



New York State
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES



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LAND  USE
LAW CENTER
P A C E L A W

Sponsors



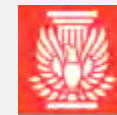
Homes and Community Renewal



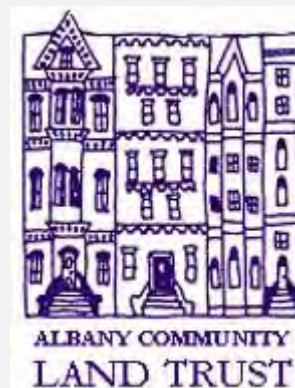
LSC

[SHORE – Sheltering the Homeless is our Responsibility](#)

Interfaith Dwellings
Corporation of New
Rochelle



AIA Westchester
Hudson Valley



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

JULY 7, 2020

9:00 – 9:10	Welcome and Introductions
9:10 – 9:20	Fulfilling the Mission Rev. Peter Cook, <i>Executive Director, New York Council of Churches</i> Rev. William Wilkinson, <i>Pastor, Medina Presbyterian Church</i>
9:20 – 9:40	Six Steps to Revitalizing a Neighborhood <i>Kevin Dwarka, Land Use and Economic Consultant</i>
9:40 – 10:30	Advocacy in Land Use Decision-Making from the Comprehensive Plan to Project Development <i>Tiffany Zezula and Rose Noonan, The Reverend Kate Forer, Senior Pastor, Presbyterian New England Congregational Church and Gordon Boyd, Bethesda Episcopal Church, Saratoga Springs</i>
10:30 – 10:45	Setting the Stage for Your Own Public Engagement Efforts <i>Tiffany Zezula.</i>
10:45 – 11:00	Technical Assistance Announcement for Westchester, Rockland, Orange <i>Rose Noonan</i>
11:00 – 11:30	Open Discussion Forum

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REFINDING THE CENTER: SIX STEPS TO REVITALIZING A NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Analyze Community's Needs

- Housing, Employment, Social Services, Amenities

2. Evaluate Existing Policies and Programs

- Zoning, Preservation, Affordable Housing, Environmental Regulations

3. Inventory Assets

- Buildings, Anchor Institutions, Landscape
- People, History And Culture

4. Organize the Community

- Residents, Merchants, Property Owners, Investors, Developers, Leaders

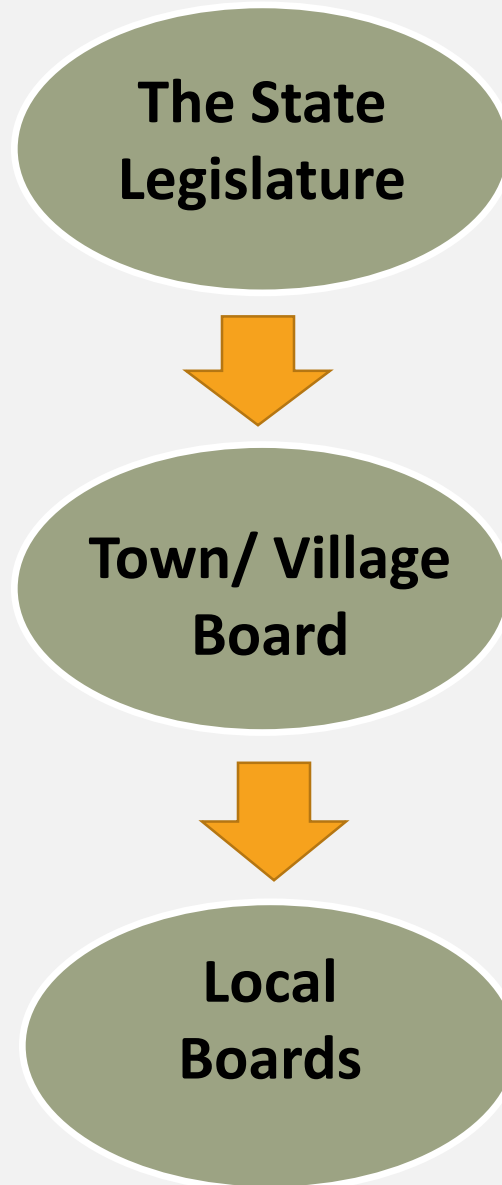
5. Make no Small Plans

- Site Plan to Neighborhood Plan to Comprehensive Plan

6. Advance Implementation through Partnerships

- Community + Government + Businesses

THE DELEGATION OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY



THE LAND USE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The New York State land use enabling act delegates authority to **LOCALITIES** to:

- Adopt comprehensive plans
- Zone
- Approve subdivision and site plans
- Issue special use permits
- Award variances

ROLE OF LOCAL GOV'T & PLANNING

1,550+ local jurisdictions in NY
With land use authority

Source: NREL

ZONING

Zoning Must be in Accordance with the
Comprehensive Plan

WHAT WE USE THE LAND USE SYSTEM TO ACCOMPLISH . . .

“Among our most important powers of local government is the responsibility to undertake comprehensive planning and to regulate land use to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.”

N.Y. Town, Village, General City Law

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

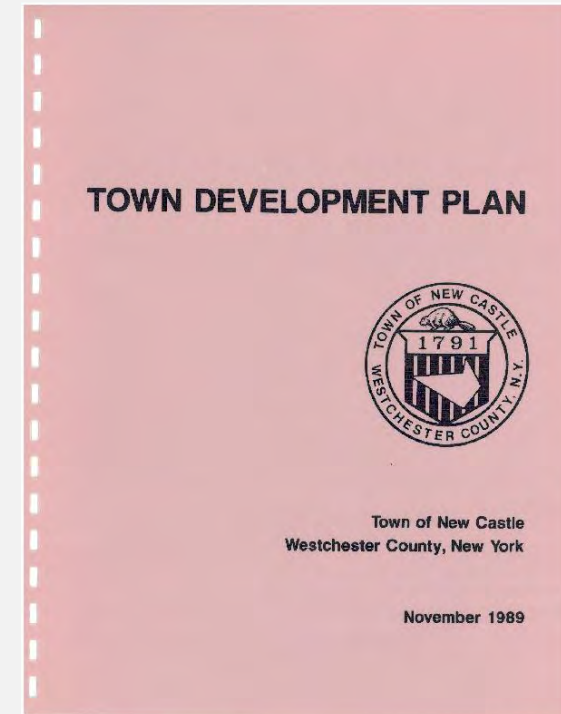
*Planning helps individuals and communities prepare for the future.
Planning also helps communities adjust to new needs—such as changing technology.*

- A written document formally adopted by the local legislature that contains goals, objectives and strategies for the future development and conservation of the community.
- “Comprehensive planning is society’s insurance that the public welfare is served by land use regulation.”

- *Pace Land Use Law Center: The Comprehensive Plan – The Foundation of*
- *New York’s Land Use System*

TIME FOR A NEW PLAN

- Request for Zoning Amendments
- Social and community needs change
- Local, national, international shifts



WHO SITS ON THE COMP PLAN COMMITTEE?

- Municipal Officials
- Chamber of Commerce
- HOAs
- Environmental/Non-profit Community
- Historic Preservation Representative
- Developers
- Landowners & Farmers
- Housing Advocates
- Religious Leaders
- PTA
- Planning Board Member (required for Comp. Plan)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STRUCTURE

