



36th Annual Planning Symposium

March 26, 2025 – Marriott Syracuse Downtown

SESSIONS

A. Skills That Make Great Board Members

Paula Gilbert, Local Government Training Manager, Division of Local Government Services, New York State Department of State
Christopher Eastman, Division of Local Government Services, New York State Department of State

What makes a great land use board member? This course examines some of the necessary skills needed for new members and should serve as a refresher for more seasoned members alike. Topics include board procedures and applicable laws to more practical matters, including conducting site visits, working with consultants, avoiding ex-parte communications, and working with the public. How to build your technical knowledge and find assistance when needed, as well as utilizing the comprehensive plan for your decisions, will also be discussed.

B. Managing Growth and Sustainability: Sewer Infrastructure and Capacity Planning in Onondaga County

Shannon Harty, P.E., Commissioner, Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection
Ray Schofield, P.E., Collections System Director, Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection

This presentation, led by the Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection (OCDWEP), will provide an overview of the department's role in maintaining and managing the county's sewer systems. It will cover the ownership and operation of sewer infrastructure in Onondaga County, explaining the responsibilities of various entities involved, and a brief discussion on WEP's initiatives to support community-wide development. The session will also address the regulatory frameworks and capacity management constraints that guide the department's decisions in reviewing and approving new sewer connections and expansions. Attendees will gain insight into the complexities of balancing environmental protection, regulatory compliance, and infrastructure development to ensure sustainable growth in the region.

C. Case Study: Skaneateles Northern Hamlets Master Plan

Christopher Legg, Supervisor, Town of Skaneateles
Karen Barkdull, Planning and Development, Town of Skaneateles
Sam Gordon, AICP, Planning Practice Leader, Environmental Design & Research

The Town of Skaneateles will present their approach to developing a master plan for the hamlets of Mottville and Skaneateles Falls, situated north of the Village of Skaneateles along Jordan Road and Skaneateles Creek. The team will share the Town's process to develop a plan that seeks to identify ways to protect the character of the two hamlets while guiding future change, and the lessons they are learning along the way.

D. Planning and Zoning: An Introduction (This session will run from 9:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Paula Gilbert, Local Government Training Manager, Division of Local Government Services, New York State Department of State
Christopher Eastman, Division of Local Government Services, New York State Department of State

The most elementary of the Training Unit's course offerings, **Planning and Zoning: An Introduction** is designed for new members of both planning boards and zoning boards of appeal. The course provides a basic overview of the functions of planning boards and zoning boards of appeal and the land use tools they work with, the role of the comprehensive plan, procedures for holding meetings and hearings, and the enforcement of board decisions.

E. Regional Transportation Goals & Strategies: From Planning to Local Implementation

Meghan Vitale, Principal Transportation Planner, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council

Andrew Frasier, Senior Transportation Analyst, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council

Staff from the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) will talk about the regional goals of the new 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which is due to be adopted in September 2025, how those goals support municipal and regional growth, and how communities can implement those goals through the design of local road networks and multi-modal facilities and drawing on planning and financing tools documented in SMTC's recent "Financing Local Mobility" study. Finally, SMTC staff will highlight recommendations for communities along the Empire State Trail that were identified in the 2022 Onondaga County Empire State Trail Local Economic Opportunities Plan.

F. Agritourism: Land Use and Zoning Practices (This session will run from 9:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Nan Stolzenburg, FAICP CEP, Community Planning & Environmental Associates

Janet Oppedisano, Agriculture Team Leader, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County

Lisa Welch, Planner II, Onondaga County Department of Planning

With 623 farms operating on over 160,000 acres, farming in Onondaga County has an economic impact of \$365 million. This session is designed to empower municipal officials with the tools needed to enhance agritourism in their community through farm-friendly land use and zoning practices by presenting options for local zoning and land use policies, definitions, and techniques to balance agriculture, tourism and community interests. This session will also discuss the relationship between local regulations and the New York State Agricultural District 25-AA program to help open doors for agritourism, on-farm sales, breweries, and other farm-related ventures.

G. Changes in New York State Wetland Regulations

Dereh Glance, Director, Region 7, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Dereh Glance, Director for Region 7, will discuss implementation of New York State's updated wetlands law and highlight additional regulatory changes that relate to the environmental review and permitting process.

H. Affordable Housing

Paula Gilbert, Local Government Training Manager, Division of Local Government Services, New York State Department of State

Christopher Eastman, Division of Local Government Services, New York State Department of State

Affordable housing is a topic shrouded in misconceptions and strong biases. One thing is certain: it cannot be ignored. Public interest and case law require municipalities to address the affordable housing needs of their regions. This course examines the history and evolution of laws, policies, and programs pertaining to affordable housing. Exclusionary zoning case law is highlighted, as well as the benefits of using land use tools such as inclusionary zoning regulations and accessory apartments to provide affordable housing. Strategies to preserve existing affordable housing, the process of developing affordable housing, and affordable housing design are also discussed.

I. Overview of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Process

Diane Carlton, AICP, Emeritus, Regional Director for Public Affairs and Education, NYS Department of Environmental

Conservation and Adjunct Professor in Environmental Sustainability, SUNY Oneonta

This session is for those who want to know how the SEQRA process works. We'll talk about the SEQRA process, terminology, long and short forms, and the various parts of the EAF and who is responsible for each. We'll also apply SEQRA to a hypothetical project to help you understand how SEQRA works in real life circumstances. If you have questions about the SEQRA process and where and how the various steps fit into municipal reviews, then this session is for you.

J. Using Model Local Laws to Increase Resilience

Irene Holak, Coastal Resources Specialist II, Office of Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure, New York State

Department of State

The New York Department of State has prepared a collection of model local laws with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and other stakeholders, as fulfillment of the Community Risk and Resiliency Act, to help the state's local governments prepare for risk due to severe weather and other climatic changes. Nearly every local government in the state should be able to increase its resilience with a range of measures that implementation of these local laws would provide – from the protections of basic zoning and subdivision approaches to floodplain and stormwater management and wetland and watercourse conservation. This session will include a summary of the model laws and a discussion of the circumstances they are intended to mitigate.

K. Closing Plenary Session: Case Law Update for Planning and Zoning

Joseph Frateschi, Esq., Associate, Harris Beach Murtha

Amelia McLean Robertson, Esq., Associate, Harris Beach Murtha

This session will summarize recent legal cases pertaining to land use and explore the implications of these cases on land use regulation at the local level.