

SELECTED PROJECTS OF JOEL RUSSELL

January 2010

Diagnostic Study, Community Planning Workshops, Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Law

Town of Philipstown, Putnam County, New York (2001-present)

Facilitated a community consensus-building process leading to a new comprehensive plan and zoning law. The process began with a diagnostic study, continued with a series of workshops and a Comprehensive Plan drafted primarily by citizens. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2006. A new zoning law and comprehensive town code revisions are expected to be adopted in 2010.

Zoning Ordinance Revision

City of Springfield, Massachusetts (2006 - present)

As Special Counsel to the City of Springfield, currently assisting City staff, consultants, and a Community Advisory Committee in overhauling an antiquated zoning code to promote economic development, compact growth, downtown revitalization, and the protection of historic character.

Zoning Law Revisions

Town of Gardiner, New York (2005 – 2008)

The first phase of this project, adopted in 2006, involved drafting new town-wide open space (cluster) development regulations as well as special ridgeline and scenic area protections for the ecologically and scenically unique Shawangunk Ridge area. The second phase, a complete revision of the rest of the Town's Zoning Law, was adopted in 2008. Draft zoning law contains inclusionary zoning, Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) provisions.

Revision of Zoning Bylaw

Town of Shutesbury, Massachusetts (2005-2008)

Revised the entire zoning bylaw for the rural Town of Shutesbury based upon the Town's revised Master Plan. The revision, adopted by Shutesbury Town Meeting in 2008, incorporated innovative approaches to open space preservation and protection of community character, including a forest conservation zoning provision with TDR that is unique in Massachusetts. This approach, called "Natural Resource Protection Zoning," has subsequently been adopted in several other Massachusetts towns.

Comprehensive Plan Update, Zoning Law, Revisions to Subdivision Law

Town of Amenia, Dutchess County, New York (2004 - 2007)

Updating of comprehensive plan and drafting of new zoning law and amendments to the

subdivision regulations to implement the updated comprehensive plan. Major issues included protection of open space, ecosystems, water resources, and rural character, concentrating growth in revitalized hamlet center, affordable housing, and redevelopment issues involving a partially closed state facility. Zoning law contains inclusionary zoning, TND, and TDR provisions. Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Law were adopted in July 2007.

Revision of Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations
City of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County, New York (2002 – 2003)

Joel Russell, in collaboration with Environmental Design and Research of Syracuse, drafted new zoning district provisions and amendments to the subdivision regulations for the City of Saratoga Springs to implement the City's revised comprehensive plan. The project began with a review of the new comprehensive plan and existing zoning as well as a diagnostic interviewing process to determine what the community needed. Drawing upon the comprehensive plan's vision of a "City in the Country", the zoning revisions created a form-based code using "transect" zones for portions of the urbanized parts of Saratoga Springs, while also improving the effectiveness of cluster development provisions in the rural areas. The revisions were adopted in 2004.

Diagnostic Study, Zoning, and Comprehensive Plan Amendments; Watershed Protection Plan
Town and Village of Skaneateles and City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York (1994-96 and 2003- 2005)

In 1994, Joel Russell was retained by the Town and Village of Skaneateles to prepare a diagnostic study and revisions to the comprehensive plan and zoning laws for both the Town and Village. There was an extensive public participation process which resulted in the adoption of the new comprehensive plan and zoning laws in 1996. In 2003, the Village retained Mr. Russell again to draft additional provisions for the Village zoning. In late 2003, Mr. Russell was invited back by the Town to update the plan, zoning, and subdivision regulations, which were completed in 2005. Major issues in Skaneateles include protecting farmland, an historic downtown, controlling growth, and protecting Skaneateles Lake which is used extensively for recreation and is also the water supply for the City of Syracuse. The Village zoning contains extensive illustrated form-based design standards. Mr. Russell also drafted a watershed land protection plan for the City of Syracuse to protect land in the Skaneateles Lake watershed.

Revision of Comprehensive Plan, Subdivision Regulations, and Zoning Law
Town of Goshen, Orange County, New York (2003 – 2004)

Revision of comprehensive plan and drafting of new zoning law and amendments to the

subdivision regulations to implement the revised comprehensive plan. Major issues included aquifer protection, protection of open space and rural character, creation of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) hamlet districts, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), inclusionary zoning, and provision of sites for office and light industrial development. The adopted documents won a Vision in Planning award from the Hudson Valley Greenway Council. The project began in April, 2003, and the draft zoning law, subdivision regulations, and comprehensive plan were completed in August. The comprehensive plan and zoning were adopted in May of 2004.

Revision of Zoning Law (1996 -1999)

Town of Dover, Dutchess County, New York

Joel Russell drafted an entirely new zoning law to implement the Town's Master Plan. The zoning revision process included a diagnostic interviewing process at the beginning. Zoning revisions included cluster development incentives, mixed use hamlet zoning, environmental protection overlays, and special mixed use zoning for the campus of the former Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center.

Revision of Zoning Bylaw (1998 – 2000)

Town of West Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

Revised the entire zoning bylaw for the Town of West Tisbury based upon the Town's revised Master Plan. The revision incorporated innovative approaches to open space preservation and protection of community character. The revised bylaw was adopted in by a Town Meeting vote of 150 to 3.

Planning Charrette and Zoning Revision (1999 – 2003)

City of Syracuse, New York

Participated in community charrette with Duany Plater-Zyberk town planners; rewrote sections of the City of Syracuse Zoning Ordinance to implement key planning recommendations, including form-based transect zoning for the lake waterfront area. Zoning revisions were adopted in 2003.

Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Revisions (1997 – 2000)

Town of Nantucket, Massachusetts

Project manager for consulting team assisting with preparation of Nantucket's first Comprehensive Plan. Primary consultant on redrafting the zoning bylaws to implement the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations.

Planning Charrette, Comprehensive Plan, and Zoning Amendments (1993 – 1995)

Village of Chatham, New York

Conducted a three-day planning and visioning charrette for the Village of Chatham, New York as part of a comprehensive plan and zoning revision. The charrette process was run

largely by volunteers with Joel Russell acting as principal facilitator and consultant. The format included plenary sessions and specific visioning exercises done in facilitated small groups. Volunteer design professionals also led some groups in redesigning key places in the Village. Over 200 people attended this charrette, in a Village with a population of 2,000. This project resulted in the production of a user-friendly comprehensive plan that has been widely circulated in New York State and praised by the Preservation League of New York State and other reviewers as a model of conciseness, clarity, and readability. Joel then translated the principles articulated in the plan into zoning amendments.

Planning Charrette and Land Use Law (1993)

Town of Reading, New York

Joel Russell conducted a planning charrette for the Town of Reading to which about 10% of the Town's residents came. The format was similar to that used in Chatham, except that there was no design exercise for specific places. This visioning process, and the summary report describing its conclusions, resulted in the drafting and adoption of the town's first land use law, an innovative document that regulates land use without the use of zoning.

Planning Charrette (1993)

Town of Hector, New York

This charrette, held concurrently with the Reading charrette, covered a town 100 square miles in size. About 6% of its residents attended. Expecting to be led to a predetermined conclusion, they were surprised that the open-ended process revealed no clear consensus in favor of regulating land use.

Yale Urban Design Charrettes (1993 – 1999)

Consultant to five urban design charrettes that focused on small downtowns or neighborhoods in Winsted, Norfolk, Hartford, Madison, and East Lyme, Connecticut under the auspices of the Yale School of Architecture's Urban Design Workshop. He was invited back to Madison to rewrite the downtown zoning provisions in accordance with the recommendations in the charrette report.