Then

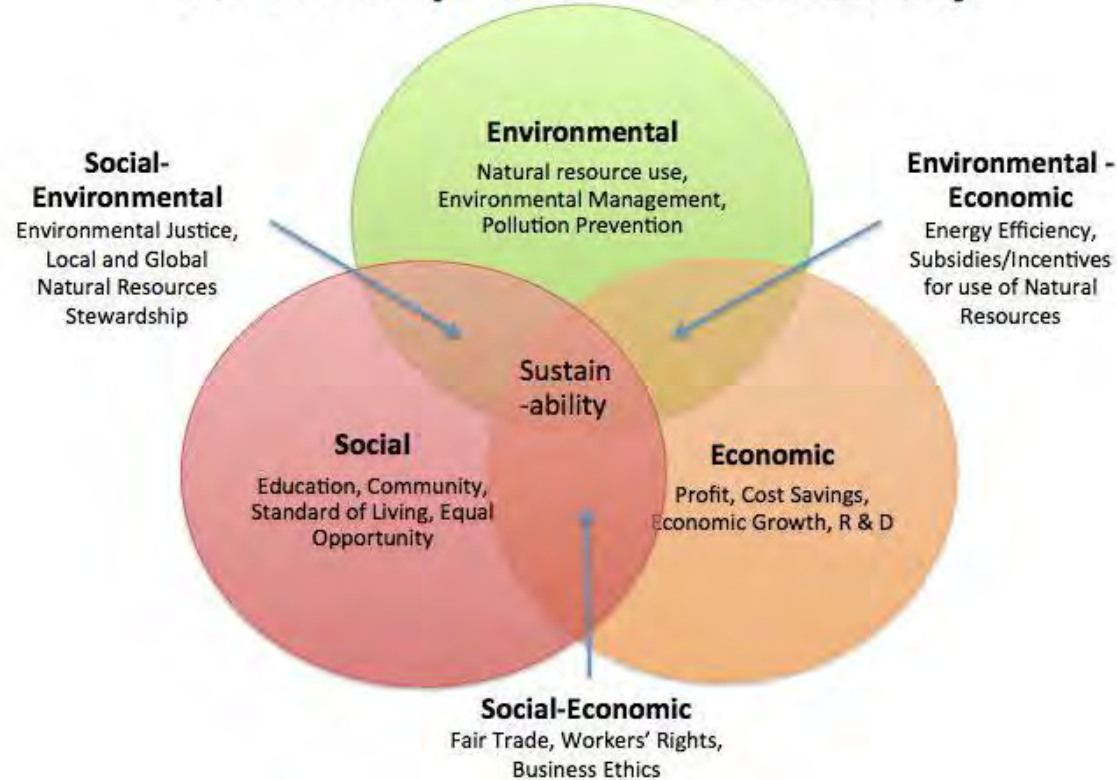


Now



SUSTAINABILITY AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Three Spheres of Sustainability



MAJOR THEMES

Livable Built Environment



Harmony with Nature



Resilient Economy



Healthy
Community



Responsible Regionalism

LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Goals and Actions:

Goal 4: Provide a range of housing types that are affordable to a diverse residential population throughout the community

- Review existing housing legislation and development incentives and revise to address current housing needs.

Goal 3: Locate a range of housing types affordable to a diverse residential population in or in proximity to the hamlets

- Strengthen zoning code to encourage the provision of a range of housing types in proximity to the hamlets





Critical Roles for Religious Leaders in Fair & Affordable Housing Advocacy

THINKING THEOLOGICALLY

"There is nothing new about poverty. What is new is that we now have the techniques and the resources to get rid of poverty. The real question is whether we have the will."

Rev. Martin Luther King

Roles

- ☐ Understand the Housing Crisis
- ☐ Be a Convener
- ☐ Educate your Congregation
- ☐ Monitor and Evaluate Land Use Proposals (Comprehensive Plans, Proposed Zoning Changes, Environmental Impact Statements)
- ☐ Serve on a Housing Committee
- ☐ Participate in Land Use Processes



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Call to Action

- ❑ Interfaith group convenes clergy to reflect theologically on issues of affordable housing, racial and cultural diversity, and diversity.
- ❑ Interfaith group sponsors *Housing Forum*
- ❑ Clergy individually and as an interfaith group monitor and participate in the Comprehensive Plan process



Supporting Affordable Housing Developments

- ☐ Taking a Leadership Role
- ☐ Bringing the Congregation Along



Not an Easy Task

- ☐ Building a Consensus among Interfaith Clergy
- ☐ Neighbors
- ☐ Concerns of Congregation



Consider Re-Purposing Surplus Properties for Affordable Housing







Cross Creek Townho
Spring Valley, NY

Tools and Techniques for Community Engagement



NIMBY



What is Citizen Engagement?

