

Congratulations 2003 Award Winners!

The New York Upstate Chapter will be handing out nineteen different awards in eight different categories in 2003. Each of the nineteen plans, projects, and individuals that receive an award at the Chapter's Awards Luncheon in Saratoga Springs on October 23, 2003 are well deserving of their recognition.

Every year, NY Upstate Chapter APA recognizes outstanding achievements that advance the art and science of planning. The selection criteria consist of quality, originality, transferability, implementation, comprehensiveness, and effectiveness/results. Each of the plans, projects, and individuals honored with an award has made significant contributions toward improving the quality of life for people throughout Upstate New York.

Congratulations to all.

The 2003 Awards Committee consisted of the following Chapter members:

Rocco Ferraro, AICP, Awards Chair
Sandy Misiewicz, Harris, Capital District Section
Michael Long, AICP, Central NY Section
Richard Perrin, AICP, Genessee/Finger Lakes Section
Julie Sweet, Southern Tier Section
Eric Gillert, AICP, Western New York

Many thanks to the Awards Committee for a very difficult job well done! Also, a special thank you to Mary Kopaskie and peter j. smith, & company, inc. for preparing and printing the certificates.

The following is a brief description of each of the 2003 award winners selected by the New York Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association.

OUTSTANDING PLANNING AWARD: COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

City of Kingston Waterfront Development Implementation Plan (Outstanding Planning Award: Areawide Plan). This study of the Kingston waterfront addresses a broad array of issues and provides a detailed inventory and analysis of land use and related conditions. The study provides the city with a "game plan" and a sense of what the city would like the waterfront to look like. Community outreach created the foundation for the waterfront vision that guided the planning process. A steering committee of public and private interests directed the process. The public outreach effort included a visioning workshop and design charette, progress meetings, one on one interviews, and neighborhood meetings.

An implementation oriented approach to the planning process was taken with a goal of measurable change in five years. The action plan outlines the investments and the projects that are necessary to achieve the vision. It provides a detailed financial impact analysis of the potential costs and benefits of accomplishing the preferred land use scenario. This marketing strategy approach helped residents and stakeholders recognize that careful redevelopment made economic sense for their community. Infrastructure analysis has outlined standards that waterfront property owners must meet to enhance adjacent waterfront amenities. The study has resulted in significant public and private interest in investing in the waterfront.

The consultant team consisted of ***River Street Planning & Development, Synthesis, Transportation Concepts, and Swiger Associates.***

Rediscovering the First Wilderness: Inter-municipal Strategy for the Northern Hudson River (Outstanding Planning Award: Special Community Initiative). The intent of this report was to examine the feasibility of re-establishing a functioning rail line along the multi-jurisdictional 40 mile corridor in Warren County on the right of way of the former Adirondack Branch of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad to enhance heritage tourism development. The report outlines a series of recommendations that can spur economic vitality in each of the corridor communities building on existing cultural and historic resources.

The action plan establishes development principles and specific plans which will lead to the redevelopment of the Northern Hudson River Corridor. A full range of tourism services, active and passive recreation opportunities, cultural destinations, historic interpretative sites, and railroad experiences are planned to meet the needs of the travelers in their

rediscovery of the First Wilderness. The main report is supplemented by a stand alone brochure for each of seven locations along the First Wilderness Corridor.

The First Wilderness Plan represents an effort at inter-municipal cooperation among Adirondack communities and agencies. The inter-municipal partnership that occurred during the planning process has created a new framework for regional planning and presents new hope for the economic viability of the region as a unique destination.

The consultant for the study was *The Saratoga Associates*.

City of Rochester Center City Master Plan (Areawide Plan: Honorable Mention). Recently adopted by the City of Rochester in 2003, the plan outlines a series of goals which outline the future direction of the Center City. The Plan envisions the Center City as the economic and cultural core of the Rochester region and outlines 89 specific public and private actions and recommendations to achieve the vision. The recommendations range from creating a "Walk Center City" Trail system to the creation of a series of distinct center city districts and neighborhoods.

The Plan is very reader friendly with illustrations and schematic designs for the sub-areas within the Center city. Several of the Plan's recommendations have been implemented including a new Center City Zoning District with specific design standards for public and private development projects. The more typical land use controls have been removed in favor of a more design and performance related regulatory system.

The Plan was prepared by the *City of Rochester Bureau of Planning*.

Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan: Honorable Mention). The Comprehensive Plan outlines a series of goals, objectives and implementation strategies to be achieved during the next twenty years in support of the Town's Bicentennial Vision statement and four Key Initiatives. The Plan was prepared using an aggressive value based planning process that responded to the issues and values expressed by a full range of stakeholders within the community. A series of community meetings and individual interviews were conducted throughout the two year planning process. The internet, including the integrated use of a Comprehensive Plan website and Geographic Information System (GIS), was also used as a method to engage the residents and stakeholders throughout the planning process.

The Plan goes beyond the traditional function of looking at the relationship among the different planning elements outlined within the document. Rather than ignoring or discounting earlier studies, it links and knits together these earlier planning initiatives into

the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan also envisions the Town working together and complimenting the efforts of neighboring communities as regional partners in the revitalization of the Buffalo-Niagara region.

The consultant team consisted of *Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, URS Corporation, and Economic Research Associates.*

Town of Amherst Deer Vehicle Accident Management Plan (Comprehensive Plan: Special Community Initiative). This unique study was prepared in response to over a decade of high deer vehicle accidents in Amherst and the growing concern for public safety on roads throughout the community. The Plan outlines specific actions for both the entire town and high accident locations identified through an integrated data collection, environmental review, and public participation process.

The adaptive management approach outlined in the plan is an integrated strategy that is sensitive to animal welfare. It establishes human and deer behavior modifications actions to reduce Deer Vehicle accidents first along with the existing program of NYSDEC nuisance permits. Lethal control of deer was considered acceptable only as a last resort. The management plan was integrated into SEQR review required for plan adoption and is an excellent example of how to successfully merge the two into one process.

The Plan was prepared by *White Water Associates.*

OUTSTANDING PLANNING AWARD: PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION

The Mill Adaptive Reuse Project. The Mill Adaptive Reuse Project represents the achievement of a shared vision to restore and reuse an historic asset of the City of Saratoga Springs into productive uses that provides long term benefits to the community. It is an example of converting an abandoned industrial complex and community eyesore into a mixed use, multi-phased adaptive reuse project.

The historic features of the original mill factory complex were preserved and integrated into the overall design of the site. The project team worked closely with the City and residents of the surrounding neighborhood to assure that the proposed site development was compatible with the city's planning objectives and design standards. The developers also worked with the City to make public improvements including enhancements to the adjacent public park.

Currently, the Mill has a high occupancy rate demonstrating the ability of the site to attract and retain business. In addition, while the area once experienced a state of decline, the Mill's success has served as a catalyst for the redevelopment of adjacent vacant parcels. The project has been well received by the City and residents in surrounding neighborhoods.

The Mill Site Master Plan was prepared by *The LA Group* and (re)developed by *Thomas Roohan (Roohan Realty) and Sonny Bonacio (Bonancio Construction)*.

Town of Greece Open Space Acquisition Program. The Town of Greece, a suburb of Rochester, has embarked upon an aggressive, but manageable, multi-faceted property acquisition program in response to recommendations contained in its Comprehensive Plan. The program also functions as the primary tool to implement the proposals contained in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan which covers the lakefront and Erie Canal corridor.

The acquisition program is characterized by identifying and prioritizing potential sites for acquisition based on the aforementioned planning documents and input from the Open Space Committee and its partners. An open space inventory map is used and parcels are rated for possible acquisition based on pre-defined selection criteria. Partnerships have been established with a variety of organizations including the Trust for Public Land, The Genesee Land Trust, NYS DEC and the Monroe County Green Space Initiative Program. A range of funding options is considered including grants, donations, bargain sales, and the Town's Recreation Trust Fund. A funding package is assembled specific to the parcel's characteristics.

Since the program's inception in 2001, 300 acres in the vicinity of the Braddock Bay Fish & Wildlife management area have either been purchased or are under active negotiation for purchase and an additional 64 acres of open space throughout the Town have been donated by developers and landowners.

The Acquisition program is coordinated by the *Town of Greece Open Space Committee*.

City of Saratoga Springs Zoning Amendments (Honorable Mention). The City of Saratoga Springs recently adopted three amendments to its zoning ordinance designed to address the special needs of selected areas within the City. The intent was to develop a set of guidelines as an alternative to the traditional Euclidean zoning and suburban design standards. The "solution" is the establishment of three transect zoning districts, a conservation development district, and two commercial gateway overlay districts.

