

## AGENDA

### **MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting, Tuesday, February 22, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

#### Minutes

2/7/11

#### Scheduled Business

##### Zoning Agent's Report

- A. Enforcement Update
- B. Current Projects Update
- C. Other

#### Old Business

- 1. 12/1/10 Draft Revisions to the Subdivision Regulations, PZC File #907-34
- 2. 3-Lot Re-Subdivision Application (1 New lot), Property on Candide Lane and Stearns Road, J. Listro o/a, File #1296  
(Public Hearing continued until 3-7-11)
- 3. Other

#### New Business

- 1. New Application to Amend the Zoning Map, Rezone a 10.4 acre parcel from R-20 to PB-1, K. Tubridy o/a. File #1297
- 2. Other

#### Reports from Officers and Committees

- 1. Chairman's Report
- 2. Regional Planning Commission
- 3. Regulatory Review Committee (Next meeting scheduled for 3/1/11 at 1:30 pm in Conf. Room B)
- 4. Other

#### Communications and Bills

- 1. Memo from Director of Planning Re: Zoning Permit Application: Storrs Center Phases 1A and 1B
- 2. Winter Planning Commissioners Journal
- 3. CFPZA Annual Conference Announcement
- 4. Other

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**DRAFT MINUTES**

MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Monday, February 7, 2011

Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: R. Favretti (Chairman), M. Beal, R. Hall, K. Holt, G. Lewis, P. Plante, B. Pociask, B. Ryan  
Members absent: J. Goodwin  
Alternates present: F. Loxsom, K. Rawn, V. Stearns Ward  
Staff Present: Gregory J. Padick, Director of Planning, Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent

Chairman Favretti called the meeting to order at 7:28 p.m. and appointed Loxsom to act in Goodwin's absence.

**Minutes:**

1-19-11 - Hall MOVED, Loxsom seconded, to approve the 1/19/11 minutes as written. MOTION PASSED with all in favor except Pociask and Plante who disqualified themselves. Ryan noted that she listened to the recording of the meeting.

**Zoning Agent's Report:**

Hirsch noted that the Citation Hearing Officer upheld the \$2,700 in fines issued concerning the Hall site. He added that if the work is completed by June 30, 2011, according to the Bonding Agreement, the Halls will then be eligible to have half of the fine returned (\$1,350).

**Public Hearing:**

**Special Permit Application, proposed Sale of Alcoholic Liquor at Randy's Wooster Street Pizza, 1232 Storrs Rd, PZC File #1295**

Chairman Favretti opened the public hearing at 7:32 p.m. Members present were Favretti, Beal, Hall, Holt, Lewis, Plante, Pociask, Ryan and alternates Loxsom, Rawn and Stearns Ward. Loxsom was appointed to act. Padick read the legal notice as it appeared in the Chronicle on 1/25/11 and 2/2/11 and noted a 2/2/11 report from the Director of Planning.

Ali Akin, owner of Randy's Wooster Street Pizza, responded to questions from the Commission regarding how and what type of alcohol will be served. He stated that only beer and wine will be served to patrons who order food, and it will be kept behind the counters and served to patrons at their tables.

Favretti noted no further comments or questions from the public or Commission. Holt MOVED, Pociask seconded, to close the Public Hearing at 7:42 p.m. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Old Business:**

**2. Consideration of Action: Sale of Alcoholic Liquor at Randy's Wooster Street Pizza, 1232 Storrs Rd, PZC File #1295**

Ryan MOVED, Holt seconded, to approve with conditions the special permit application (File #1295) of Randy's Wooster Street Pizza for the sale of beer and wine in association with a restaurant use at University Plaza, 1232 Storrs Road, as depicted on a submitted floor plan, as described in a statement of use and other application submissions and as presented at a Public Hearing on 2/07/11. This approval is granted because the application as approved is considered to be in compliance with Article X, Section I, Article V, Section B and other provisions of the Mansfield Zoning Regulations, and is granted with the following conditions:

1. Any significant change in the proposed restaurant use and sale of beer and wine, as described in application submissions and at the 2/07/11 Public Hearing, shall require further PZC review and

approval. Any questions regarding what constitutes a significant change shall be reviewed with the Zoning Agent and, as deemed necessary, the PZC;

2. Pursuant to Mansfield's current Zoning requirements for Planned Business-2 sites within 500 feet of a school, all beer and wine shall be served from a service bar in conjunction with the service of meals to customers seated at tables;
3. The owner shall be responsible for training staff with respect to all applicable Connecticut liquor laws;
4. This approval grants the requested site plan submission waivers. The information submitted is adequate to appropriately address applicable approval criteria;
5. This permit shall not become valid until the applicant obtains the special permit form from the Planning Office and files it on the Land Records.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Public Hearing:**

**3-Lot Re-Subdivision Application (1 New lot), Property on Candide Lane and Stearns Road, J. Listro o/a, File #1296**

Chairman Favretti opened the Public Hearing at 7:47 p.m. Members present were Favretti, Beal, Hall, Holt, Lewis, Plante, Pociask, Ryan and alternates Loxsom, Rawn and Stearns Ward. Loxsom was appointed to act. Padick read the legal notice as it appeared in the Chronicle on 1-25-11 and 2-2-11 and noted the following communications received: a 12-28-10 report from G. Havens, EHHD; a 1-19-11 report from J. Ianni, Certified Soil Scientist; a 1-23-11 report from N. Bellantoni, PhD, CT State Archaeologist; and a 2-3-11 report from G. Padick, Director of Planning.

Joseph Boucher, Towne Engineering, agreed to enter the comments from the Inland Wetlands Agency into the record of this Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. Boucher reviewed the plans and the proposed conservation easements.

Favretti noted the suggestion of the Conservation Commission to construct a driveway with a permeable surface and questioned Boucher if an unpaved driveway is advisable with an 11.3% grade. Boucher indicated that it would not be an issue either way.

Padick suggested keeping the Public Hearing open, as he is expecting a report from the Town Engineer/Inland Wetlands Agent and the Fire Marshal.

Holt MOVED, Ryan seconded, to continue the Public Hearing until 3/7/11. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Public Hearing:**

**12/1/10 Draft Revisions to the Subdivision Regulations, PZC File #907-34**

Chairman Favretti opened the public hearing at 8:00 p.m. Members present were Favretti, Beal, Hall, Holt, Lewis, Plante, Pociask, Ryan and alternates Loxsom, Rawn and Stearns Ward. Loxsom was appointed to act. Padick read the legal notice as it appeared in the Chronicle on 1/25/11 and 2/2/11 and noted the following communications received: a 12/20/10 report from J. Jackman, Fire Marshall; a 1/10/11 memo from the Open Space Preservation Committee; a 1/18/11 report from A. Bloom, EHHD; a 2/3/11 report from G. Padick, Director of Planning; a 2/3/11 report from D. O'Brien, Town Attorney; a 2/7/11 memo from the Conservation Commission, and a 1/5/11 report from WINCOG which was read into the record.

Padick reviewed the changes made to the 12/1/10 Draft Subdivision Regulation Revisions. Favretti noted no comments or questions from the public or the Commission. Beal MOVED, Plante seconded, to close the Public Hearing at 8:20 p.m. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Padick suggested the Commission be prepared to review the revisions at the next meeting and to discuss possible minor revisions.

**Old Business:**

**1. Zoning Permit Application: Storrs Center Phases 1A and 1B**

Padick discussed the review process and stated that he expects to have his review finalized by the end of the week. Members were asked to submit any comments they may have as soon as possible.

**New Business:**

**1. 8-24 Referral: Potential Acquisition of Penner Property**

Holt MOVED, Ryan seconded, that the Planning and Zoning Commission notify the Town Council that the proposed acquisition of the Penner Property would promote Mansfield's Plan of Conservation and Development and would help protect the ecological health and character of an Atlantic White Cedar Swamp of statewide importance. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**2. Draft Natchaug River Basin Conservation Compact**

Hall MOVED, Loxsom seconded, that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the Town Council that approval of the Draft Natchaug River Basin Conservation Compact would be appropriate. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Reports from Officers and Committees:**

Chairman Favretti noted a 2/9/11 Regulatory Review Committee meeting at 1:15 p.m. in Conference Room C.

**Adjournment:**

Chairman Favretti declared the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Holt, Secretary

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To: Town Council/Planning & Zoning Commission  
 From: Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent  
 Date: February 14, 2011



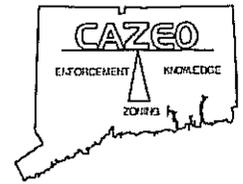
**Re: *Monthly Report of Zoning Enforcement Activity***  
*For the month of January, 2011*

Activity	This month	Last month	Same month last year	This fiscal year to date	Last fiscal year to date
Zoning Permits issued	1	3	4	66	70
Certificates of Compliance issued	4	13	12	72	65
Site Inspections	6	25	39	284	293
Complaints received from the Public	0	2	0	29	23
Complaints requiring inspection	0	1	1	23	20
Potential/Actual violations found	1	1	5	21	37
Enforcement letters	9	11	19	75	79
Notices to issue ZBA forms	0	0	2	0	6
Notices of Zoning Violations issued	0	2	1	12	28
Zoning Citations issued	0	3	10	39	35

Zoning permits issued this month for single family homes = 0, multi-fm = 0  
 2010/2011 fiscal year total: s-fm = 3, multi-fm = 8



# Town of Mansfield



CURT B. HIRSCH  
ZONING AGENT  
HIRSCHCB@MANSFIELDCT.ORG

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING  
4 SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD  
MANSFIELD, CT 06268-2599  
(860) 429-3341

To: Planning & Zoning Commission  
From: Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent  
Date: February 14, 2011

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CBH", is written over the "From" and "Date" lines of the header.

Re: Current Projects Update

Windwood Acres, Storrs Rd: The common driveway construction has been completed and is fully stabilization. Zoning Permits have been issued for two lots, one built

Beacon Hill Estates: 10 homes have received CO's, two are under construction. 11 lots remain vacant.

Fellows Estates, Monticello Rd.: 6 of the 8 lots are completed and occupied.

Mulwood East, Wormwood Hill Rd.: 3 of the 5 lots are built and occupied.

Mulwood West, Mulberry La: All four lots remain vacant.

Freedom Green: Zoning Permits have been issued for all of the proposed 36 units in Phase 4-C. About 20 of these units are now occupied. This is the final phase of a project approved by the PZC in 1980.

Paideia: There is still a partial Stop Work Order in place from the Building and Zoning Offices. Limited work was authorized and the PZC and Building Office have authorized completion of the stage.

Gibbs Oil, Stafford Rd.: A Zoning Permit has been issued but no work has started. The PZC extended the mandatory 'start' date until 10/1/11. The Building Permit however has expired and will need to be re-issued before any work may proceed.

Zoning Permits are outstanding for ten single-family homes. Only four of these are under 'active' construction at this time.

RECEIPT OF APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING MAP:

\_\_\_\_\_, MOVE and \_\_\_\_\_ seconds, to receive the application

submitted by Kevin M. Tubridy (File # 1297)

to change the zone classification of a 10.4 acre parcel of land, owned by the applicant,

located at the north side of Frontage Road between Ledgebrook Drive and Mansfield City Road,

from a R-20 zone to a PB-1 (Planned Business 1) zone,

as shown on plans dated 12/2/10 and as submitted to the Commission, to refer said application to the staff for review and comment and to set a Public Hearing for March 21, 2011.

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APPLICATION TO AMEND THE ZONING MAP  
(see Article XIII of the Zoning Regulations)

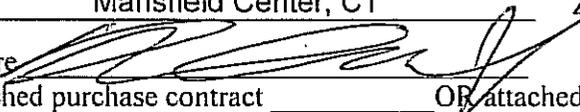
PZC File # 1297  
Date 2-10-11

1. The undersigned applicant hereby petitions the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission to change the zone classification of the hereinafter-described property from R-20 (Residence 20) to PB-1 (Planned Business 1)

2. Address/location of subject property North side of North Frontage Road  
Assessor's Map 38 Block 101 & 102 Lot(s) 2-1 & 6-1

3. Acreage of subject property 10.4, acreage of adjacent land in same ownership (if any) 4.6

4. APPLICANT Kevin M. Tubridy  
(please PRINT) Signature  
Street Address 25 Ledgebrook Drive Telephone 860-423-0334  
Town Mansfield Center, CT Zip Code 06250  
Interest in property: Owner X Optionee \_\_\_\_\_ Lessee \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(If "Other", please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

5. OWNER OF RECORD: Kevin M. Tubridy  
(please PRINT) Signature  
Street Address 25 Ledgebrook Drive Telephone 860-423-0334  
Town Mansfield Center, CT Zip Code 06250  
Signature   
OR attached purchase contract \_\_\_\_\_ OR attached letter consenting to this application \_\_\_\_\_

6. AGENTS (if any) who may be directly contacted regarding this application:  
Datum Engineering & Surveying, LLC  
Name Edward Pelletier, L.S. Telephone 860-456-1357  
Address 132 Conantville Road, Mansfield Center, CT Zip Code 06250  
Involvement (legal, engineering, surveying, etc.) surveying  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Involvement (legal, engineering, surveying, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

7. The following items must be submitted as part of this application:  
X application fee  
X map of subject property (5 copies) prepared by surveyor as per requirements of Article XIII, Section B.4. Map shall include areas within 500 feet of proposed rezoning, existing and proposed zone boundaries, existing streets, rights-of-way, easements, watercourses, wetlands, flood hazard areas, property lines and names and addresses of neighboring property-owners, including those across any street

(over)

8. Items to be submitted as part of this application (continued):

  X   legally-defined boundary description of areas to be rezoned

  X   Statement of Justification addressing approval considerations of Article XIII, Section C, and substantiating the proposal's compatibility with the Mansfield Plan of Development; the reasons for the proposed rezoning (including any circumstances or changed conditions that would justify the revision), and the effect the zone change would have on the health, safety, welfare and property values of neighboring properties and other Mansfield residents

  X   reports and other information supporting the proposed rezoning (see Article XIII, Section B.8). List or explain.

