COMMUNITY DESIGN

Land use tools for a better community

Program objectives

- Understand basic authority to regulate design
- Encourage community planning
- Encourage maintaining or enhancing the community's distinctive qualities
- Learn to integrate design with existing tools
- Development of new tools

Using design tools locally

- Guide developers
  - Appropriate development for the community
- Provide guidance to review boards
  - Planning
  - Architectural
  - Zoning Board of Appeals

What are the benefits?

- Achieve comprehensive planning goals
- Preserve or create community character
- Establish connections
- Preserve natural resources

Guidelines or Standards?

- Standard
  - Required or agreed to level of quality or attainment
    - Mandatory
    - Enforceable
- Guideline
  - Rule giving guidance
    - Voluntary
    - Recommendation

Signage and landscaping

Grant of authority

- MHRL
- "Grant of power"
  - Zoning
    - Placement of buildings & other structures
- Subdivision Review
- Site Plan Review
  - "…any additional elements specified…"

- Municipal Home Rule Law §10
- General City Law §20
- Town Law §261 & § 264
- Village Law §7-700 & §7-110

Aesthetics & Land Use Regulation

"Landmark" Case

□ **People v. Stover**

■ 12 N.Y.2d 462, 191 N.E. 2d 272, 240 N.Y.S. 2d 734 (1963)

Established aesthetics as a legitimate governmental concern & a permissible exercise of the police power

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What are design tools?

Regulatory

Written standards

Graphic or illustrated standards

□ Zoning
□ Subdivision
□ Site Plan
□ Architectural Review
□ Historic Preservation Laws
□ Design Standards or Guidelines

What are design tools

Non-regulatory

Facade improvement programs

Tax abatements

Targeted infrastructure improvements

What are design tools?

Design Guidelines & Standards can address:

- Landscaping
- Signage
- Pedestrian amenities
- Streetscapes
- Lot layout
- Stormwater management

Architectural Design Graphics

Developing design tools

Community visioning & analysis

The Community Planning Process

- Getting Started
  - Establish a team
  - Involve the community
  - Seek sources of assistance

The Community Planning Process

- Inventory
  - Identify existing resources
  - Conduct a Visual Preference Survey
  - Hold a charrette

Charette example: Saranac Lake

"River Walk" Project	Charette results:
▫ 1.5 mile linear park connecting public, private & commercial properties ▫ Berkeley Green	▫ Mini-Amphitheater ▫ Terraces ▫ Paver-stone sidewalks

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Berkeley Green

The Community Planning Process

- □ Analysis
  - ■ Interpret collected information
- □ Develop a vision
- □ Adopt standards or guidelines

Visual tools

- □ Define community character
- □ Identify highly visual locations
  - ■ Evaluate & rank
- □ Simulate different scenarios for evaluation

Visual Preference Surveys

- □ Series of slides depicting images of the built & natural environment
- □ Gather feedback on elements that contribute to community character

Visual Preference Surveys

- Generally administered at workshops
  - Alternatives: TV, internet, or mail
- Participants rate visual concepts of architectural styles, signage, landscape design, etc.
- Gage participates' preferences
  - "Gut" reaction to the images

Visual Preference Survey

Visual Preference Survey

Visual Preference Survey

Visual Preference Survey

Visual Preference Survey

Technical analysis

- Interpret information
- What is wrong?
  - 88% of area within 100' of road edge is asphalt

Identify opportunities for improvement

- Curb Cuts
  - Access management
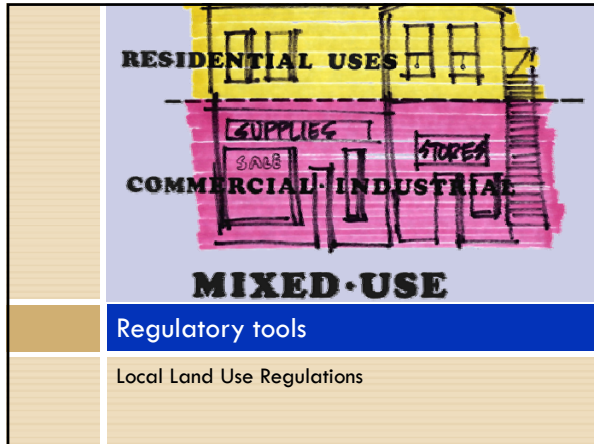   - Eliminate & reduce
  - Traffic control
  - Pedestrian safety

Identify opportunities for improvement

- Defining the street edge
  - Use of landscaping
  - Setbacks

RESIDENTIAL USES

COMMERCIAL · INDUSTRIAL

SUPPLIES | SALE | STORES

MIXED·USE

Regulatory tools

Local Land Use Regulations

Effective design tools

- Understandable review process
  - Applicant instructions
- Design objectives clearly stated
  - Supported with specific review criteria
  - Vague language avoided
- Illustrations used where appropriate
  - Design Guideline Handbook or Manual

