

32nd Annual Planning Symposium

March 12, 2020 • Marriott Syracuse Downtown
SESSIONS

KEYNOTE Reaching for the Future: Cities Competing in the 21st Century

Tom Murphy, Senior Resident Fellow, Joseph C. Canizaro/Klingbeil Family Chair for Urban Development, Urban Land Institute Americas

The forces of change are redefining the rules for all of us including cities. Globalization, technological innovation, environmental changes, and demographic shifts are challenging the traditional roles of cities. Cities will succeed or languish depending on how they respond. The leadership of a city must be nimble, curious and have an appetite for risk. Cities that are succeeding have a clear strategic vision of their strengths and their future, understand multilayered financing and how to build great partnerships and most importantly, have dynamic leadership to galvanize the community. The leadership of a community can be from public officials but also is increasingly coming from civic, university and business leaders. Change is tough; protecting the status quo or only reacting to projects rather than pro-actively pursuing them might seem easier and more politically safe, but successful cities are intentional in the choices.

A. Planning Board Overview (Please note this session will run through the 8:30-9:30 & 9:40-10:40 session periods.)

Patricia Burke, Land Use Training Specialist, New York State Department of State

Christopher Eastman, Land Use Training Manager, New York State Department of State

This basic course addresses the powers and duties of town, village, and city planning boards and commissions. The administrative and regulatory roles of the planning board, including its review of site plans, special use permits, and subdivision plats are discussed, along with the planning board's role in the municipal comprehensive plan. The importance of board procedures, referral to the county planning agency, and making findings are also covered.

B. Community Planning and Water Resources: 7 Things to Consider for the Future

Khristopher Dodson, Associate Director, Environmental Finance Center

This session will focus on several intertwined planning and resource topics that local governments should be thinking about as they consider specific community needs and projects as they move into the future. Some topics covered will include water resource protection, stormwater management (at the site scale, but also in rights-of-way and public property), infrastructure, private investment, and comprehensive planning to help guide your town or village into a prosperous future.

C. Planning for Small Farm Animals in Communities

David Skeval, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County

John Langey, Esq., Partner, Costello, Cooney & Fearon, PLLC

Communities have a growing interest in planning for residents to raise small farm animals. Raising small farm animals reconnects people to agriculture, maintains open space, can reduce tick populations, and addresses food security issues. This workshop will focus on poultry and goats and will provide models for planning that incorporate limits of herd and flock numbers based on reducing potential conflicts. The discussion will also include legal considerations of balancing the interests of neighboring properties and animal owners, including noise and waste management impacts.

D. Don't Leave Funding on the Table: How Age-Friendly Initiatives Can Work for Your Community

Esther Greenhouse, Built Environment Strategist and Industry Scholar, Cornell Institute for Healthy Futures

What's the next biggest trend? Leveraging the built environment to create housing and communities that enable people of all ages to thrive. The government agrees and is putting money towards this. Learn how to do this, why it matters, and about NYS funding options and national programs which can help your community develop an Age-Friendly focus. This can help retain citizens 50 and older (who generate 51% of the US economy!), potentially reduce costs and demand on services, and better meet the needs of citizens across the lifespan.

E. Planning for Wildlands and Habitat Connectivity

Ed Marx, AICP, Northeast U.S. Wildlands Ambassador, Wildlands Network

Andrew Zepp, Executive Director, Finger Lakes Land Trust

This session will focus on how local planners and partners such as land trusts can help protect and restore a landscape that will support long term survival of native species. The field of conservation biology has developed the broad outlines of what a system of protected lands should look like: large core areas that are fully protected, buffer areas where compatible uses are allowed, and connecting corridors between core areas to facilitate maintenance of a robust gene pool, and to allow movement of species seeking suitable habitat in response to climate change. The mass extinction of species, along with climate change, are the two global environmental crises of our time. An international group of biologists and conservationists have rallied around the call by renowned Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson to avoid mass extinction by saving half of the planet for all of life, what he calls "Half-Earth."