The transect zones provide standards for lot and block size, building and parking location, minimum building frontage, appropriate materials, roof forms, facade treatments, and required streetscape elements. These districts will allow Saratoga Springs to accommodate mixed use infill development that is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The Conservation Development District places new residential growth within "clusters" and preserves, as dedicated non-development areas, lands that have natural constraints and those with open space and passive recreational value. Though the number of homes remains essentially the same as permitted by the underlying zoning, at least 50% of the buildable land must be preserved.

The two Commercial Gateway Overlay Districts are aimed at preserving the rural "country" character of the affected areas. The established guidelines address the location and character of landform, buildings, roads, parking, signage, and vegetation. The gateway overlay districts are designed to preserve the "City in the Country" image of the outlying portions of the city.

The Zoning Amendments were prepared by ***Environmental Design Partnership and Joel Russell*** under the direction of the ***Saratoga Springs Zoning Ordinance Review Committee***.

2003 CURRENT TOPIC: PARKS & PUBLIC LAND

End Use Plan for the Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site. Once a privately owned quarry followed by an active municipal landfill site from 1976 to 2001, the End Use Plan identifies a series of steps to transform the landscape into a community resource and major regional attraction. The Plan represents a collaborative effort among project stakeholders to design a green site based on the principles of "reduce, reuse, and recycle". It is based on a clear vision of integrating landscape rehabilitation with public access and environmental education.

Features of the End Use Plan include limited vehicular access, all paved surfaces are natural materials which promote percolation, the use of recycled construction materials, use of

solar panels to generate electricity, minimal mowing and enhanced wildlife habitat including use of native plantings.

Phase I activities under construction include a visitors pavilion, a children's science and nature area, an interpretive Boardwalk, Heritage Arboretum, Wildflower Meadow, and summit and escarpment overlooks. A stewardship committee has been established to coordinate activities associated with the development and operation of the site.

The Plan was prepared by *peter j. smith & company, inc.*

Erie County Park Systems Master Plan. The Master Plan is a comprehensive document that outlines a series of recommendations for the Erie County Park system which consists of nearly 11,000 acres on 38 sites throughout the county. The Plan categorizes each of the parks according to significant features recognizing the diversity and variety of uses within the County parks system. Schematic designs and specific action items are listed for each of the parks. It is the Plan's intent to establish a framework for preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the parks during the next 15 to 20 years.

The comprehensive theme of the Park System Master Plan is **RENEWAL: Recreation, Environmental sustainability, Natural and cultural heritage, Education and interpretation, Waterways, Accessibility, and Linkages.** The preparation of the Plan included a collaborative effort that involved extensive public participation. The management component recognizes the importance of partnering with other government and non-government entities in order to implement the specific actions outlined in the Plan. To date, Erie County has already allocated \$15 million for Plan implementation. In addition, the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department has integrated the inventory data base into their system as a management tool.

The consultant team consisted of *Parsons, Envision, The Hough Group, Paradigm Consulting, and Wendel - Duchscherer Architects and Planners.*

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Vital Communities Toolbox (Honorable Mention). The Toolbox offers a variety of practical tools for those interested in community planning and development and is available on-line at www.tompkins-co.org/planning/vct. The toolbox is a result of the adoption by the Tompkins County Legislature of Vital Communities Development Principles which promote strong neighborhoods, a range of housing choices, preservation of open space, centralized growth, a vibrant local economy, farmland protection, and a variety of transportation options.

The goal of the Toolbox is to provide citizen planners, governments, businesses, and non-profit groups with tools to help achieve the goals set forth in the Vital Communities Development Principles. The Toolbox contains descriptions of over 150 planning tools from tips on creating bicycle friendly transportation systems to using zoning as an effective community tool. It offers a range of options that a community can consider in achieving its goals and objectives.

The web site is user friendly providing easy to understand descriptions of the range of options available. The site also includes diverse links on its Resources page.

The Toolbox and web site were developed by the *Tompkins County Planning Department and Information Technology Services*.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT PROJECTS

Revitalization Strategies for North Albany. The Revitalization Plan presents a visionary approach outlining short and long term recommendations for the revitalization of the historic North Albany neighborhood. Four key themes were addressed in detail throughout the Plan: safe streets, gateways and connections, housing, and community facilities.