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(end of Applicant section)

\* \* \* \* \*

(for office use only)

date application was received by the PZC \_\_\_\_\_ fee submitted \_\_\_\_\_

date of Public Hearing \_\_\_\_\_ date of PZC action \_\_\_\_\_

action: \_\_\_\_\_ approved \_\_\_\_\_ denied effective date \_\_\_\_\_

comments:

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signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission

date \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT OF USE  
**NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD**  
MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

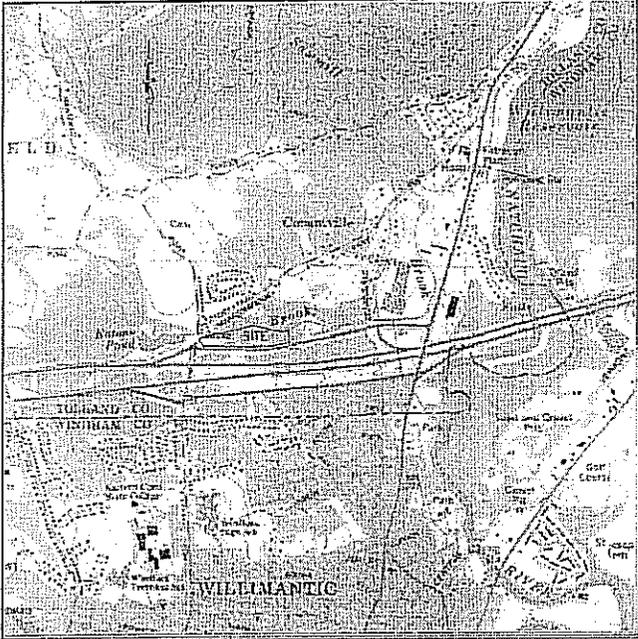
My North Frontage Road property consists of 15 acres of which 4.6 acres are now in a PB1 zone while the adjacent piece of 10.4 acres is in an R-20 zone. The property is on North Frontage Road directly across from the State of Connecticut sand storage and maintenance facility. The parcel is north of the PB1 zoned Ledgebrook South Office Park which I developed in the 1990s.

This parcel has a municipal sewer line within its boundary area and also has access to a municipal water supply. The Mansfield's Plan of Development has shown this parcel to be scheduled for reclassification into the PB1 zone. There are no residences on North Frontage Road and since there few commercial parcels in Mansfield that possesses access to water and sewer, it would seem to be prudent to follow Mansfield's plan of development. I am asking that consideration be given to rezone this 10.4 acre parcel into the PB1 zone.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

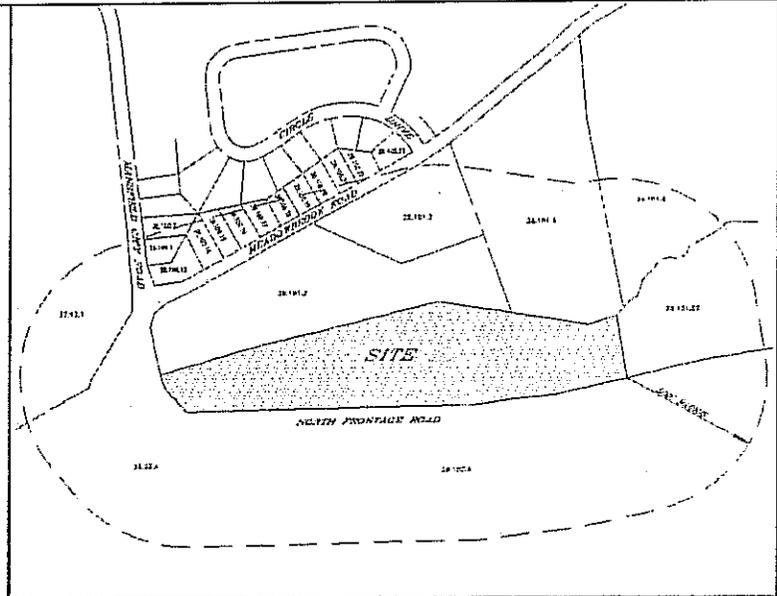
Kevin Tubridy  
New England Design, Inc.  
25 Ledgebrook Drive  
Mansfield, CT 06250  
KevinTubridy@aol.com  
860-423-0334

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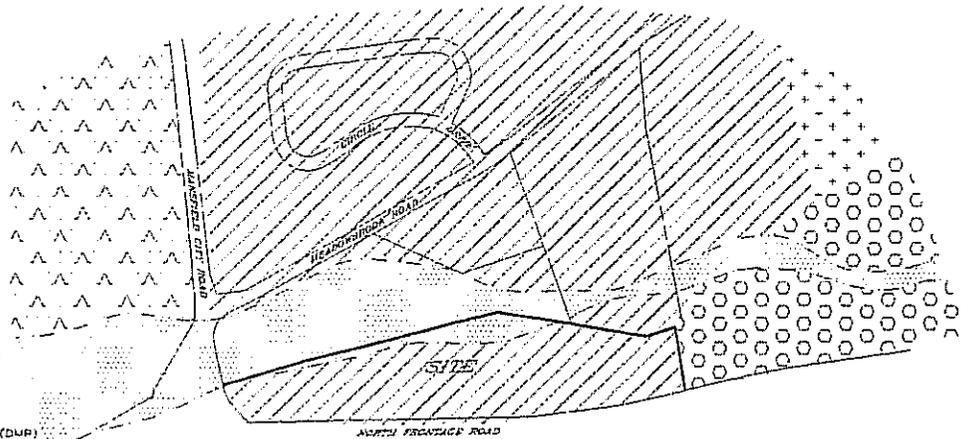


**LOCATION MAP**  
SCALE 1" = 1000'

PARCEL #/OWNER	OWNER'S ADDRESS
27.93.1	STATE OF CONNECTICUT (EDEL HALL PLAZA) 100 SOUTH MAIN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.95.4	CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 500 STATE STREET MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.1	HOMINER, DONALD M. JR. & DAIRNE A. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.2	LECHAPPELLE, RICHARD M. DOUGLAS 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.3	DAVE, MICHAEL E. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.14	FELLEN, JAMES L. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.15	WELLS, CHARLES A. & KATHA J. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.18	HOGAN, ERICA D. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.17	BUNZING, STEVEN 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
29.100.10	UNIVERSAL CONCRETE & R. UNCLEY, JOSEPH W. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.16	FORREST, ERIC S. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.20	LEONARD, JESSICA L. & CHRISTOPHER P. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.21	MCCORMACK, JILL 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.22	HALLIBELL, THOMAS F. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.23	BEWES, PHILIP R. & MARION J. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.2	BROWN, EDWARD J. JR. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.3	EDMUND, JAMES 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.4	CHIEF, JAMES 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.5	JANNEY, FRANK JAMES 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.6	TURNEY, KEVIN M. 10 WINDMILL LN MANSFIELD, CT 06108
28.100.8	CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 500 STATE STREET MANSFIELD, CT 06108



**ABUTTER'S MAP**  
SCALE 1" = 200'



**ZONE LEGEND**

	RESIDENCE 20 ZONE (R-20)
	PLANNED BUSINESS 1 ZONE (PB-1)
	INSTITUTIONAL ZONE (I)
	DESIGN MULTIPLE RESIDENCE ZONE (DMR)
	FLOOD HAZARD ZONE (FH)

**ZONING MAP**  
SCALE 1" = 200'

PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE  
PREPARED FOR  
**KEVIN TUBRIDY**  
NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD  
MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT  
SCALE AS NOTED DATE: DECEMBER 2, 2010

SHEET 1 OF 2

**P.T. ENGINEERING & SURVEYING, LLC**  
132 GRANVILLE ROAD  
MANSFIELD CENTER, CT 06250  
TEL: (860) 456-1267 FAX: (860) 456-1840  
JOHN H. ZIEGLER  
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD**  
**OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

GREGORY J. PADICK, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

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Memo to: Curt Hirsch, Mansfield Zoning Agent  
From: Gregory Padick, Director of Planning  
Date: February 9, 2011  
Re: Zoning Permit Applicant, Storrs Center Phases 1A and 1B



Pursuant to the provisions of Article X, Section S of the Zoning Regulations, I have completed my review of the 1/13/11 Zoning Permit application of Storrs Center Alliance LLC and Education Realty Trust, Inc. and have determined that, subject to the attached conditions of approval, the Zoning Permit is in compliance with all applicable Zoning requirements. Accordingly, you are authorized to issue a Zoning Permit for the subject Storrs Center Phases 1A and 1B subject to incorporation of those conditions which do not involve immediate map revisions.

In the process of making this compliance determination, I note the following findings:

- The applicant's submission includes a thirty-eight (38) page set of site and architectural plans with an issue date of 1/13/11, as prepared by BL Companies and a comprehensive application packet dated 1/13/11 which contains a Statement of Use; Table of Land Uses; documentation of public water and sewer service; statements of consistency with the PZC approved Preliminary Master Plan, Master Parking Study, Master Traffic Study, Master Stormwater Drainage Study, the Storrs Center Design Guidelines; and a Design Review Checklist and signed Design Certification. This information appropriately meets the submission requirements of Article X, Section S.5.c.
- Pursuant to the provisions of Article X, Section S.6.b.(ii), the Mansfield Downtown Partnership has conducted a public hearing and provided an appropriate opportunity for the submittal of public comment. On 2/8/11, the Mansfield Downtown Partnership determined that the Zoning Permit application for Phases 1A and 1B complies with the requirements of the Storrs Center Special Design District regulations and the Storrs Center Design Guidelines. This action was taken after consideration of public comments and a report from its Planning and Design Committee. The Director of Planning attended the Downtown Partnership Public Hearing.
- On 1/19/11, the Inland Wetland Agency determined that the plans for Phases 1A and 1B were consistent with its 10/1/07 License approval for the Storrs Center Project.
- On 1/19/11, the Planning and Zoning Commission conditionally approved a Special Permit modification application for all proposed construction in the Planned Business-2 zone that remains under the Commissions approval authority.
- For over three months various Mansfield staff members have met with applicant representatives to help ensure compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements. Written staff reports have been received from R. Miller, Director of Health; V. Walton, Recycling Coordinator; L. Hultgren, Director of Public Works; K. Grunwald, Director of Human Services and J. Jackman, Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal. Verbal feedback also has been received from G. Meitzler, Assistant Town Engineer/Inland Wetlands Agent. Written comments also have been received from R. Favretti, PZC Chairman and resident D. Morse. Subject to conditions included in this Zoning Permit approval authorization, all identified zoning issues will be addressed.
- All approval criteria contained or referenced in Article X, Section S.6.d, including Article V, Section A.5 and Article XI, Section C.3. have been addressed or will be addressed by conditions included in this Zoning Permit authorization.

Article X, Section S.6.e. authorizes the Director of Planning to add conditions deemed necessary to ensure compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements. The following conditions, except for those that require immediate map revisions, shall be incorporated into the Zoning Permit approval for Phases 1A and 1B:

1. Pursuant to Article X, Section S.6.g of the Zoning Regulations, any proposed revisions to the submitted plans and associated application narratives and/or the proposed uses hereby granted Zoning Permit approval shall be submitted to the Director of Planning for review and approval. It is recognized that plans for the parking garage/intermodal center, Village Street, Town Square, Storrs Road, Dog Lane and other site improvements are not yet finalized and accordingly, plan revisions are anticipated.
2. All conditions of approval cited in the Planning and Zoning Commission's 7/5/06 Special Permit approval, as modified on 1/19/11, shall be met. These conditions, which apply to the portion of the project within the PB-2 zone, include required map revisions, additional submission requirements and the posting of a \$5,000 site development bond. To address Zoning Permit provisions, this \$5,000 bond, with an associated bond agreement to be approved by the Director of Planning, shall cover all site work in Phases 1A and 1B.
3. All conditions of approval cited in the 10/1/07 Inland Wetland Agency license approval, as revised on 1/19/11, shall be met. This includes a requirement that open space areas be deeded to the Town and monumented prior to the issuance of occupancy permits.
4. Based on the Planning and Zoning Commission required notations on the Preliminary Master Plan mapping, Storrs Road and Dog Lane improvements shall be constructed in association with Phase 1A and the Village Street improvements, including a public access connection to the Storrs Post Office Road, shall be constructed in association with Phase 1B. Whereas these roadway/streetscape improvements, as well as the parking garage/intermodal center, are now Town projects, this Zoning Permit approval does not specifically tie completion of these Town projects to the initial issuance of occupancy permits. However, no occupancy permits in either Phase 1A or 1B shall be issued until it is demonstrated (to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning) that safe and appropriate vehicular and pedestrian access has been provided.
5. No construction shall start in Phase 1A until it is confirmed (to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning) that the Phase 1A and 1B improvements are acceptable to all federal and state agencies who have granted permit approval for the entire Storrs Center project. No Building Permit can be issued until a State Traffic Commission Certificate is issued.
6. With the exception of demolition work, no construction shall start in Phases 1A or 1B until title to identified properties to be acquired in each phase are conveyed to the applicant and merged in a manner that eliminates the need for subdivision approval.
7. No construction shall start in Phase 1A until the proposed ground lease with from the University of Connecticut for the Bishop Center surface parking lot is executed and a notice of lease is filed on the Land Records. To provide long term use rights, it is understood that the subject ground lease shall be for a term of ninety-eight (98) years, including renewal options. Any reduction in this term must be approved by the Director of Planning.
8. To supplement applicant submissions regarding construction traffic, no construction shall begin until a more specific construction traffic management plan is developed in association with the Town of Mansfield, who is responsible for Storrs Road, Dog Lane, the Village Street and the parking garage/intermodal center projects, and with the University of Connecticut who will be upgrading sewer lines in the project area. The coordinated construction traffic management plan shall be approved by the Mansfield Traffic Authority.