Design criteria

- How are the criteria developed in the regulations?
  - Text
  - Cross-sections & plans
  - Photographs
  - Reference to other regulations & guidelines

Design Manual

Supplement zoning with an illustrated guidebook to better communicate requirements to applicants

- Make minor modifications to the site to maintain & preserve its natural appearance & environment by:
  - Minimizing grading
  - Conforming to natural topography
  - Grading to create smooth contours
  - Avoiding sharp cuts & fills
  - Avoiding construction on steep slopes
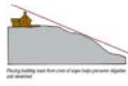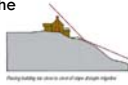
Design criteria

- Architecture
  - Details
  - Colors
  - Materials
  - Accessory structures

Design criteria

- Signs
  - Materials
  - Height
  - Size
  - Illumination
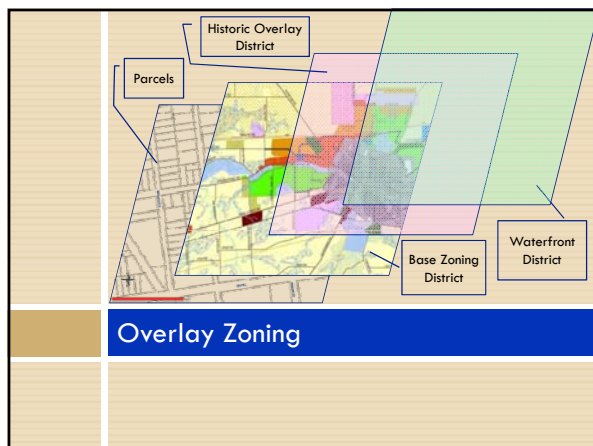 - Colors
  - Setbacks
  - Quantity

Zoning

- Zoning
  - Setbacks, lot coverage, lot size, allowed uses…
  - Overlay Districts
    - Special Use Permit

Mixed Use Zoning

- Encourage mixed use using vertical zoning:
  - First floor
    - Storefronts
    - Retail
  - Upper floors
    - Offices
    - Residential

Historic Overlay District

Parcels

Waterfront District

Base Zoning District

Overlay Zoning

Overlay Zoning

- Modifies one or more conventional zoning districts

- May cut across several "underlying" zoning districts

- Applies standards in addition to those of the underlying zoning
  - May trigger additional review or permits

- Road Corridors
- Gateways
- Historic Areas
- Mixed Use Areas
- Waterfront Areas
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Gateway Overlay District

"…to preserve & promote the cultural & aesthetic heritage of the towns entrance…"

Town of Woodstock

- Special Use Permit review criteria:
  - Facades, including fenestration
  - Character & location of uses
  - Preservation of landmark or historic structures
  - Preservation of views & open spaces
  - Signage & lighting.

Hamlet Preservation Overlay District

- A hamlet is an unincorporated community or area within a town
  - Not classified as an administrative division of government
    - Counties, cities, towns & village are municipal corporations
    - Cannot pass laws or provide services to residents
- Usually established settlement areas
  - Denser development
  - Traditional land use pattern
- Can be used as a land use classification
  - Adirondack Park Agency
  - Overlay district

Hamlet Preservation Overlay District

- Preserve aesthetic character of the district
- Encourage quality exterior building design
- Ensure design of proposed structures harmonizes with neighboring properties
- Preserve existing residential structures to encourage their continued use as residences
  - *Town of Woodstock*

Hamlet Preservation Overlay District

"…to protect & enhance the buildings, landmarks, historic structures & distinctive elements of the of the District… "

Town of Woodstock

Hamlet Preservation Overlay District

Encouraged: Wood.. clapboards, shingles, stone or brick, historic style windows, & architectural details

Discouraged: Metal & vinyl siding, concrete block, artificial stone or brick

Town of Woodstock

Additional reviews
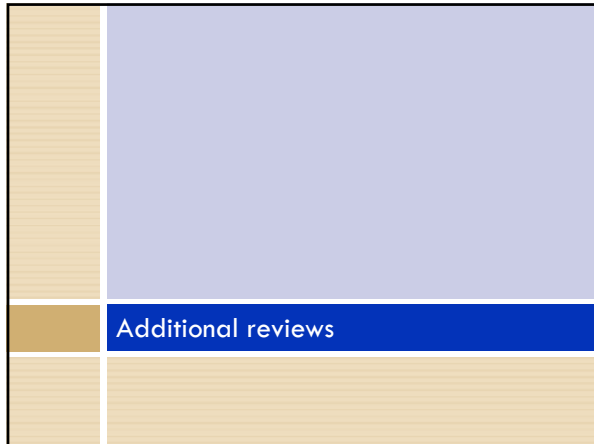
Subdivision Review

- Lot configuration
- Landscaping
- Street Pattern
- Street Lights
- Sidewalks
- Utilities
- Drainage
- General City Law §32 & §33
- Town Law §276 & §277
- Village Law §7-728 & §7-730