Safe streets identifies a series of streetscape improvements that could create a safer pedestrian environment leading to a reduction in crime. Gateways and Connections identifies key gateways throughout the neighborhood and how to establish connections with the surrounding area. The Housing section focuses on strategies for the construction of infill housing, the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock, and opportunities for increased home ownership. The Community Facilities section addresses the need for and makes recommendations for buildings, spaces, and programs to create a sense of community and neighborhood among the residents.

The planning process included an inclusive collaborative public participation component including personal interviews, public meetings, and outreach to advocacy groups located in the community. The Plan has been embraced by the neighborhood and serves as a reference tool for the North Albany community to lobby for funding, programming, and construction improvements as outlined in the Revitalization Plan.

The Plan was prepared by *students enrolled in the Graduate Planning Studio class at the University at Albany Department of Geography and Planning*.

Towards a Smart Growth Master Plan. Assessment and Recommendations for the Town of Porter. The Town of Porter is a rural community of approximately 7000 residents located in Niagara County along the shore of Lake Ontario. There are two distinct population centers at opposite ends of the Town: the Village of Youngstown and the Hamlet of Ransomville.

The Smart Growth Plan recommends that future development be directed to the existing population centers, with emphasis on infill development within these centers. The preservation of open space and farmland is encouraged. Recommendations were also made toward the careful expansion of community services, infrastructure, and rural public transit. Applications of Smart Growth principles were presented in relation to the analysis of demographic, economic, and land use data in the Town of Porter.

The community was engaged throughout the planning process and the final set of smart growth recommendations reflect the vision of the community. The Town is in the process of hiring a consultant to complete the planning process building upon the significant efforts and excellent foundation provided by the students.

The Plan was prepared by ***students enrolled in the Graduate Planning Studio class at the University at Buffalo Department of Urban & Regional Planning.***

Master Land Use Plans for Greenes Landing & Wilawana Flats (Honorable Mention). Greenes Landing and Wilawana Flats are two areas located within Athens Township, Pennsylvania. Wilawana Flats is a predominantly agricultural area encompassing approximately two miles west of the Chemung River that has been experiencing growth pressures during the past decade. Greenes Landing is a small 200 year old hamlet on the western bank of the Chemung River that is interspersed with strip commercial development and residential land uses dating back to the early to mid 18th century, two mobile home parks and a small industrial park.

The Master Land Use Plans address traditional growth and community development issues such as allocation of land uses, preventing sprawl, preserving key agricultural lands and other open space assets, infrastructure investment, and meeting existing and future recreational needs. The new visions and implementation strategies for the two areas are presented both in narrative form and hand drawn and colored illustrations. They address the major issues raised by both the Township leaders and residents of the two planning areas. The plan has also served as a catalyst for increased interest and resident participation in the planning process in the township.

The Plan was prepared by ***students enrolled in the Graduate Planning Workshop at the Cornell University Department of City & Regional Planning.***

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP: ELECTED OFFICIAL

Mary O. Donohue, Lieutenant Governor, State of New York. First elected to serve as Lt. Governor of New York in 1998 and re-elected in 2002, the Honorable Lt. Governor Mary Donohue has taken a leadership role in promoting a smart growth agenda in New York State. In January 2002, the Lt. Governor was appointed by the Governor to chair the Task Force on Quality Communities.

Charged with studying balanced growth, the Lt. Governor chaired an 18 member task force assisted by a 27 member Advisory Committee comprised of government representatives, business leaders, and representatives from advocacy groups. The Task Force sought strategies not only to curb sprawl but to enable localities to implement plans that fulfill community visions respecting the needs of the environment and neighboring communities. The report entitled "State and Local Governments Partnering for a Better New York" identifies 41 recommendations designed to improve the quality of life in communities across the state. The report provides a comprehensive framework for enhanced cooperation among various levels of government in an effort to promote economic growth, sensible community planning and sound environmental policies in communities across the State.

The Lt. Governor presently chairs the Quality Communities Working Group comprised of 25 state agencies joining forces to implement the Task Force's 41 recommendations.