9. The proposed Common Interest Ownership arrangement is acceptable for Phases 1A and 1B subject to compliance with all applicable State requirements and incorporation of commitments made in the Zoning Permit application. A copy of the executed Common Interest Ownership documents shall be filed in the Mansfield Planning Office.
10. Unless alternative parking arrangements are approved by the Director of Planning, no occupancy permits shall be issued for Phase 1A buildings until the parking garage and associated access improvements are approved, constructed and operational. As an exception to this condition, the relocation of the Storrs Automotive use and other commercial uses existing in buildings that will be demolished, may be issued occupancy permits provided approved surface parking is available in the Bishop Center lot and safe vehicular and pedestrian access is provided to the subject relocated uses.
11. Prior to the construction of the "Temp Road" in Phase 1A, specific plans for addressing parking, loading, vehicular and pedestrian traffic and landscaping for the areas adjacent to the Marketplace retail building and the "Temp Road" shall be submitted to and approved by the Director of Planning.
12. Prior to beginning any demolition work, specific plans for protecting the existing tree "to be saved" adjacent to Storrs Road shall be submitted to the Director of Planning, approved and implemented.
13. As noted on Sheets SP-1A/1B, prior to the issuance of occupancy permits for building TS-2 in Phase 1B, design plans for the Town Square and site restoration/site enhancement plans for the Phase 1C area now occupied by the Marketplace retail building shall be submitted to the Director of Planning, approved and implemented.
14. In order to confirm the adequacy of parking for the final mix of commercial uses in building TS-2, no occupancy permits for commercial spaces in Phase 1B shall be issued until a more specific breakdown of commercial uses is provided for this building. The Director of Planning needs to confirm that adequate parking will be provided in accordance with the approved Master Parking Study.
15. All designs for commercial storefront areas, including signage, awnings, outdoor seating and other features to enhance the streetscape, shall be submitted for approval by the Director of Planning. Planning and Zoning Commission approval is required for the DL-1 building situated within the PB-2 zone. Individual commercial spaces may also need approval from the Eastern Highlands Health District.
16. Pursuant to Article XI Sections 4.d, no new foundation walls shall be constructed until certification from a licensed land surveyor is received by the Zoning Agent confirming that foundation footings are in approved locations.
17. Due to ongoing design work on the Village Street, Town Square and associated improvements, street lighting, street trees, bus shelters, benches, trash receptacles, directional signage and other streetscape improvements shall require subsequent review and approval by the Director of Planning. It is anticipated that final approvals of these elements of the Storrs Center Project can be issued in the spring of 2011. 2/7/11 comments received from R. Favretti shall be considered in reviewing proposed landscaping improvements and more attention shall be given to avoiding monocultures in the street tree design.
18. Unless specifically authorized by the Director of Planning, all new utility lines shall be installed underground.
19. All material that will be removed from the project area in association with demolition activities shall be disposed of in an appropriate location that has been approved for such disposal. All site demolition contractors shall be advised of this requirement.

20. To address regulatory approval criteria, and applicant commitments, the following revisions noted below shall be incorporated onto the final site and architectural plans. All final plans shall be signed and sealed by the responsible professionals.
- A. Plan revisions identified in a 2/1/11 memorandum from A. Graves of B.L. Companies. These revisions were agreed upon after meeting with the Downtown Partnership Planning and Design Committee.
  - B. Revisions deemed necessary by the Mansfield Fire Marshal to address Section 4.10 of the Design Guidelines regarding fire protection measures and site safety issues.
  - C. Revisions to the design of the parking, loading driveway and waste disposal site improvements situated north of building DL-1/2 and east of building TS-1. The Planning and Zoning Commission has expressed concerns regarding vehicular and pedestrian safety in this area, the Mansfield Solid Waste Advisory Committee has raised concerns regarding access to the dumpster near building DL-1 and the Advisory Committee on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities has suggested providing accessible parking spaces closer to building entrances. Additionally, consideration should be given to specifically identifying all reserved spaces. A final design for this area shall be approved by the Director of Planning with assistance from other Mansfield Staff members.
  - D. Plan revisions required by the Planning and Zoning Commission in association with the Special Permit approval granted for work in the PB-2 zone.
  - E. The plans shall incorporate electrical outlets appropriate for community event use in the Town Square area and along other project roadways.
  - F. On Sheet LL-1, the tree to be saved at the corner of Storrs Road and Dog Lane needs to be identified for specific protection during construction activities.
  - G. On Sheet DN-1, the accessible parking space detail needs to be revised to depict cross-hatching on the right side as per Mansfield Zoning requirements.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this report and the listing of approval conditions. If additional information is received regarding the subject conditions or it is determined that wording revisions are necessary to clarify requirements, I will reconsider the conditions.

It also is noted that review comments have been received regarding residential floor plans and occupancy of the project apartments. It is my finding that the proposed residential units comply with the permitted use provisions of the Zoning Regulations. Furthermore, Education Realty Trust, Inc. has the right to modify floor plans, without additional zoning approval, as long as all applicable building and fire code requirements are met and as long as there is no change in permitted use classification. Floor plan revisions are anticipated, particularly in association with residential marketing efforts designed to serve the general public.

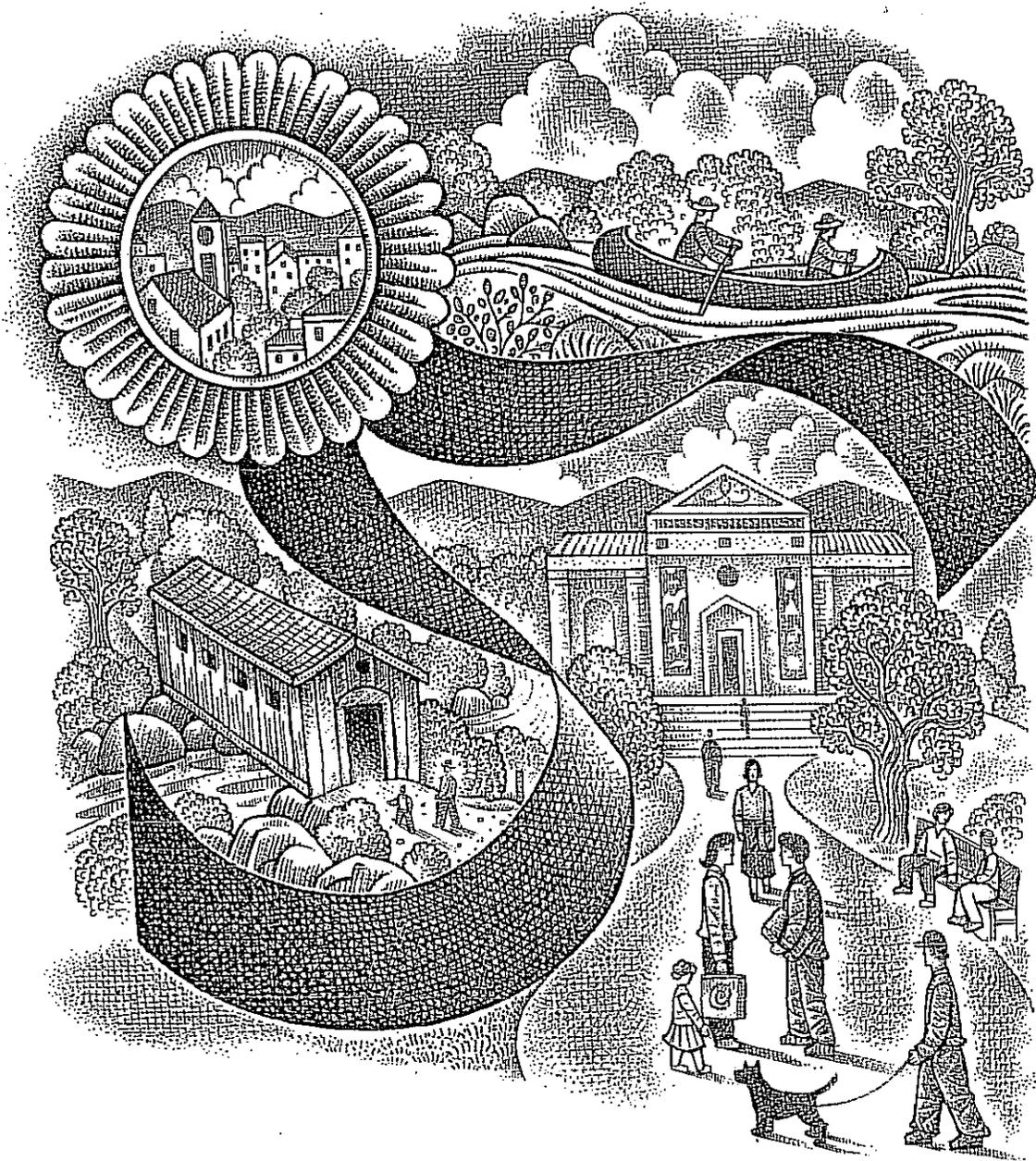
Cc: Storrs Center Alliance, LLC  
Education Realty Trust, Inc.  
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Inc.  
Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission  
Mansfield Town Council  
Barry Feldman, UConn Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

PLANNING  
COMMISSIONERS

# Journal

NEWS & INFORMATION FOR CITIZEN PLANNERS

## Recognizing Community Assets



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## Recognizing Our Assets

It's an all too common failing, we tend to lose sight of the natural and man-made assets our communities offer: our history, our landmarks, our natural features, the special character of our downtowns and main streets.

Sometimes we recognize them too late, as Joni Mitchell reminds us in her well-known lyrics: "Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got till it's gone. They paved paradise and put up a parking lot."

In this issue, you'll find several articles on this theme. Gwendolyn Hallsmith starts by reminding us of the economic benefits that can come from recognizing our natural and cultural assets. Then read Rob Voigt's account of how four towns in Ontario have come together to map them out.

Another way of enhancing our assets can come from a combination of strengthening our urban cores, while conserving farmland and natural resources. Beth Humstone discusses one tool for accomplishing this: urban growth boundaries.

The physical character and beauty of our cities, towns, and countryside is also a valuable asset. Ed McMahon, a senior fellow at the Urban Land Institute, argues that billboards undermine this, with negative economic impacts.

While some still claim that aesthetics is not within the purview of local government, the Supreme Court over a half-century ago said otherwise.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, as planning historian Laurence Gerckens has pointed out, the impetus for community planning in the U.S. at the turn of the 19th century centered on aesthetics: "realizing an inspiring good order in the public environment while protecting the positive qualities of both the natural environment and the cultural heritage."<sup>2</sup>

Finally, let's not forget that it's engaged citizens who are any community's most valuable asset – including dedicated, informed planning board members. ♦



*Wayne M. Senville*

Wayne M. Senville,  
Editor

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# Journal

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1 See *Berman v. Parker*, 348 U.S. 26 (1954), where the Court found that "it is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy ..."

2 See Gerckens, "Community Aesthetics & Planning," *PCJ* #7 (Nov/Dec. 1992).

# Finding Your Local Economy's Hidden Treasure

by Gwendolyn Hallsmith

For the last three issues, this column has explored the first steps local planning commissioners can take to start to address the economic crisis so many communities are facing. This has included the most important step – recognizing that you can act to improve your local economy. Once you make the decision to take action, you recruit the stakeholders who need to be involved in the project. The last column described how to identify and categorize the assets you have.

After you have a clear picture of the assets in your community, you'll need to find ways your community can use them to create new jobs and opportunities. For example, your asset inventory might include historic and cultural resources in a part of the city you have always thought of as the "wrong side of the tracks." Old buildings – factories, 18th and 19th century housing, landmarks, and unique cultural enclaves – all offer possibilities for redevelopment.

For example, in the Blackstone Valley of Rhode Island, places like Woonsocket, Central Falls, and Pawtucket were old mill towns that had lost their major employers – the mills, blast furnaces, and forges – when they moved out of New England in the early part of the 20th century.

The Blackstone River, once known as "the hardest working river in America" because of its role in powering the industrial growth of the region became a backwater, with towns whose new claim to fame was some of the highest levels of unemployment in the country. The old, crumbling mills were eyesores, the river smelled like a cesspool, and the neighborhoods grew more distressed as

unemployment became the norm.

As suburbanization spread in the latter part of the 20th century, the Blackstone Valley relics of the industrial age seemed doomed for the wrecking ball. Then, in 1986, people who were concerned about the loss of these important historic resources worked to get Congress to create the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor, the second of its type in the country. The corridor included 46 miles of river, 20 towns, and

and blight and recognized the hidden treasure in the wreckage of the industrial age.

The Blackstone River story also points to another asset that is often overlooked – the natural features which offer restoration and rejuvenation possibilities. Strict environmental controls and the introduction of sewage treatment plants required by the Clean Water Act turned the river around. A cleaner river became the front yard of the region, rather than its sewer pipe.

Many cities have discovered their hidden treasure in the cultural enclaves that made up some of their blighted neighborhoods as the 20th century came to an end. "Little Italys," once home to recent Italian immigrants who came to the U.S. and Canada in search of factory jobs, are now home to restaurants, shops, and unique cultural festivals. The "Chinatowns" in many cities also provide tourist and recreational attractions, where the colorful and decorative architectural styles imported from the Far

East have created neighborhoods that look like works of art.

These are just a few examples of how visionary communities have recognized the assets they have – even when they look like liabilities – and have used them to reshape and revitalize their local economies. ♦

Gwendolyn Hallsmith is Director of Planning & Community Development for the City of Montpelier, Vermont. Previously, she founded Global Community Initiatives, a non-profit organization that supports municipal sustainable development initiatives.



ANDRIAN FAQUETTE, CURATOR, SLATER MILL MUSEUM; REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION OF SLATER MILL MUSEUM, PAWTUCKET, RI

The "Labor & Ethnic Festival" is held each year at the Slater Mill along the Blackstone River in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

two states (Rhode Island and Massachusetts). With stricter environmental controls, the cleaned-up river drove the new phase of tourist and cultural development as riverboat tours, parks, new museums made from the old mills, and a long bike path became the new attractions.