- Municipal subdivision regulations can contribute to the following:
  - Designs that contribute to a larger neighborhood or district
  - Interconnectedness between neighborhoods

Lot configuration
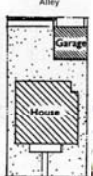
Figure 3.2.4.E-a Not Permitted

Figure 3.2.4.E-b Required

Clustering or Conservation Subdivision

- Allows more creative & efficient use of land
- Preserves community character
- Protects farmland, forest & open space
- Interconnectedness
 - Trail systems & open space networks
- Integration with natural systems

Fields, Stream Corridor, and Mature Woodlands Protected from Development

Dutchess County Greenway Connections

Site Plan Review

Site Plan Elements
- Screening
- Signs
- Parking
- Access
- Adjacent land uses
- Landscaping
- Location & dimension of buildings
- Architectural features

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
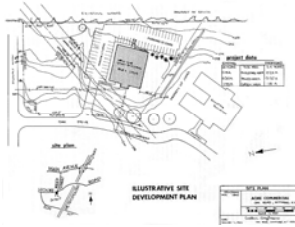
- General City Law §27-a
- Town Law §274-a
- Village Law §7-725-a

Building & parking placement

"Parking may be placed between the principal building and a public street, if necessary due to specific site conditions and/or functional requirements, if the parking is screened by topography or a year round vegetative buffer of sufficient density to substantially limit the view of the parking lot."

- Town of Marbletown
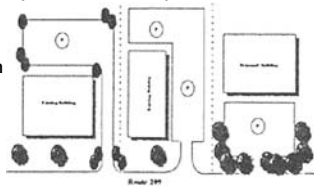
Guide overall site design

- Parking in front
- Undefined ingress & egress
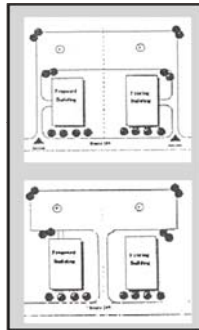- Lacks edge definition
- No sidewalks

- Edge definition
- Sidewalks
- Parking in back
- Access management

Traffic patterns

"A single access to adjoining parking lots or an interconnection between adjoining parking lots is encouraged and may be required where necessary to provide safe traffic management."

- Town of Marbletown
  - Local Law No. 1, 1999.

Parking

- Landscaping
- Edge definition
- Ingress & Egress

Landscaping, screening & buffering

Benefits

- Protect & improve visual qualities of site
- Reduce surface runoff
- Minimize soil erosion
- Provide shade
- Create & preserve wildlife habitats & corridors
- Separate from adjacent uses

Landscaping, screening, & buffering

Review criteria

- Percentage of site coverage
- Type
  - Tree, shrub or groundcover
  - Evergreen or deciduous
  - Native
- Height & caliper
- Spacing
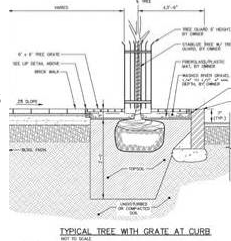- Hardiness
- Width of buffer

The berm

- Visual buffer
- Noise reduction
- Separate uses
- Landscaping opportunities

Proper installation of new plants

- Tools:
  - Performance Guarantees
  - Maintenance Plan
  - Field Protection Measures

TYPICAL TREE WITH GRATE AT CURB

Historic Preservation Local Law

- Designation
  - District
  - Landmarks
- Review board
- Procedures
- Criteria for review:
  - Alterations
  - Demolitions

Architectural control

- Integrate with another review process?
  - Site Plan Review
  - Special Use Permit
- Separate review board?
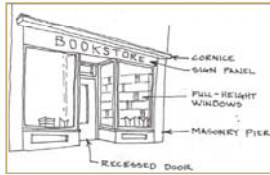- Criteria

Architectural control

- Typical review elements:
  - Building materials
  - Facade features
    - Projections or recesses
    - Pattern, size & proportion of windows & door openings
  - Roof
    - Pitch, shape & materials

Architectural control

Facade features

Franchise design

Franchise design

Franchise design

On-line resources

- Town of Newburgh (2007)
  - http://www.townofnewburgh.org/documents/town%20of%20newburgh%20design%20guidelines.pdf
- Town of Riverhead (2009)- Historic Preservation
  - http://www.riverheadli.com/HistoricPresDesignGuidelines.6.09.pdf
- Town of Berne- Hamlet of East Berne (2007)
  - http://www.cdtcmpo.org/linkage/materials/berne/final.pdf
- Town of Woodstock (2001)
  - http://www.woodstockny.org/content/Boards/View/4:field=documents;/content/Documents/File/51.pdf
- Town of Le Ray (2008)- Commercial Corridors
  - http://townofleray.org/Final%20Guidelines6_12_08.pdf

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