Glenn R. Nellis, Supervisor, Town of Eden. The Honorable Glenn Nellis has served as Supervisor of the Town of Eden since 1998. He was quick to realize that the key to a successful municipal plan lies in its implementation and has taken the initiative to implement the Town's Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in 2000. The Supervisor has spearheaded the implementation programs by establishing a number of committees, including a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC). He has remained an active participant in meeting with the committees and garnering Town Board support, including budgeting money specifically for implementation.

In addition to creating the CPIC to guide the execution of the recommended actions, the following are key accomplishments under Supervisor Nellis's direction since the plan was adopted two years ago:

- Adopted changes to the Town's Zoning & Subdivision regulations.
- Adopted a Conservation Easement Law and an information packet about the Conservation Easement Process.
- Adopted a new local Right to Farm Law.

- Establishment of a Hamlet Revitalization Committee.
- Implementation of streetscape improvements.
- Creation of new stormwater management regulations.
- Securing outside funding support for projects.

Merrilyn Pulver, Supervisor, Town of Fort Edward. The Honorable Merrilyn Ellis has served as the Supervisor of the Town of Fort Edward since 2000. Under the leadership of Supervisor Pulver and the other members of the Town Board, the residents of the town embarked on a course of self analysis and discovery that culminated in the preparation and adoption of a Comprehensive Plan in 2002.

Under her leadership, the Town has successfully achieved the following as outlined in the comprehensive plan:

- Inter-municipal cooperation in the development of a successful Quality Communities Grant application for the creation of a four community Route 4 Corridor study.
- Partnered with adjacent Hudson River communities to prepare a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan.
- Rehabilitation and re-opening of the Roger's Island Visitors Center.
- Establishment of a Zoning Update Community Advisory Committee to review and update the Town's Zoning ordinance.
- Successful application to secure a Community Development Block Grant Technical Assistance Grant to prepare a Local Economic Revitalization Plan.

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP: CITIZEN PLANNER

Richard Muscatello, Chair Town of Wheatfield Planning Board. Mr. Muscatello has served as the Planning Board Chairman in the Town of Wheatfield, Niagara County for eight years. During his tenure as Chairman he has played an integral role in encouraging the Town Board to authorize funds for the preparation of the various phases of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Muscatello has also played an active role in the creation of the document working closely with the Town's consultant and personally taking responsibility for individual tasks as well as the general tone and direction of the Comprehensive plan documents. He assisted in the drafting of press releases and invitations to the public meetings, including interviews by the local press encouraging citizen participation in the process.

Mr. Muscatello has taken the initiative to spearhead improvements to the Town's Zoning ordinance including the establishment of the Niagara Falls Boulevard Overlay District and the Town's Cell Tower ordinance. To improve the productivity of the Planning Board, he has instituted work sessions and has arranged for a computer to be brought into the Planning

Board meetings providing immediate access of the Planning Board's review to the applicant. He also developed a set of written procedures and guidelines in order to improve the quality of the applications coming before the Planning Board for review.

Mr. Muscatello has also been an active participant to retain the Niagara Falls Airbase and has been nominated by the Commissioner of Niagara County Department of Planning, Development, and Tourism to participate in the regional partnership task force for economic development in Erie and Niagara counties.

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP: PROFESSIONAL PLANNER

Michael J. Kayes. Michael Kayes has had a long and distinguished planning career since receiving a Master of Urban & Regional Planning degree from the University of Mississippi in 1971. Since receiving his degree, he has been employed as a professional planner in New York State. He began his career as a Senior Planner with the Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board. In 1972 he went to work as a Chief Planner for the Cattaraugus County Planning Board. In 1986, he was appointed Planning Director. In 1992, he became the Director for the Montgomery County Department of Planning and Development, a position he currently holds.

Throughout his career he has received numerous honors and awards including Executive of the year -Cattaraugus County Professionals, Outstanding Director Award from the APA Western New York section, Leadership Award from the Cattaraugus County Industrial Development Agency, Outstanding Board Member from the Fulmont Community Action Agency of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, and the Heissenbuttel Award for Planning Excellence from the New York Planning Federation.

Mr. Kayes has been involved in innumerable planning studies including the Cattaraugus County Comprehensive Plan, the Florida Industrial Park, Glen Canal View Business Park, and the Montgomery County Canalway Trail Plan.

Mr. Kayes is the current President of the National Association of County Planners, serves on various County and regional committees and serves on the Executive Committee of the New York Upstate Chapter of APA. He had previously served as Secretary and President of the Upstate Chapter.