Now the Blackstone Valley is home to artists and a cultural economy that consistently is ranked as one of the top tourist destinations in Rhode Island, a state where Newport, Block Island, Watch Hill, and the beaches provide ample competition. The historic preservation advocates of the 1980s had a vision that saw beyond the deterioration

# Cultural Asset Mapping

by Robert Voigt

In recent years, urban planning, arts and culture, economic development, and city administration have found common ground in a raised awareness of the importance of culture to a community's livability and prosperity. In fact, cultural vitality is increasingly referred to as one of the four pillars of sustainability, along with social equity, economic health, and environmental responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

Numerous cities across North America have begun to leverage cultural assets for attracting business, investment, and people. Smaller municipalities often have serious challenges in competing with their larger urban cousins to achieve these kinds of successes. Cultural asset mapping (CAM) is used to understand and interpret the complex interrelationships of cultural elements for use in strategic planning and economic development and is scaleable for use in smaller municipalities.

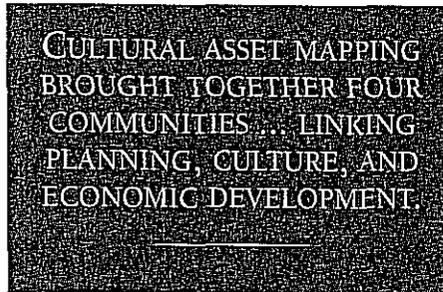
CAM has been defined as: "a process of collecting, recording, analyzing, and synthesizing information in order to describe the cultural resources, networks, links, and patterns of usage of a given community or group."<sup>2</sup>

Maps are most often understood as the indispensable tools that help us navigate our physical world. Cultural asset maps, by representing the spatial relationships between such things as artists, markets, fairgrounds, heritage sites, and buildings, help tell us about who we are, based on our unique identity, history, and cherished stories – in other words, our culture.

1 See, e.g., "Towards a Sustainable and Authentic Canadian Urbanism," by Dan Leeming, Robert Freedman and Alex Taranu (founders of the Council for Canadian Urbanism); Jon Hawkes, *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning* (Common Ground Publishing, 2001).

2 See the Cultural Mapping Toolkit, available at: [www.creativecity.ca](http://www.creativecity.ca)

There are two categories for these maps: (1) *resource maps*, identifying and recording tangible cultural resources, such as buildings or locations; and, (2) *community identity maps*, identifying intangible cultural resources, such as the stories and traditions that define community identity.



Cultural resource information that is spatially-based allows it to be integrated into municipal projects and land use planning in a number of ways:

- Awareness and marketing – promoting culture with residents and tourists.
- Economic development – targeting or facilitating entrepreneurial investment in creative cultural industries.
- Planning and policy – informing municipal decision-making relating to land use, social planning, heritage planning, urban design, and place making.
- Networks and collaboration – facilitating partnerships with cultural groups and identifying opportunities to maximize assets.

## FROM AN IDEA TO A STRATEGY

The cultural asset management project that I'll be describing has brought together four communities in a broad-ranging undertaking linking planning, culture, and economic development.

The towns of Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Clearview, and Blue Mountains, are located in what's called the "Georgian Triangle," a geographic area that includes the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve

of the Niagara Escarpment; Wasaga Beach, the world's longest freshwater beach (8.6 miles in length); and the waters of Georgian Bay. We are also within a 2-1/2 hours' drive from the metropolitan Toronto area.

In many ways, our four towns share commonalities with hundreds of others across North America. Our manufacturing jobs have largely relocated with a significant shift to tourism and service based employment; and the recent years of drastic economic upheaval have had their impacts as well.

Although each town has its own unique cultural assets and sense of identity, we recognized the importance of shared relationships, and saw benefits to collaborating in cultural asset mapping.

Our multi-town CAM project also reflects priorities set out in our region's Economic Development Strategy, which identifies the "Arts and Entertainment" sector as one of the region's existing economic strengths, and the "Information and Culture" sector as an emerging strength. Many assets in both sectors were mapped in the project.

## DATA & FINDINGS

Dr. Greg Baeker is one of Canada's leading experts in the field of cultural resource planning.<sup>3</sup> As he explains: "The myth is that municipalities lack information on cultural resources. The reverse is true. The problem is that information is collected by different people, for different reasons, and exists in different locations. Cultural asset mapping begins by consolidating existing information in a consistent way."<sup>4</sup>

We discovered a wealth of resources and data sets from familiar sources that

3 Dr. Baeker is a Senior Consultant and Founder of AuthentiCity, the firm contracted to work on our cultural asset mapping project.

4 From *Putting Culture on the Map* Final Report (AuthentiCity, July 2010).



Based on how our project has evolved, I encourage those organizing a cultural asset mapping project to take an approach that allows for exploration and creative freedom within a setting that encourages collaboration. While this may increase levels of uncertainty, new and fruitful ideas will likely emerge. For us, the benefits of having an open process where outcomes were not pre-defined have included:

- new municipal partnerships.
- increasing capacity to influence our cultural economy.
- better integrating the activities of various organizations.
- developing a more comprehensive understanding of the communities' assets.
- increasing diversity of stakeholders engaged with the partner municipalities.

There are two more aspects of the project worth highlighting:

First, the project was funded and incorporated into a broader regional economic development strategy. We came together out of a recognition of shared needs and opportunities, finding that the most effective way of doing the CAM work was on a multi-town basis. The partner municipalities shared costs, data, and human resources, which resulted in each town benefiting far more than if it had undertaken the work on its own.

Second, the project creatively made use of GIS. As Dr. Baeker noted, "the ability to manipulate cultural data is a huge leap in integrating cultural assets and information with other critical areas including land use, economic development, and social planning."<sup>7</sup> ♦

Robert Voigt is a Registered Professional Planner with over a dozen years of experience in the U.S. and Canada, and is currently a Senior Planner for the Town of Collingwood, Ontario. He authors CivicBlogger, a blog site dedicated to urban planning issues.

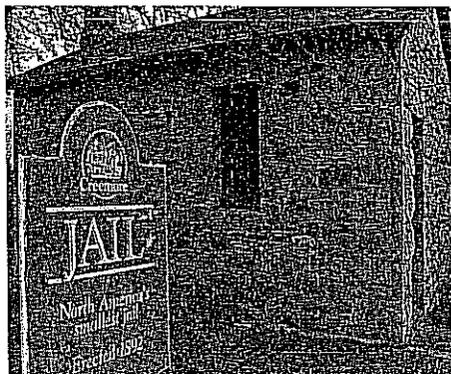


6 [www.georgianbaymappingculture.com/](http://www.georgianbaymappingculture.com/)

7 "Culture an economic driver, says expert," by Shawn Gülck in *The Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin* (June 16, 2010).



*Broad community participation was important in identifying and mapping some 700 cultural assets in the four towns, including the historic Creemore Jail.*



we had a high level of confidence in, for example: InfoCanada (which aggregates data from Statistics Canada [equivalent to the U.S. Census Bureau] and the Yellow Pages); tourism events; arts and culture data bases; and heritage registers.

We also included municipal and regional GIS mapping for trails and parks; heritage districts and sites; and archaeological sites; as well as cultural heritage landscape assessment maps.

Our project has included the identification of over 700 cultural assets. Each has been translated into data that can be manipulated in the regional and local geographic information systems. What is remarkable is that this only represents resource mapping and does not yet include "identity mapping" stories.

Identity mapping stories generally include three types of narratives: those that honor the past, celebrate the present, or envision the future.<sup>5</sup>

We decided that each community would independently capture these kind of stories later. Why wait? We wanted to avoid spending time collecting things like video recordings of personal community recollections, without first hav-

ing a strategy in place for how this information would be used. However, when the communities do undertake identity mapping, the results will be linked and highlighted on the project's "Putting Culture On the Map" web site.<sup>6</sup>

The project's findings also describe ways that CAM information can support the growth of our creative/cultural economies, an important regional economic development priority. These include: coordination of stakeholders to pursue a shared cultural and economic agenda; building networks of innovation across disciplines; and developing connections between producers and consumers.

5 A well-designed web site that features these kinds of stories is City of Memory: A Story Map of New York ([www.cityofmemory.org](http://www.cityofmemory.org)).

# Billboards: The Case for Control

by Edward T. McMahon

*Editor's Note: This article is an update of a piece Ed McMahon wrote for us in 1998. We're also pleased to make available to you as a complimentary download, McMahon's companion article on how to regulate billboards. It goes into more detail on various approaches communities can employ to gain control over billboards and their location. Go to: [www.plannersweb.com/billboards.pdf](http://www.plannersweb.com/billboards.pdf).*

Come see America the beautiful if you can. Amber waves of grain? It is more like a ride through the yellow pages: a windshield vista of 50-foot beer cans and towering casino signs.

Many thought billboards were an endangered species in 1965 when Congress passed the Highway Beautification Act. But the law was so riddled with loopholes and enforcement so lax that in recent years, billboard companies have put up thousands of new, bigger, more obtrusive billboards.

In a relatively short time, outdoor advertising has gone from Burma Shave to Blade Runner: from small and folksy to huge and intrusive. We've now entered the era of digital billboards – giant outdoor TV screens wasting energy while degrading the landscape and distracting drivers.

Billboards are the definition of a roadside distraction. Their entire purpose is to take your eyes off the road and put

them on giant outdoor advertisements. Safety is just one of the reasons why many communities have been trying to regulate billboards for decades.

Curbing billboards is not easy, but it can be done. This article lays out the case for billboard control. It discusses the reasons beyond safety for why we need to halt construction of new billboards and strictly regulate those that remain.

## 1. Billboards are a form of pollution – visual pollution

Over the years, billboards have been described as the “junk mail of the highway,” “litter on a stick,” “visual kudzu,” “urban blight,” and more, but in their simplest form billboards are a form of visual pollution.

Regulating billboards is no different from regulating noxious fumes, sewage discharges, or excessive noise. The U.S. Supreme Court has said: “Pollution is not limited to the air we breathe and the water we drink; it can equally offend the eye and ear.”<sup>1</sup>

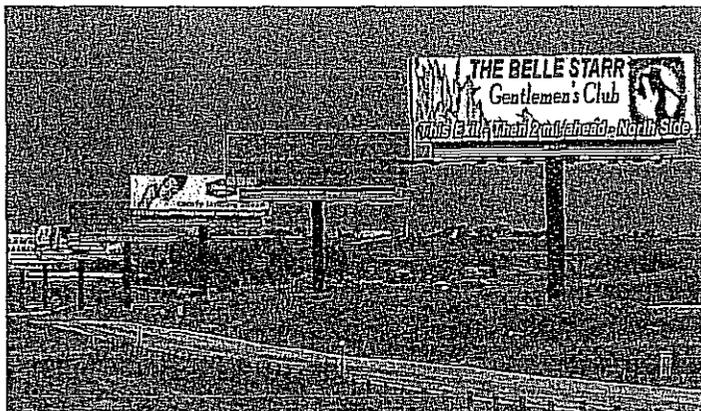
While the messages on a billboard can be ugly or ordinary, when they are enlarged to the size of a house, placed on poles 50 to 100 feet high, randomly strewn along every street, even covering entire buildings, they become a visual and environmental hazard. Like overly loud noise – strictly regulated in many

communities – billboards thrust a discordant commercial note into our environment. They deprive us of visual access to scenic vistas and create a strident, hectic atmosphere in cities.

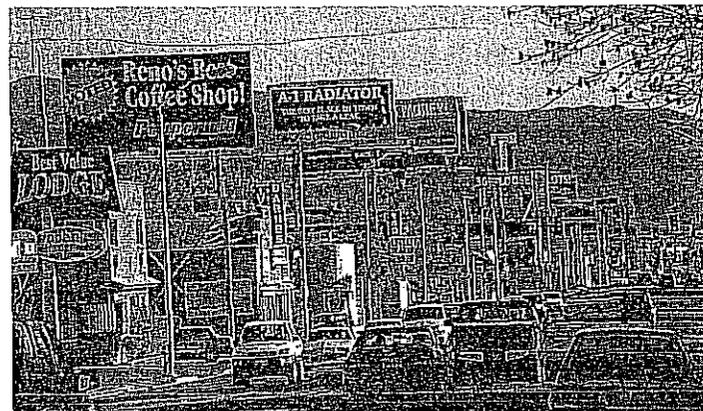
## 2. Billboards are out of place in most locations

Our landscape is one of America's greatest resources. Its value is economic as well as aesthetic, psychological as well as recreational, spiritual as well as physical. Every landscape, rural or urban, has its own kind of beauty and uniqueness. In every kind of landscape billboards are a disturbing alien intrusion. Like empty beer cans in a mountain stream, they simply don't belong because they commercialize, homogenize, and degrade our natural landscape.

Visual clutter may be appropriate in a few limited locations, such as a city's entertainment district (e.g., Times Square or the Las Vegas Strip). In most cases, however, billboards obliterate architectural character and ruin natural beauty. They also undermine community livability and sustainability. Doug Kelbaugh of the University of Michigan School of Architecture put it this way: “If a building, a landscape, or a city is not beautiful, it will not be loved; if it is not loved, it will not be maintained. In short it won't be sustained.”<sup>2</sup>



Billboards commercialize, homogenize, and degrade the countryside.



Welcome to Anyplace USA!



A tree on public land destroyed to improve the view of a billboard.



Billboards make us a captive audience to advertising.

### 3. Billboards destroy distinctiveness

Billboards look the same whether they are in Mississippi, Montana, or Malaysia. As a result, billboards homogenize our communities. They help turn unique places into "Anyplace." In fact, almost nothing will destroy the distinctive character of a place faster than uncontrolled signs and billboards. This has negative economic consequences.

"Community differentiation" is a key concept in economic development today. If you can't differentiate your community from any other community you have no competitive advantage. Put another way, the image of a community is fundamentally important to its economic well being.<sup>3</sup>

Every day, people make decisions about where to live, invest, or vacation based on what communities look like. Attractive, well-ordered communities have an advantage over ugly, chaotic ones. Take tourism: the more one community comes to look like every other community, the less reason there is to visit. On the other hand, the more a community does to protect and enhance its distinctive character, whether natural or architectural, the more reason there is to visit.

Billboards destroy distinctiveness and undermine our sense of place while they commercialize our neighborhoods.

1 *Metromedia, Inc. v. City of San Diego*, 453 U.S. 490 (1981).