F. Special Use Permits

Patricia Burke, Land Use Training Specialist, New York State Department of State

Christopher Eastman, Land Use Training Manager, New York State Department of State

Some uses require additional review and should be granted permission only if the application meets certain conditions. These special uses include gas stations, dog kennels, and uses with drive-through windows. The special use permit is also used for development in environmentally sensitive zones with overlays such as for wetlands, steep slopes, and along scenic ridgelines. Scenarios in which the special use permit tool is most helpful will be discussed, along with rules local boards must follow for reviewing and approving applications for special use permits.

G. SOCPA Hour: Hamlet, Town Center, and Focus Area Planning Case Studies

Daniel Kwasnowski, AICP, Director, Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (SOCPA)

Hamlet, Town Center, or generally "Focus Area" planning is planning for a specific area in a community with the intent of taking a detailed approach to development of a specific vision developed through intense participation from residents, landowners, the development community, employers, and local government officials. This planning process discovers and defines constraints along the way. The resulting plan is often more predictable for local government, developers, and local residents and therefore more likely to be implemented.

SOCPA's Planning Director will share his experiences with hamlet and focus area planning. Through its Town Planning Grant Program, Onondaga County will be funding several focus area and hamlet plans throughout the county. In addition, the proposed County Plan themes include strengthening centers like hamlets and town centers. The presentation will use nearby examples of hamlet and focus area planning with different approaches and varying degrees of success to demonstrate the potential and limitations for focus area planning with opportunities for discussion.

H. Planning for Large Scale Solar Electricity Facilities in NYS

David Kay, Senior Extension Associate, Community and Regional Development Institute (CaRDI), Department of Global Development, Cornell University

George Frantz, Associate Professor of the Practice, Department of City and Regional Planning, Cornell University

David Kay will introduce NYS policies governing the development of solar electric generation facilities larger than 5 MW in capacity. He will provide an overview of such development, underway and planned, that is currently public, and introduce some related land use and land use planning issues.

George Frantz will focus on principles and concerns to consider in site planning and design. He will also summarize current thinking on whether and how solar and agriculture can be designed to be complementary versus mutually exclusive land uses.

I. Tips for Regulating Telecommunications Facilities

Patricia Burke, Land Use Training Specialist, New York State Department of State

Christopher Eastman, Land Use Training Manager, New York State Department of State

Changes to federal law have placed restrictions on the extent to which local governments can regulate both large telecommunications facilities and the small cell components of a growing 5G network. But that doesn't mean the abilities of local officials to influence telecommunications towers and small cell systems are entirely pre-empted. This course aims to dispel misperceptions and answer questions about the application process for structures that nearly all of us utilize but few of us wish to have right outside our windows.

J. Using the SEQRA Short Form

Diane Carlton, AICP, Retired Regional Director for Public Affairs and Education, NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation

With the recent changes to SEQRA, many projects can be reviewed using the SEQRA short form. Learn how to recognize whether a project is a Type II or Unlisted Action and then use the short form to review those Unlisted actions that are subject to SEQRA. We'll go through the short form, answer its questions as the lead agency, and review a proposed project in the Onondaga County area to see how it is done.

K. Service Consolidation of Local Municipal Sanitary Assets in Onondaga County

J. Ryan McMahon, II, County Executive, Onondaga County

Frank Mento, PE, Commissioner, Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection

This session will provide an overview of Onondaga County's program to consolidate local municipal sanitary sewer assets within the Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection (WEP). This is a key element of County Executive McMahon's Infrastructure agenda and a bold strategy to prepare our community for shovel-ready economic development and enhanced asset renewal. Some of the related issues that we may discuss include: current system structure and its challenges, issues with segmented ownership, asset conditions, regulatory pressures, Infiltration and Inflow, options for the future, "Do nothing," come together with single entity ownership from toilet to treatment, legal framework for asset transfer and the subsequent rights to execute work, benefits of consolidation, and next steps.

Closing Plenary Session: Case Law Update for Planning and Zoning

Timothy A. Frateschi, Esq., Member, Baldwin, Sutphen & Frateschi, PLLC

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

Historic Hotel Tour

Hotel Staff, Marriott Syracuse Downtown

Join us for a guided tour of the most documented and folklore filled building in all of Syracuse. As we stroll through the ballrooms and lesser known areas of importance hear the stories of the early years of this Grand Ol' Gal from the roaring twenties to famous guests and musicians that have graced its hallways. It may have a brand new look but the memories and tales of this renaissance revival beauty remain unchanged.