- Citizens of a community are “engaged” when they play an effective role in decision-making
- They are actively involved in defining the issues, identifying solutions, and developing priorities for action and resources.



- The solution is NOT IMMEDIATELY CLEAR to all the parties
- The parties FUNDAMENTALLY DISAGREE on the best solution
- The decision is likely to have FAR REACHING IMPACTS
- The decision is likely to be CHALLENGED

Community Engagement

Principles

- Engage Early
- Listen & Learn First
- Be Inclusive & Involve Many
- Build on Interests, Not Positions
- Design an Effective and Positive Process
- Be Transparent & Responsive
- Use a Skilled Facilitator



Engage Early & Listen

- Plan a Meeting
- Brainstorm the goals and objectives
 - What's working? What resources are important to the community?
 - What's not working? What are challenges in our community?
 - What are strategies to overcoming these challenges?



POSITIONS vs. INTERESTS

What are POSITIONS?

**Parties' assertions,
wants, demands, offers,
and solutions**

What are INTERESTS?

**A person's needs and
concerns**

Design An Effective Process

- Hold Multiple Meetings
- Schedule Meetings to meet the needs of various stakeholders
 - Select convenient and accessible venues
 - Select varying dates and times
 - Publicize meetings



Create a Positive Environment

- Distribute Detailed Agendas
- Establish Ground Rules
- Offer Refreshments
- Distribute Meeting Summary
- Discuss interests instead of positions



Skills for a Facilitator

- Plan meetings and develop agendas
 - Respond to group feelings
- Sense and be able to handle individual/group tension
- Restate interests/ positions clearly and objectively
 - Keep the group on track
 - Summarize group discussions
 - Test for agreements
- Identify major points of discussion or agreement
 - State decisions made by consensus
- Structure the direction and flow of discussion

Attitudes of Facilitators

- **HAVE CONFIDENCE** that the people are intelligent and through cooperative deliberation, they can arrive at good solutions to their problems
- **BELIEVE** each person has something valuable to say or has a contribution to make in the process of discovering the best solution
- **BE WILLING** to deal with hidden feelings that affect how decisions are reached
 - **HAVE RESPECT** for diverse interests of group members
- **BE AWARE** of power differences in groups and be prepared to deal with them

Be Transparent and Responsive

- Post meeting notes and technical information
- Find ways to continue to receive input/feedback
- Continue to ask, “who else should we inform & update?”
- Schedule future meetings
- Give feedback



Be Creative and Get Out There

- Community Meetings/Education Session
- Interviews, Polls & Surveys & Hotlines
- Websites, Email, Social Media & Texting
- Focus & Advisory Groups
- Neighborhood Walks
- Newspaper Article
- Municipal Meeting
- Brochure/Fact Sheet
- Neighborhood Pot Luck





Pleasant Valley Community Picnic

Free Food and Fun!

Build your own Town Center!

Rain or Shine!

Learn about our history!

Meet Your Neighbors!

Come join us as we celebrate our community and imagine ways to revitalize our hamlet! Connect with families, neighbors, and businesses for an evening of merriment as we consider how our downtown can better serve us.

Bring a Picnic Blanket!

Wednesday July 19, 6-8pm

@Cady Field/Town Hall
1554 Main St, Pleasant Valley, NY

Kayle Donato LLC
Pleasant Valley, NY



Your Role in the Land Use System

- Join a Land Use Board/Housing Committee
- Comprehensive Plan Committee involvement
- Be a Convener - Host a meeting regarding neighborhood planning - issues and concerns
- Support zoning proposals and/or zoning changes involving multifamily housing
- Future site identification
- Support affordable housing development
- Attend Public Hearings
- Educate your Congregation

Reflections and Lessons Learned from Capitol Region Religious Leaders

The Reverend Kate Forer, Senior Pastor, Presbyterian New England Congregational Church

Gordon Boyd, Bethesda Episcopal Church, Saratoga Springs



Next Session:
Conversation with Funders and Technical Assistant Providers
From Pre-Development to Post-Construction
July 14, 2020