2 Douglas Kelbaugh, "Seven Fallacies in Architectural Culture," *Journal of Architectural Education* 58:1 (Sept. 2004).

3 For more on this point see my article, "The Place Making Dividend," *PCJ* #80 (Fall 2010).

### 4. Billboards are the only form of advertising that you can't turn off or avoid

There is a vast difference between seeing an ad – even the same ad – in a magazine, newspaper, on television, or on the internet. When you buy a magazine or turn on the television, you exercise freedom of choice. You can easily close the magazine or turn off the television. You can flip the page or turn the channel.

In contrast, you have no power to turn off or throw away a billboard. Twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, billboards force advertising on individuals and communities whether they want it or not. Billboards are placed so you can't avoid seeing them. Try closing your eyes while driving down a road lined with billboards and you'll wreck your car.<sup>4</sup>

This is how the billboard industry sells space. They tell advertisers billboards give them more "control" over consumers. They claim the ability to "grab your attention" and rub your nose in advertising.

4 A word about safety. A recent report prepared for the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, *Safety Impacts of the Emerging Digital Display Technology for Outdoor Advertising Signs*, contains an exhaustive review of prior research. Among the report's findings: "research sponsored by the outdoor advertising industry generally concludes that there are no adverse impacts from roadside digital billboards, even when, in one case, the actual findings of such research indicate otherwise. Conversely, the conclusions reached in research sponsored by government agencies, insurance companies, and auto safety organizations ... demonstrate that the presence of roadside advertising signs such as digital billboards, contributes to driver distraction at levels that adversely affect safe driving performance."

### 5. Billboard companies sell something they don't own – our field of vision

Courts have long held that billboards do not derive their value from the private land they stand on, but from the public roads they stand next to. Courts call this the "parasite principle" – because billboards feed like a parasite off roads they pay almost nothing to build, use, or maintain.

To understand this, imagine that every billboard in America was turned around so that the message could not be seen from the road. The billboards would suddenly be worthless. Their only value comes from their ability to be seen from public roads. Billboard companies charge advertisers based on the circulation of the road. The higher the traffic count, the higher the ad revenue.

Next time you drive on a toll road lined with billboards, consider how you're being charged to use the road, while the ad company, typically is not.

*continued on next page*

## Resources



*Fighting Billboard Blight: An Action Guide for Citizens and Public Officials* (Scenic America, Washington, DC 2000)

*Meeting the Sign Regulation Challenge* (American Planning Association, Chicago, IL 2006; CD-ROM)

*Street Graphics and the Law*, by Daniel Mandelker (American Planning Association, Chicago, IL 2004).

## Billboards: The Case for Control

continued from previous page

As former California Governor Pat Brown once said: "When a man throws an empty cigarette package from a car, he is liable to a fine, but when a man throws a billboard across a view, he is richly rewarded."<sup>5</sup>

### 6. Billboards are ineffective and unnecessary

Billboard companies argue that "people need billboards." This is completely untrue. There are alternatives to billboards that provide the same information at less cost without degrading our landscape. We have all seen the highway "logo signs" which advertise roadside services such as gas stations, restaurants, hotels, and tourist attractions.

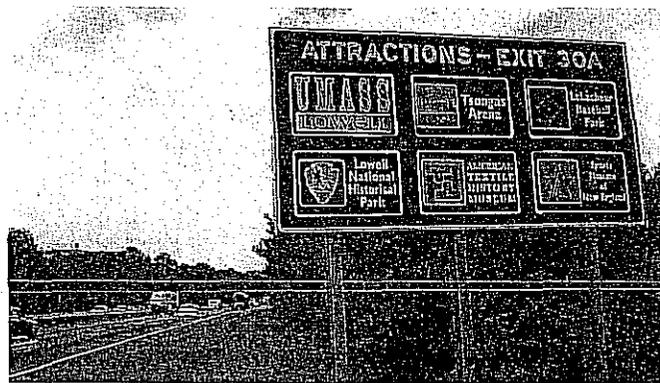
Information on roadside services is also readily available on smart phones, Blackberries, and vehicle information systems. These are far more useful and effective than roadside billboards, particularly when you consider the fact that the vast majority of billboards advertise products or services that have nothing to do with motorist information: beer, cell phones, strip clubs, you name it.<sup>6</sup>

Billboards are also one of the least effective forms of advertising. Billboards represent less than two percent of total advertising in the United States. At best, they are a secondary form of advertising that is used to reinforce ads in other media. The truth is, billboards are so ubiquitous that most people simply tune them out.

Media expert Marshall McLuhan was famous for saying "the medium is the message." This means that the medium affects us more than the message. Billboards are a downscale medium that blights the countryside, annoys many people, and causes advertising overload.

<sup>5</sup> Pat Brown, quoted in David Ogilvy, *Ogilvy on Advertising* (Vintage Books 1985).

<sup>6</sup> The alcohol industry uses outdoor advertising, including billboards, to a much greater extent than other industry groups. See "Alcohol advertising on billboards, transit shelters, and bus benches in inner-city neighborhoods" in *Contemporary Drug Problems* (July 2008).

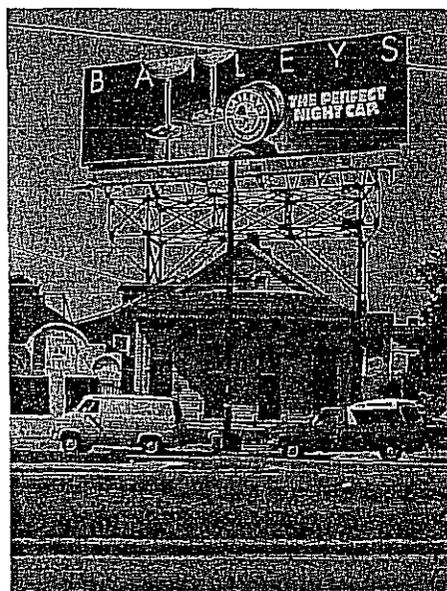


Logo signs provide motorist information without degrading the landscape.

### 7. Billboard companies exercise almost no restraint in the placement of outdoor ads

In recent years, billboards have metastasized in every kind of landscape and setting. Billboards now cover up buildings, hover over our neighborhoods, and stare down on homes, schools, churches, parks, and playgrounds. They deface cemeteries and historic districts.

In the countryside there are few areas sufficiently rural or scenic to be safe from billboards – they are even found in World Heritage Areas and along many designated scenic highways. Rami Tambello, founder of an anti-billboard group in Canada, says: "The outdoor advertising industry has a global culture of non-compliance with the law."<sup>7</sup> Ad companies are erecting illegal bill-



A familiar streetscape in too many communities. Good for property values?

boards all over the world, wherever they can get away with it."<sup>8</sup>

Today four U.S. states – Alaska, Hawaii, Maine, and Vermont – along with thousands of cities and counties totally prohibit billboards. Many other strictly limit billboards.

Billboard regulation has also gone

international: many European countries, like England, have long prohibited billboards in the countryside. Now billboards are becoming an issue in developing countries. In 2000, Athens, Greece was so thick with billboards that it was difficult to see the city's famous architecture. In preparation for the 2004 Olympics, the city dismantled rooftop billboards to beautify the city and improve its vitality.

In 2007, São Paulo Brazil, the world's ninth largest city, banned billboards and took them all down. Brazilian media called this "a rare victory of the public interest over the private interest, of order over disorder, of aesthetics over ugliness, of cleanliness over trash."<sup>9</sup> One of the most important reasons for billboard regulation is because no place in the world will stay scenic and un-commercialized by accident.

### 8. Billboards are both a cause and a symptom of urban blight

Billboards are a cause of urban blight because they degrade the urban environment, lower property values, and foster contempt for the public realm. They are a symptom of urban blight because one

<sup>7</sup> As reported by Jim Edwards in "Meet Rami Tambello ..." on bNet, the CBS Interactive Business Network (Apr. 22, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Search online and you'll find numerous reports about local efforts to fight illegal billboards. See, e.g., "Court orders 59 billboards taken down" (*Houston Chronicle*, Oct. 21, 2010); "Fines slapped on illegal billboards" (*NY Post*, Apr. 27, 2010); "Billboards Gone Wild" (*L.A. Weekly News*, Apr. 23, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> See Patrick Burgoyne, "São Paulo: The City That Said No to Advertising" (*Bloomberg Businessweek*, June 18, 2007); available online at: [www.businessweek.com](http://www.businessweek.com) (search site for São Paulo).

form of blight breeds another. Graffiti, trash, junk cars, billboards – where you find one you'll usually find the other.

What's more, billboards are disproportionately located in low income neighborhoods. There are no billboards in Beverly Hills, Georgetown, Palm Beach, Scarsdale, or hundreds of other affluent communities. But drive into low-income neighborhoods in Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, or any other big city and you will see neighborhoods saturated with billboards. As more of the world's population moves into cities, there is a growing need for places of respite from the chaos and clutter of urban life.

### 9. Billboards are bad for business

Beauty and place making are good for business; ugliness is not. Compare two communities: one with billboards and one without. For example, Montgomery County, Maryland, has no billboards. The nearby city of Baltimore, Maryland has thousands of billboards.

Has Montgomery County been negatively affected? On the contrary, Montgomery County has much lower unemployment, and much higher property values, than Baltimore. In fact, the county with America's lowest unemployment rate – Arlington County, Virginia, has no billboards at all. Lack of billboards does not seem to have deterred economic vitality here or in other communities. Places like Boulder, Colorado; Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Marin County, California, have banned billboards and gained national reputations as great places to live and work.

There is ample evidence to support the assertion that billboard regulation helps business.<sup>10</sup> This is why almost all of America's premier vacation destinations tightly control signs. For example, Vermont runs ads touting its lack of billboards. The former head of the Vermont Chamber of Commerce said: "One of our greatest resources is our scenic beauty. Although there was some initial sensitivity that removing billboards might hurt tourism, it has had the opposite effect. Tourism went up for all businesses, large and small."<sup>11</sup>

### 10. Digital billboards use huge amounts of energy, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and global warming

Digital billboards are energy hogs. They use an enormous amount of electricity, especially compared to conventional billboards. Research by the Central Texas chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council found the energy consumption of one digital billboard 49 times that of a conventional billboard.<sup>12</sup> Even the spokesman for a major outdoor advertising firm recently acknowledged that a digital billboard consumes roughly 4,600 kilowatts of electricity per month, compared to 920 kilowatts for the average single-family house.<sup>13</sup>



Digital billboards are energy hogs.

Digital billboards make a mockery of government efforts to "go green." Sustainable communities simply don't allow themselves to be overrun with billboards. At its most basic, "sustainable" means enduring; a sustainable community is a place of enduring value. A community littered with ugly, energy guzzling digital signs is the antithesis of a sustainable community.

10 See also "Billboard Control Is Good For Business," at: [www.scenic.org/billboards/background/business](http://www.scenic.org/billboards/background/business).

11 Christopher Barbieri, quoted in testimony of Meg Maguire, former President of Scenic America; see: [www.scenic.org/billboards/fiba/testimony](http://www.scenic.org/billboards/fiba/testimony).

12 Available at: <http://banbillboardblight.org/?p=340>

13 As reported in "Dallas considers opening door to digital billboards," *Dallas Morning News* (Oct. 2, 2010). Department of Energy data for home energy consumption is available at: [www.eia.doe.gov](http://www.eia.doe.gov). For a good overview of the energy and environmental impacts of digital billboards, see Gregory Young, "Illuminating the Issues," available at: [www.publicvoiceforpublicspace.org](http://www.publicvoiceforpublicspace.org).

### BILLBOARD CONTROL: WHAT WORKS

Billboard control is difficult, but not impossible – and thousands of communities around the world have successfully addressed the billboard problem. The legal tools for effective billboard control do exist; the larger question is how can they be used to best advantage.

In my experience, the simplest thing to do right now is to say, "No more billboards," in other words, to stop the construction of new billboards.

The big mistake many communities make is allowing new billboards in some locations while the industry refuses to take down non-conforming billboards in other locations. This adds insult to injury. With billboards, if things can get worse, they will get worse.

Halting new construction means the number of existing billboards will slowly diminish. It also gives government some leverage in dealing with the industry, especially when you understand that digital signs can generate five times more revenue than conventional signs.

### SUMMING UP:

Almost 70 years ago, *Fortune* magazine, observed, "no place on earth is geographically beyond the reach of the hawkers and hucksters." Today commercialism – particularly in the form of outdoor advertising – pervades our world to an extent unimaginable, even several decades ago. It seems now that the hucksters won't be satisfied until every square inch of public space is filled with giant structures festooned with the message "BUY."

Billboards degrade our landscape and our culture. The old fashioned ideals of community, beauty, modesty, and respect for nature stand for nothing in the face of rampant commercialism. Now is the time to stand up and just say no to out of control billboards. ♦

Edward T. McMahon is a Senior Resident Fellow at the Urban Land Institute. Over the years, McMahon has written more than two dozen articles for the PCJ; see: [www.plannersweb.com/mcmahon.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/mcmahon.html). (The viewpoints expressed are his own).



# Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places



*Note from PCJ Editor  
Wayne Senville:*

We're pleased to introduce you to the Project for Public Spaces. PPS is a remarkable non-profit organization that works with cities and towns in the U.S. and Canada – and around the world. Its goal is to help people create public spaces that build stronger communities.

PPS' expertise goes beyond park and recreational spaces, as its staff also brings a wealth of knowledge about public markets, civic centers, waterfront development, and transportation systems – all of which affect the public realm. In fact, you might recall my discussion in our last issue with Gary Toth, PPS' Senior Director of Transportation Initiatives.

In coming issues we'll be devoting our "center-fold" to a series of short articles written by PPS staff. You're in store for lots of useful and interesting information about how to develop vibrant, well-used community places.

Planners and planning commissioners can play a key role in these efforts, which offer a payoff of not just improved "quality of life" for residents, but stronger local economies.

For this issue, PPS staff thought the best starting point would be to share with you their "Eleven Principles for Creating Great Community Places" – giving you a big picture look at their approach.



