infrastructure, bicycle lanes, and the like in the future.

These are the four big points that came from the survey. There's a lot of good feedback that we can then incorporate into the POCD, what strides we want to make, as well as things that we want to bring up and have more discussion about.

Next we are looking at our executive summary, which is the stakeholder interview. With our earlier discussions on who we wanted to interview, we identified 19 people to participate. When we did our outreach, we had 11 individuals who took part in the actual interview process when we scheduled time for them. This process ran throughout May 2026 into early June 2026. We took everyone's responses to the questions that we asked them and took out major trends as a whole, rather than individual people. And there were three major takeaways – Funding, Space and Communication.

That is a broad overview of the executive summary. Next meeting Emely will present the community survey. There's a lot of really good information, especially with such a big pool of participants from the community.

Vision Statement Exercise – The goal is to provide information that Emely and Lana can incorporated into a draft of a Vision Statement. A vision statement for a POCD serves as our guidepost for our plan recommendations and implementation strategies for the next 10 years. It says that this is who we want Plymouth to be in 2037. It serves as our North Star for everything that we decide that we want to utilize to get to that point. The town may, over the next 10 years, revise your plan. They may decide different strategies would work better for implementation, but ultimately, that vision will stay the same. That way, you can make choices that align with it and keep you moving in the direction that you want to move.

The activity was for the commission to fill in some statements about the town based on what you want the town to be and to look like. After the meeting, Emely and Lana will review and put together a draft vision statement. They will bring it back to the steering committee to revise and adopt, once those revisions are in.

Meeting Administration - Our next meeting will be held on October 22, 2026, at 5:30 in the Assembly room of town hall. Emely will send out calendar invites to all committee members.

Public Comment – None

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Adjournment: There being no further business of the Plymouth Planning and Conservation Development Steering Committee, Vin made a motion to adjourn at 6:30 pm and Sue seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maureen Cappetto

Maureen Cappetto
Recording Secretary