*Young and old find a spot to rest and talk in the center of a village.*

*by the Staff of the  
Project for Public Spaces*

Effective public spaces are extremely difficult to accomplish, because their complexity is rarely understood. As the late William (Holly) Whyte – who pioneered in the research of how people use public spaces – once said, "It's hard to design a space that will not attract people. What is remarkable is how often this has been accomplished."

PPS has identified 11 key elements in transforming public spaces into vibrant community places, whether they're parks, plazas, public squares, streets, sidewalks, or the myriad other outdoor and indoor spaces that have public uses in common. We'll return to a number of these elements in future issues of the *PCJ* to show you in more detail how they can be applied in practice.

## 1. The Community Is The Expert

The important starting point in developing a concept for any public space is to identify the talents and assets within the community. In any community there are people who can provide an historical perspective, valuable insights into how the area functions, and an understanding of the critical issues and what is meaningful to people. Tapping this information at the beginning of the process will help to create a sense of community ownership in the project that can be of great benefit to both the project sponsor and the community.

## 2. Create a Place, Not a Design

If your goal is to create a place (which we think it should be), a design will not be enough. To make an under-performing space into a vital "place," physical elements must be introduced that would make people welcome and comfortable, such as seating and new landscaping, and also

through management changes in the pedestrian circulation pattern and by developing more effective relationships between the surrounding retail and the activities going on in the public spaces.

The goal is to create a place that has both a strong sense of community and a comfortable image, as well as a setting and activities and uses that collectively add up to something more than the sum of its often simple parts. This is easy to say, but difficult to accomplish.

## 3. Look for Partners

Partners are critical to the future success and image of a public space improvement project. Whether you want partners at the beginning to plan for the project or you want to brainstorm and develop scenarios with a dozen partners who might participate in the future, they are invaluable in providing support and getting a project off

the ground. They can be local institutions, museums, schools and others.

#### 4. You Can See a Lot Just By Observing

We can all learn a great deal from others' successes and failures. By looking at how people are using (or not using) public spaces and finding out what they like and don't like about them, it is possible to assess what makes them work or not work. Through these observations, it will be clear what kinds of activities are missing and what might be incorporated. And when the spaces are built, continuing to observe them will teach even more about how to evolve and manage them over time.

#### 5. Have a Vision

The vision needs to come out of each individual community. However, essential to a vision for any public space is an idea of what kinds of activities might be happening in the space, a view that the space should be comfortable and have a good image, and that it should be an important place where people want to be. It should instill a sense of

pride in the people who live and work in the surrounding area.

#### 6. Start with the Petunias: Experiment, Experiment, Experiment

The complexity of public spaces is such that you cannot expect to do everything right initially. The best spaces experiment with short term improvements that can be tested and refined over many years! Elements such as seating, outdoor cafes, public art, striping of crosswalks and pedestrian havens, community gardens, and murals are examples of improvements that can be accomplished in a short time.

#### 7. Triangulate

"Triangulation is the process by which some external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk to other strangers as if they knew each other" (Holly Whyte). In a public space, the choice and arrangement of different elements in relation to each other can put the triangulation process in motion (or not). For example, if a bench, a wastebasket, and a telephone are placed with no connection

to each other, each may receive a very limited use, but when they are arranged together along with other amenities such as a coffee cart, they will naturally bring people together (or triangulate!). On a broader level, if a children's reading room in a new library is located so that it is next to a children's playground in a park and a food kiosk is added, more activity will occur than if these facilities were located separately.

#### 8. They Always Say "It Can't Be Done"

One of Yogi Berra's great sayings is "If they say it can't be done, it doesn't always work out that way," and we have found it to be appropriate for our work as well. Creating good public spaces is inevitably about encountering obstacles, because no one in either the public or private sectors has the job or responsibility to "create places."

For example, professionals such as traffic engineers, transit operators, urban planners, and architects all have narrow definitions of their job – facilitating

what "form" you need to accomplish the future vision for the space.

#### 10. Money Is Not the Issue

This statement can apply in a number of ways. For example, once you've put in the basic infrastructure of the public spaces, the elements that are added that will make it work (e.g., vendors, cafes, flowers, and seating) will not be expensive. In addition, if the community and other partners are involved in programming and other activities, this can also reduce costs. More important is that by following these steps, people will



Enjoying a sunny day in a Paris park.

traffic or making trains run on time or creating long term schemes for building cities or designing buildings. Their job, evident in most cities, is not to create "places." Starting with small scale community-nurturing improvements can demonstrate the importance of "places" and help to overcome obstacles.

#### 9. Form Supports Function

The input from the community and potential partners, the understanding of how other spaces function, the experimentation, and overcoming the obstacles and naysayers provides the concept for the space. Although design is important, these other elements tell you

have so much enthusiasm for the project that the cost is viewed much more broadly and consequently as not significant when compared with the benefits.

#### 11. You Are Never Finished

By nature good public spaces that respond to the needs, the opinions, and the ongoing changes of the community require attention. Amenities wear out, needs change, and other things happen in an urban environment. Being open to the need for change and having the management flexibility to enact that change is what builds great public spaces and great cities and towns. ♦



At the farmers market in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

# Building Invisible Walls

## URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARIES

by Beth Humstone

Just as walls once created clear distinctions between town and countryside, today's urban containment strategies aim to keep urban places urban and rural places rural.

Urban containment – the constraint of growth to limited geographic areas – is of great interest to planners for its potential benefits of preserving open space, saving money on public services, reinvesting in cities, and providing a more predictable permitting process. In fact, the American Planning Association estimates that over 100 metropolitan areas have some form of urban containment strategy.<sup>1</sup>

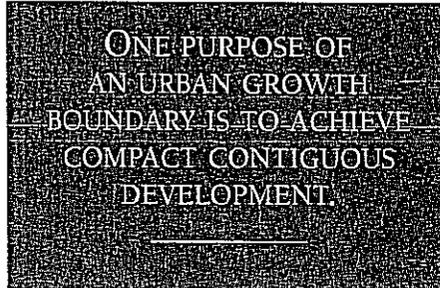
Of the three principal kinds of urban containment strategies – urban service areas, greenbelts, and urban growth boundaries – in this article, we'll be focusing on urban growth boundaries.

### What is An Urban Growth Boundary?

An urban growth boundary encompasses an area defined on a map where:

- development is permitted at a higher density or intensity than surrounding areas,
- mixed uses are typically encouraged, and
- a full complement of public services is provided.

The size of the area within the boundary typically is configured to provide sufficient land to meet population and land use needs for a 20-year period. Over time, the boundaries may be adjusted – either by expansion or contraction – to meet changing conditions. In the United States, urban growth boundaries have been established through local



initiatives, regional strategies, and state mandates and/or incentives.

### Why Plan for Growth Boundaries?

Communities and regions plan for urban growth boundaries in order to meet the goals of their comprehensive plans, because they are mandated or encouraged to do so by state government, or because they have a particular need such as downtown revitalization or protection of important farmland.

Within a comprehensive plan, places are delineated both where growth will be encouraged and development limited. The plan typically contains projections for population, employment, and housing so the community knows how much land is needed for different uses. The plan also identifies existing development, the location and capacity of services, and important environmental and natural resource features.

By designating a growth boundary, a community or region can provide for infill and contiguous growth that reinforces and reinvests in existing settled areas, limits urban services to avoid costly extensions to rural areas, and protects environmental or natural resources outside the center. A few examples:

Lexington, Kentucky uses an urban growth boundary to meet its planning goals. The Lexington urban growth boundary, which includes Fayette County,

was first adopted in 1958 – the oldest growth boundary in the United States. Its primary purpose was to protect the bluegrass and horse farms for which the region is famous by requiring most development to take place within the boundary and severely limiting development outside the boundary.

Over the years, the boundary has been adjusted, and planning and zoning for the area has been altered to meet changing needs and political pressures. The urban growth area was initially 67 square miles (comprising 22 percent of the county's total land area); it is now 75 square miles (30 percent).<sup>2</sup>

In New Jersey, the State (in conjunction with the National Park Service) established the Pinelands National Reserve in 1979. Within the 1.1 million acre Reserve, a comprehensive management plan guides the management and protection of environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands threatened by sprawling land development. A joint county-state-federal Pinelands Commission reviews local ordinances for consistency with the management plan.

The plan also delineates regional growth boundaries. The Commission uses a transfer of development rights (TDR) program to protect important open space and natural areas, as well as encourage more development in

<sup>2</sup> See 2007 Lexington-Fayette County Comprehensive Plan (Appendix, p. 287).

<sup>3</sup> TDR provides land owners with development rights (or credits) which can be transferred or sold to allow for increased density in areas where growth is encouraged. For more on TDRs, see Rick Pruett, "Putting Growth In Its Place With Transfer of Development Rights" in *PCJ* #31 (also included in *Taking a Closer Look: Food, Farmland, & Open Space*; for details: [www.plannersweb.com/reprints.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/reprints.html)).

<sup>4</sup> For more on PDRs, see Gayle Miller & Douglas Kreiger's "Purchase of Development Rights: Preserving Farmland and Open Space," in *PCJ* #53 (also included in the *Taking a Closer Look* publication cited above).

<sup>1</sup> Arthur C. Nelson, FAICP, and Casey J. Dawkins, *Urban Containment in the United States: History, Models, and Techniques for Regional and Metropolitan Growth Management*, APA, PAS Report 520, March 2004, p. ix. While their report analyzed 131 urban containment plans, the authors noted their study did not cover all such plans in the U.S.





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### ... Building Invisible Walls

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rise. Pressures to limit growth may come from residents who are concerned about too much density in their neighborhoods. However, if the density isn't high enough, it may be difficult to provide affordable housing and a range of housing types – as well as meet growth targets.

Some communities have required developers within growth boundaries to set aside a certain percentage of units for affordable housing. Others have increased densities within some parts of the growth boundary and moderated growth in other neighborhoods. Most seek to take advantage of federal and state programs offering financial assistance and incentives for affordable housing.

**4. Reinvestment Within the Growth Boundary:** To accommodate and encourage projected growth within the boundary, communities need to provide adequate services and amenities, as well as incentives for private investment. These need to be in place in conjunction with any limitations on the extension of public services and facilities in areas outside the boundary.

Among the kind of improvements or programs that may be needed:

- repairs to existing facilities, such as sidewalks, water and sewer lines, and parks.
- expansion of transit lines, bike paths, and similar infrastructure.
- rehabilitation of brownfield sites to accommodate new development.
- programs to facilitate the construction of affordable housing.

To pay for these, communities have used tax increment financing or special assessment districts, or have turned to state or federal funding sources.

**5. Development Patterns Within the Growth Boundary:** One purpose of an urban growth boundary is to achieve compact, contiguous development – minimizing sprawl. However, residents within the boundaries may be resistant to

8 For more on accommodating higher densities, see my article, "Getting the Density You Want," PCJ #74, Spring 2009.

higher densities. To meet growth targets and address residents' concerns, communities must pay close attention to the regulations for these areas. Techniques such as building to the sidewalk, lowering setbacks, requiring parking in the back, and allowing accessory apartments can help ensure more compact development that retains neighborhood character.<sup>8</sup>

**6. Permitting: Predictability and Efficiency:** To attract developers to areas within an urban growth boundary, communities need to offer a predictable and efficient permitting process. Some predictability is already built in by the very designation (in the urban boundary planning process) of areas where growth is encouraged and adequate public facilities are in place.

Further incentives can also help. Some communities have eliminated certain requirements (e.g., impact studies or impact fees) for developments planned within the growth boundary. Others have decreased the time it takes to process applications by putting projects within the boundary at the head of the line or giving planning staff more authority to approve these projects.

However, communities should only make these concessions after fully weighing their fiscal and political implications. Perhaps the most important thing communities can provide to developers is a clear and concise set of standards for development review that are consistently followed.

### SUMMING UP:

Urban growth boundaries act to focus growth in designated areas while protecting surrounding rural lands from sprawl. They provide an economical and efficient way to grow that also encourages reinvestment and revitalization of downtowns and community centers. ♦

Beth Humstone regularly writes for the PCJ. Over the past 35 years, she has worked as a planning consultant on a wide range of projects in rural communities and small towns.



# Practical Tips for Citizen Planners

by Carolyn Braun, AICP

The job of a planning commissioner is an important one in most communities. It takes a lot of time and patience. There is much to learn. You will need to study and review the comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinance, and perhaps other planning-related documents. You will deal with emotional residents. People may challenge you. You will need to make difficult decisions. But here you are, a recently appointed commissioner and your job is about to begin.

## 1. Getting Started

If you are just thinking about applying to be a planning commissioner, you'll want to visit with the planning director and the chair of the commission. Ask about the date, time, and number of meetings. Ask how long the meetings typically last. Ask if there are other meetings you'll need to attend. It's also a good idea to attend commission meetings so you can see what they entail. Then decide if you are willing to spend the time it will take to do the job.

If you have just been appointed, you may also have time to attend a commission meeting before your official term begins. Again, it is a good way to get a feel for your new job.

Before your first commission meeting, you should meet with the planning staff and with the chair of the commission. If the staff doesn't call you, call them and make an appointment to visit. They will provide you with copies of the various documents you need such as the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. Hopefully, they also will give you copies of American Planning Association and *Planning Commissioners Journal* publications for planning commissioners – or show you where they are kept in the planning department offices.

It is especially important that you review the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. You will regularly be referring to these documents when you review development applications and other requests.

You can also ask the staff, when they

have the time, to give you a tour of the community, highlighting recent planning actions. Because of its visual nature, a tour gives you a lot of information in a relatively short period of time and will help you understand the context of citizen requests.

Finally, you can do research on your own. It is helpful to know what the surrounding communities are planning and the issues they are facing.

## 2. Getting Ready for the Commission Meeting

Do your homework. Plan to spend a few hours before each meeting reviewing your planning commission packet. If you have questions, or need more information, contact your planning staff. If you wait until the meeting, the staff may not be able to provide what you need.

You also want to visit the site. This is the quickest and best way to understand a request. Before you go, contact staff. In some communities, site visits are organized by staff and planning commis-

*continued on next page*



## Online Comments

"I schedule a face-to-face orientation session with new members, like you would with new employees. I explain what the planning commission does, the types of cases, planning basics, and how a hearing is run. I give them a copy of the comp plan and ordinances; the PCJ's Welcome to the Commission publication; a current calendar; and the previous planning commission hearings. We cover topics like ex-parte contact/communication and conflicts of interest. I try to make the session as interactive as possible and answer any questions.

Finally, I introduce them to the staff, get their name, address, phone number and email address, and give

them the contact information for the other members. The whole orientation can take two to three hours, but it is well worth the time."

– Michael Hershman, AICP, Senior Planner, Lamar County, MS

"Tour the city with new commissioners; then make them commit to visiting each site that is under consideration, regardless of how many times they drive past it. Walk them through the process of a site visit. Discuss 'ex parte' contacts."

– Wayne Oldroyd, Director of Community Development, City of Maryland Heights, MO

"No city or community is an island – you are part of a region. Don't be afraid to take lessons learned or ideas from other communities and see if they can be applied

to your community. Become acquainted with planning commissioners in other cities and talk to each other. Share ideas."

– Cheri Bush Soileau, PMP, AICP, Dallas, TX

"Keep in mind the community's vision for its future as you make your decisions. In addition to the comprehensive plan and zoning code, read the subdivision code, neighborhood plans, and downtown plan, if applicable to your jurisdiction. Finally – and this may be the most important, but most difficult tip – develop a thick skin and maintain your sense of humor!"

– Laurie Marston, Planning Consultant, Highland Park, IL (also past member of Evanston Plan Commission)

"I have served as both citizen planner (and chair), and professional planner. New commissioners should take the time to listen, learn about issues, and build relationships – then listen some more before jumping in and trying to change the world. Have an open mind; as the '7 Habits' [of Highly Effective People] teaches us, seek first to understand. Spend time talking with fellow planning commissioners and staff. Consider which questions and issues are well suited for public discussion, and which may be better raised in private."

– Lee Krohn, AICP, Planning Director, Town of Manchester, VT

### ... Practical Tips

*continued from previous page*

sioners go as a group; they are also publicly noticed since a quorum of the commission may be there.

Because of concerns about “ex parte” contacts (that is, private discussions outside of the context of the public hearing), site visits need to be done with care. In fact, a number of planning commissions have guidelines for site visits.<sup>1</sup>

If you are visiting a site on your own, be careful when talking to anyone at the site. Don’t make any promises and don’t get into a debate. Simply explain to anyone present that it is best if they attend the commission’s public meeting or provide written comments prior to the meeting. In some communities, anything you hear needs to be disclosed at the meeting so that everyone can act on full information.

In some cities or counties, especially those covering a large geographic area, staff may also videotape the site and make the video available to view in advance of the meeting. This can be particularly helpful when several requests are being heard at one meeting, making it difficult and time-consuming for commissioners to visit all of them before the meeting. Having said this, it is still preferable, whenever possible, to visit the sites yourself.

### 3. The Meeting

*To make this work for both you and the community, take the job seriously.* That means arriving on time and attending all meetings. If you must miss a meeting, let the staff and commission chair know as far in advance of the meeting as possible.

This is particularly important when there are citizen requests on the agenda and a quorum of members must be present to take action.

*Show respect when addressing fellow commissioners* (“Commissioner Johnson”), the audience (“Ms. Smith” or “Mr. Olson”), and Chairman (“Chairman Nelson”). Always address the chair before speaking. When speaking to staff, show that same respect. Don’t assume that the staff is always wrong and the citizen is always right (and don’t assume the converse, either). Planning cases are not a matter of who is wrong and who is right. It is more important to make decisions based on the best information available and be fair.

Agree or disagree in a respectful manner. You can expect applicants, as well as those opposing an application, to often be emotional. Their request or opinion is very important to them, especially when it involves their property or neighborhood.

You need to control your emotions in response. When someone is emotional, repeat or summarize what was said. Narrow down the issues. Focus on issues that the planning commission can address. Don’t promise anything and don’t try to answer questions without having the information at hand. Realize that you can’t please everyone – nor should you be trying to.

Don’t do things to disrupt the meeting. Don’t have side discussions with the person next to you. Don’t make personal attacks, faces, whisper, or exhibit body language that show displeasure. All of these behaviors can reflect badly on the commission and the community.

Remember that most commissions represent a variety of views. As such, decisions may not always be unanimous. That’s okay. Don’t feel you have to compromise. Sometimes the commission can broker a win-win situation for everyone, but compromise is not always the right answer.

### 4. Making a Decision

The most important part in making a good decision is to keep an open mind and be fair. Decisions will be upheld if you work through them using due process. Applicants are entitled to a fair hearing. You need, at the start of a hearing, to declare any potential conflicts of interest, even if it is only a perceived conflict. This generally means recusing yourself from participating in the hearing and deliberation on that application.

During hearings on an application it is essential that commissioners listen to the evidence, weigh it carefully, and give everyone a reasonable opportunity to be heard. Remember, your decisions will not be upheld if they are unreasonable, arbitrary, or capricious.

Decisions must be made on factual evidence and based on what your code or ordinance does or does not allow. Be careful in the weight you give to petitions submitted to you in support or opposition to a project. There is often no way to know what information was given to signers to encourage them to sign the petition.

Likewise, do not be unduly swayed by a show of hands in the audience (and

<sup>1</sup> For more on site visits, see Greg Dale’s article, “Site Visits: Necessary, But Tricky” in *Taking a Closer Look: Ethics & the Planning Commission*; [www.plannersweb.com/ethics.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/ethics.html).



certainly, don't ask to see a show of hands!) Again, your job is to be guided by the criteria in your regulations, not by popular opinion.

Resist the temptation to redesign the applicant's request. Your job is to review and identify concerns; it is the applicant's job to design the site to meet the requirements of your zoning or land development regulations. If you need more information, ask for it and don't feel compelled to make an immediate decision. On the other hand, don't unreasonably delay a decision simply because it is going to be a difficult one to make. Review proposals based on their merits, not simply on what the developer states is best in order to make a profit.

In many states, the planning commission is not the final decision-maker on development applications (and in almost all states, does not have final say on rezoning requests). Instead, planning commissions in these states typically provide recommended decisions to the governing body.

While governing bodies usually give weight to the commission's recommendation, don't be offended if they do not accept or follow your position. Your ultimate goal is to make the best decision possible – based on clear, solid findings of fact, in conformance with your adopted regulations – and doing so in a manner that allows you to maintain the respect of the community.<sup>2</sup>

2 If, however, the governing body regularly rejects your recommendations, or gives them little respect, this may be a symptom of a deeper problem. For ideas on how to deal with this, see Michael Chandler's "The Planning Commission As Independent Advisor," in PCJ #23 ([www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w365.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w365.html)), and "Linking Elected Officials With Planning," in PCJ #48 ([www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w139.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w139.html)).

## 5. Ways to Improve

Planning commissions are often responsible for developing policies and strategies to help guide and manage growth. That means dealing with change. As such, it will benefit you to continually learn about your community and how it is evolving.

- Pay attention to what other boards and commissions in your municipality (and in neighboring places) are working on.
- Routinely meet with your elected officials.
- Follow the activities of your county and, to the extent possible, follow state issues and trends.
- Follow up on past approvals. Did they turn out how you thought they would? Is there anything that you would do differently? Is there anything that the code allowed or didn't allow that should be changed?
- Network with other commissioners by attending seminars and conferences.

Over time, you will become more and more adept in making decisions.

## 6. Have Fun

Don't let your role as a planning commissioner affect your relationship with others – both on and outside of the commission. Your role can be stressful, yet it is a very important position. Your decisions will help to determine land uses and land development patterns for years to come. Do the best you can and then enjoy the fruits of your labor. ♦

*Carolyn Braun is Planning Director for the City of Anoka, Minnesota. She is past President of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association. Braun regularly writes for the Planning Commissioners Journal.*



## What Planning Staff Can Do

by Joyce Allgaier, AICP

A new planning commissioner has an opportunity to make local government work even better – and the professional planner has a key role in making it happen.

1. Once the commissioner is appointed, make a personal phone call within a couple of days to welcome and establish a strong staff-commissioner connection, the basis for respect and an effective working relationship.
2. Invite new commissioners to a sit-down orientation in the city or county offices, where you can introduce all planning staff who will come in contact with them at meetings or who will be providing staff reports. Let them know you are all there to assist them and answer questions. Provide a Planning Commissioner's handbook if you have one.
3. Discuss with new commissioners their role and responsibilities, along with that of the chairperson, staff, governing body, municipal attorney, etc. Remind new commissioners that their job is not to decide how to fix road potholes or change parking meter fees, but to focus on land-use planning issues.
4. Provide copies of and an introduction to the codes, plans, and other documents that the planning commission uses and relies on.
5. Inform new commissioners of how commission meetings are run. Help them feel comfortable with the public processes they will be involved in: taking testimony, decision-making, findings of fact, motions, and so on.
6. Have your city (or county) attorney join the orientation to cover legal issues, such as ex parte communications, open meeting laws, findings of fact, and liability protections for commissioners.
7. Always thank your commissioners at every meeting for their commitment to community, their perspectives, and their time – and try to provide refreshments at meetings as well!

*Joyce Allgaier is a land use planner and sustainability coordinator in Clarion Associates' Aspen, Colorado, office. She previously served as Deputy Director of Community Development for the City of Aspen, and as Town Planner for Williston and Shelburne, Vermont.*



# The Tee-Ball Approach to Development

(AND HOW TO AVOID IT)

If you've been a parent, a grandparent, an aunt, or an uncle, no doubt you've been to a tee-ball game. The youngsters on each team can hardly sit still in the dugout, and the bleachers are full of family members eager to cheer on their budding sports heroes. A pint-size batter steps up to the tee, winds up for the swing, and clips the ball, which rolls four or five feet towards the pitcher. The crowd goes wild, cheering as the batter runs as fast as little legs will go ... towards third base!

That's how it sometimes goes with our local communities' attempts at development. The community gets so excited about a proposed development that it can head off in the wrong direction – without having the infrastructure needed to support the development.

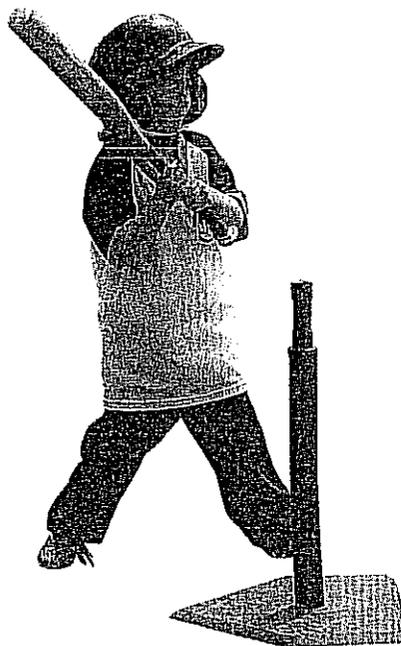
Some examples:

- A subdivision is approved in an area with lots too small for replacement septic drain fields and/or where the population density is too low to be feasibly served by public sewer.
- An office park is platted in an area where water lines are too small to provide adequate fire protection.
- A large retail/dining/lodging facility is proposed for an area where road capacity is already maxed out and there's no land available for additional parking.

In other words, communities are commonly enticed by development for which the infrastructure is inadequate. This not only burdens the community, it also minimizes the long-term return on private investment. It's just like a tee-ball player running the wrong direction.

Before we offer solutions on how to avoid unsustainable development, it makes sense to examine WHY this happens so frequently in communities. In many cases, it comes down to looking at only part of the equation: short-term

by Jim Segedy, Ph.D., FAICP, and  
Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy, AICP



gains – without considering long-term, life-cycle costs.

If you find that recent developments have placed a burden on your water, sewer, roads, public safety, schools, and so on, this points to the need for some improvements to your community's planning and development strategies to ensure that the costs of community services are factored into your development review process.

[From Jim]. Let me share with you a story I used to tell my students: Imagine a farm. To make the math easy, let's say it's one hundred acres. The farmer, his wife, grandma, and the seven kids all live happily in the big farm house. Water comes from a well, they have a septic field, the sheriff stops by once a week for a piece of pie, and all seven kids ride the bus to school. That's about it.

Now, that same hundred acres has a proposal submitted for a subdivision. Nice suburban lots at four dwelling units per acre. That's perhaps 300 houses!

- 🏠 Probably won't work for each house to have its own well:
  - ➡ Public Cost #1: public water supply.
- 🏠 No way the septic fields can handle that kind of load, so the municipality will have to run sewers:
  - ➡ Public Cost #2: sewer lines, and
  - ➡ Public Cost #3: expanded sewage treatment plant.
- 🏠 At two kids per household, we're talking a lot more kids in the school:
  - ➡ Public Cost #4: more classrooms or perhaps a new school; and
  - ➡ Public Cost #5: a new park or playground.
- 🏠 You're also talking about:
  - ➡ Public Cost #6: another police officer and car.
  - ➡ Public Cost #7: expanded fire service.
  - ➡ Public Cost #8: more trash pick-up.

You get the point. Sure there is a higher tax rate for residential development than for a farm, and the municipality will gain in tax revenues, but the costs are usually higher. A variety of studies have shown that in the United States the cost of public services for new suburban residential development is about 15 percent greater than the increased tax revenue generated.<sup>1</sup>

## BENEFITS VS. IMPACTS

A community's permit review process is a good place to evaluate the benefits and impacts (including costs) of a proposed development. It is easy to get excited about any proposal that creates jobs these days. But what if the proposal

<sup>1</sup> See the Farmland Information Center's "Fact Sheet: Cost of Community Services," available at: [www.farmlandinfo.org](http://www.farmlandinfo.org). See also the Wisconsin Center for Land Use Studies' Cost of Community Services Project: [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/COCS/COCS.html](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/COCS/COCS.html).

will cause a significant increase in the student population of your school (say, by 40 percent) and your school is already overcrowded? What if the proposed development will increase the community tax base by \$1 million after five years, but require \$2.5 million in immediate road improvements to create access and prevent traffic congestion?

If your municipality doesn't have a mechanism for accounting for the impacts and costs of new development (and/or a system of impact fees for offsetting these costs), the planning commission may want to take the lead in advocating for it.

A review of past developments in your community can shed light on impacts – both positive and negative. Compare the benefits generated (e.g., increased property tax revenues) against any costs or burdens (e.g., needed public road and sidewalk improvements; water and sewer line extensions; new school facilities) attributable to the developments.

### RIGHT DEVELOPMENT, WRONG LOCATION?

Perhaps your community is situated in a growth corridor. Population projections in your comprehensive plan indicate that your community will grow in the next decade. In that case, it is certainly reasonable to expect and even seek development.

As a planning commissioner, the best possible thing you can do for your community before you're hit with development requests is to establish priority areas for growth and then steer growth to those areas.

If you have vacant land that is already served by water and sewer, then those areas should be infilled before farmland

2 See also Kate Lampton, "Developing a Sewer Ordinance: One Town's Experience," *PCJ#44*; [www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w366.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/wfiles/w366.html).

3 According to the comprehensive web site, [impact-fees.com](http://impact-fees.com) (maintained by Duncan Associates), some 26 states authorize localities to adopt various kinds of development impact fees. A 2010 survey conducted by Duncan Associates (available on the web site) found the average impact fees assessed on a single-family residential unit totaled \$8,509 (excluding utility fees) – the largest component of this (\$4,835) being for schools.

**AS A PLANNING  
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is converted to other uses.

New growth should connect to what you already have rather than "leapfrogging" beyond your infrastructure service area.

To better ensure that growth aligns with your plan, there are a variety of measures a community can take. A few examples:

- streamline the permitting process for developers who request permits that are consistent with the plan.
- proactively "upzone" land (i.e., allow for higher densities) that has adequate facilities to accommodate growth (if no rezoning is required, that saves the developer time and money).
- adopt an "adequate public facilities ordinance," ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place before development can be permitted.<sup>2</sup>
- consider the use of impact fees, if allowed by state law.<sup>3</sup>

### SETTING THE EXAMPLE

A comprehensive plan is intended to define a community's vision, provide for sustainable growth, ensure the adequacy of public facilities, and establish the public purpose for local regulations. This applies for the entire community, including both public and private developments.

When a local government ignores the comprehensive plan and permits new facilities without regard to the impacts on utilities, transportation, and future land use patterns, that action sends a powerful message to the community that

the plan doesn't matter. Every time a governing body approves a development permit that is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, it is a tacit comment on the plan's (lack of) value.

As planning commissioners, you are advocates for the comprehensive plan. You have a unique opportunity to help decision-makers embrace the plan and, when necessary, amend it to more accurately reflect the conditions, opportunities, and vision of the community. Your plan can be your ballfield, with the base lines painted neatly on the pages, so that whether your community hits a single or a homer, it will run in the right direction. ♦

*Jim Segedy is the Director of Community Planning for the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and a co-author of The Small Town Planning Handbook.*



*Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy is Associate Director for River Restoration for American Rivers' Western Pennsylvania Field Office, and a former Planning Director for a Regional Planning Commission near Atlanta.*



## Taking a Closer Look: Planning Law Primer



Covering the basics of variances, procedural due process, and other legal issues. This collection of articles

provides an excellent introduction to key planning law topics.

Attractively bound, and delivered by first-class mail, you'll receive this 62-page booklet within a few days.

For details and to order, call us at: 802-864-9083, or go to: [www.plannersweb.com/law.html](http://www.plannersweb.com/law.html)

# Planners Central to a Changing American Dream

by Dave Stauffer

In the wake of the collapse of the housing bubble and ensuing Great Recession, experts and observers are wondering if the American dream may be out of reach for most Americans – perhaps permanently.

Consider these recent news headlines: “New study shows American dream under threat,” “Homeownership, long thought the American dream, has become a nightmare,” “As for-sale signs bloom, the American dream wilts.”

Even though housing prices nationwide fell 30 percent from 2006 to 2010, and mortgage interest rates reached historic lows, homeownership rates resumed their downward trend, from 69 percent in 2004 to 67 percent at mid-2010.

Can’t such data be ascribed to the recession, with resumption of upward trends to be expected as the economy recovers? Yes, say government officials and reports by the mass media. But their optimism concerning homeownership – particularly dream homes of the large, sprawling sort – is almost certainly misplaced. “We’re going through a fundamental shift,” according to Urban Land Institute senior fellow John McIlwain. “The old normal will not return.”

In other words, it’s not the economy, stupid. Instead, it’s more lasting changes that won’t go away when the economy improves.

Long-term demographic trends are striking. 70 million baby boomers will reach retirement age between 2010 and 2025, with many seeking downsized residences. Their kids, called Generation Y and numbering close to 80 million, will simultaneously be forming new households, but not in the way their parents did. Demographers say household size will continue to fall.

Thinking of the home as an investment vehicle is also a phenomenon

whose days are gone, at least for the next 20 years or so. Expert consensus holds that home prices will appreciate at a rate of one or two percent annually.

Yet the American dream isn’t likely to disappear. Intractable forces gird it. Foremost among these is a panoply of federal subsidies for homeowners, headed by mortgage interest deductibility.

**“AN ALMOST CERTAIN  
CONSEQUENCE OF A RE-  
SHAPED AMERICAN DREAM  
IS THE RE-EMERGING  
POPULARITY OF RENTING.”**

The dream has also acquired support from its own “too big to fail” status. The continuous churn of home buying and selling has made the housing market one of the largest segments of the American economy. It’s become an industry that government officials – especially elected ones – will perpetuate, literally, at all costs.

A third force supporting the dream, though intangible, is mighty in its own right: the striving to possess one’s own abode and the ground on which it sits.

## AWAKENING TO OPPORTUNITIES

So the American dream is changing in ways that won’t be reversed, yet its historic form won’t be totally transformed. How will this affect the work of planning commissioners?

Consider these comments by planning historian Larry Gerckens in a *PCJ* article, “Single-Family-Only Zones” written nearly 15 years ago:

“If communities ... continue to value single-family-detached zoning as an encouragement for home ownership, efforts must at least be undertaken to make these areas available to far more citizens. This can be done in several ways, including: reducing lot and floor-area

requirements; increasing single-family residential densities; and making single-family detached homes an allowable use in all areas, not just in low-density residential districts.”

Consistent with Gerckens’ suggestions, planners might further encourage common elements of smart growth, new urbanism, and sustainable development: reducing lot-size minimums, permitting accessory dwelling units, and allowing subdivision of larger homes into duplexes or apartments.

An almost certain consequence of a reshaped American dream, expert consensus holds, is the re-emerging popularity of renting. While courts have generally held that governments can’t specify “conditions of occupancy” (i.e., renters vs. owners), 85 percent of U.S. multiple-unit housing is renter-occupied, suggesting that planning should more widely allow apartments and other dwellings that boost densities.

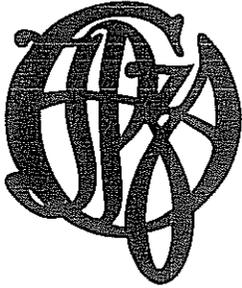
One way of achieving this in single-family-home neighborhoods is by permitting accessory dwelling units or cottages. In June 2010, the Denver City Council unanimously approved a new zoning code that permits accessory units, and Seattle earlier OK’ed zoning changes allowing cottages in single-family zones.

In the many places where affordability is an issue, planners will need to intensify efforts aimed at making homes more affordable. Among mechanisms for achieving this, community land trusts and inclusionary housing.

The bottom line: we are entering an age of a changing American dream, one in which Americans profit less from rising home prices and more from housing that fits their needs and better connects them with their neighbors and neighborhoods. ♦

*Dave Stauffer is a freelance writer and chairman of the Yellowstone Business Partnership. He is a former city planner, planning commission chair, and city council member in Red Lodge, Montana.*

CONNECTICUT FEDERATION  
OF  
PLANNING AND ZONING AGENCIES



ANNOUNCES

ITS

63<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2011

AT THE

AQUA TURF COUNTRY CLUB  
PLANTSVILLE, CONNECTICUT



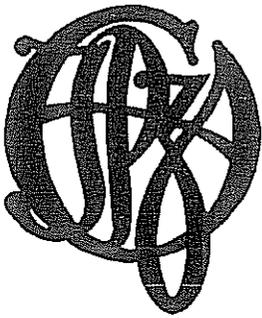
Cost: \$40.00 per person for Agencies that are members of the CFPZA  
\$50.00 per person for Agencies that are not members of the CFPZA

**The enclosed registration form must be received by Brescia's Printing,  
by mail or fax, no later than Tuesday, March 22, 2011**

**Fax: (860) 289-7130**

Questions? Call Steve Byrne at (860) 677-7355

*More info on back* —>



## 63<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CFPZA CONFERENCE

Aqua Turf Country Club  
Plantsville, CT  
Thursday, March 24, 2011

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### PROGRAM

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- 5:00 p.m. **SOCIAL HOUR / REGISTRATION**
- 6:00 p.m. **DINNER**  
Soup, Salad, Ziti, NY Strip, Vegetables, Potato, Dessert
- 7:15 p.m. **AWARDS PRESENTATION**  
    ☛ 12-year Length of Service Awards  
    ☛ Lifetime Achievement Awards
- 8:00 p.m. **TOPIC: The Changing "Face" of Farming in Connecticut**

This topic will focus on how updating farming and agriculture regulations today can preserve farms and open space for tomorrow. The speaker will address the need to have regulations in place that are simultaneously specific enough to determine whether certain activities that may take place on a farm actually fit within the definition of farming yet flexible enough to sustain farming as a viable land use in Connecticut.

**Principal speaker:** Joan Nichols, Government Relations Specialist,  
Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

Joan has a B.S. in Forestry and Natural Resources Management from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, NY and a B.S. from Syracuse University. She specializes in all aspects of land use as it relates to agriculture including Planning & Zoning and Inland Wetland regulations, plans of conservation and development, right to farm law and local right to farm ordinances, and agricultural commissions.

#### DIRECTIONS TO THE AQUA TURF

**I-84 EAST FROM WATERBURY** – Merge onto I-169 E via Exit 27 toward Meriden. Take the CT-10 exit, EXIT 3, toward Cheshire. Turn left onto CT-10 (Highland Ave.). Continue to follow CT-10. Stay straight to go onto Old Turnpike Road. Turn right onto Mulberry Street. Aqua Turf, 556 Mulberry Street is on right.

**I-84 WEST FROM HARTFORD** – Take the CT-10 exit, EXIT 29, on the left toward Milldale. Stay straight to go onto Mulberry Street. Aqua Turf, 556 Mulberry Street is on right.

**FROM I-91 OR THE MERRITT PARKWAY** – Merge onto I-169 E via Exit 27 toward Meriden. Take the CT-10 exit, EXIT 3, toward Cheshire. Turn left onto CT-10 (Highland Ave.). Continue to follow CT-10. Stay straight to go onto Old Turnpike Road. Turn right onto Mulberry Street. Aqua Turf, 556 Mulberry Street is on right.

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NOTE: Order forms for all Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies publications will be available at the meeting.

# CONNECTICUT FEDERATION OF PLANNING & ZONING AGENCIES

STEVEN E. BYRNE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BUILDING #2  
790 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06032  
TELEPHONE (860) 677-7355  
FAX (860) 677-5262



TO: Chairman of Planning and/or Zoning Commissions  
and Zoning Boards of Appeal

SUBJECT: Length of Service Awards / Lifetime Achievement Awards

Length of Service Awards will be presented at the Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies' Annual Conference on March 24, 2011, to those persons who have served 12 or more years as a member of a planning commission, zoning commission, planning and zoning commission or zoning board of appeals.

The twelve years of service may be a combination of time spent as a member of all four agencies. The twelve years, however, must be continuous from year to year. A Length of Service Award form is attached.

Lifetime Achievement awards are presented to individuals who have served at least twenty-five (25) years in the area of land use, either as a member of a zoning agency or as staff or advisor to a zoning agency. Please call Steven Byrne at (860) 677-7355 if there is an individual you believe should be considered for this award.

All nominations should be sent to the following address:

The Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies  
790 Farmington Ave., Building 2B  
Farmington, CT 06032

The nominations can also be sent by Fax to (860) 677-5262.

Please note that individuals who have received these awards in the past are not eligible to receive them again.

All nominations for awards must be returned no later than **March 14, 2011**.

**NOMINATION FORMS ATTACHED**

PAGE  
BREAK

**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD  
NOMINATION FORM**

1. Name of Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name and address of contact person or person making nomination.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name	Home Address	Home/Business Phone
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3. Name, address, and home and business phone of Chairman and Secretary of Agency.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Home Address	Home/Business Phone
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Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Home Address	Home/Business Phone
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4. Name and address of Lifetime Achievement Award candidate:

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Name and address of who to send confirmation of selection to receive award:

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Lifetime Achievement: List below the names of agencies and dates served. Length of service must be continuous and total 25 or more years. It may, however, consist of time spent on a planning commission, zoning commission, combined commission and/or zoning board of appeals. Time spent as an alternate member is valid. This award is also open to individuals who have served part or all of the above time as professional staff to one or more of the above mentioned agencies.

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Individuals who have received this award previously ARE NOT eligible to receive it again. A brief biographical paragraph can be submitted to be read at the presentation ceremony.**

**TWELVE YEAR  
LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD  
NOMINATION FORM**

1. Name of Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name and address of contact person or person making nomination.

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Name	Home Address	Home/Business Phone
------	--------------	---------------------

3. Name, address, and home and business phone of Chairman and Secretary of Agency.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Home Address	Home/Business Phone
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Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Home Address	Home/Business Phone
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4. Name and address of Length of Service Award candidate:

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5. Name and address of who to send confirmation of selection to receive award:

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7. Length of Service: List below the names of agencies and dates served. Length of service must be continuous and total 12 years. It may, however, consist of time spent on a planning commission, zoning commission, combined commission and/or zoning board of appeals. Time spent as an alternate member is valid.

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**Individuals who have received this award previously ARE NOT eligible to receive it again.**