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APA CT

American Planning Association
Connecticut Chapter

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A Publication of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

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MAKING GREAT COMMUNITIES

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Tonnecticut Planning, our flagship publication, consistently provides timely insights on planning and the very best in professional practice from across the state. For this special edition, CCAPA is pleased to feature "Start with Planning," including an overall summary of work accomplished to date, a series of policy papers on key topics and the next steps to continue the initiative.

CCAPA advances good planning through technical assistance, public awareness, and collaboration. These values not only "help planners plan," but also lend critical insights as Connecticut navigates the 2018 election cycle in the midst of a slow overall economic recovery and ongoing fiscal issues at many levels of government. These challenges have understandably dominated statewide conversation, often leaving little room to emphasize the incredibly powerful stories of ingenuity and innovation happening across Connecticut. We learned about these stories as part of the outreach for Start with Planning, which included small- and large-group conversations with planners and related professionals.

In one conversation, planners discussed growth in the advanced manufacturing sector and strategies to support that growth through business development and placemaking in Stratford. Another conversation highlighted the need to streamline land use permits related to coastal resiliency, which, in turn, would free up time for planners to also focus on the public infrastructure in vulnerable areas. At our annual awards luncheon earlier this year, we recognized the work of the Town of Windsor, which is not only one of the fastest growing communities in Connecticut, but also one of the most transparent. Thanks to digital improvements, Windsor has improved its development review process without compromising citizen participation.

As you will read in the following pages, the Start with Planning message is focused on our collective sense of place, preserving the authenticity of Connecticut as a core value. Our message also recognizes the need to accelerate our pace of progress in order to stay current with global socio-economic trends moving at a rapid speed. And we will need to continue to build up "Team Connecticut," a broad

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, cont'd

coalition of planning professionals tasked to carry out this work in the years to come.

One immediate next step is the launch of CCAPA's Community Planning Assistance Team. Modeled after APA's national program, CCAPA members are volunteering their time to assist you with a planning- or land use-related challenge in your community. Learn more at this exciting new service at www.ccapa.org.

Pulling this initiative together requires extraordinary efforts on the part of our members. Special thanks to our members who are already participating in Start with Planning, including the chapter's Executive Board, Government Relations Committee, and Start with Planning working groups. Working group co-chairs were responsible for background research, review of member feedback, and development of the policy papers now posted on our website. Their efforts reinforced the value of the planning process by synthesizing many data points before developing key insights and recommendations.



"The Art of Planning" is a great opportunity for our members to collaborate and celebrate important work in the field.

The working groups relied heavily on the excellent research already completed by organizations across Connecticut in the topic areas of economic development, transportation, resiliency, conservation, and affordable housing. Guidance documents coming out of the University of Connecticut's CIRCA program, the Connecticut Main Street Center, and the Partnership for Strong Communities are particularly noteworthy and we are reinforcing many of those recommendations herein. The Regional Plan Association's Fourth Regional Plan provides important guidance on economic growth, transportation and climate change. RPA also documents the crisis in social equity, stating "...in 2017, the region ranked as one of the least affordable and most highly segregated regions in the country by both race/ethnicity and income." Without a renewed commitment to social equity, there is simply nowhere to start on a path forward.

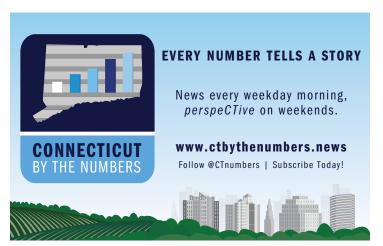
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CONNECTICUT PLANNING

is published quarterly by the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association. Contributions are encouraged. Submissions must include the name and contact information of the contributor. Material may be edited to conform to space or style requirements. Please address submissions to Executive Editor Rebecca Augur, AICP (contact information below).

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, cont'd

True to our professional standard, we relied both on empirical data from numerous sources and on insights gained through conversation. For example, at a joint exercise with the Connecticut Bar Association's Planning and Zoning Section, Connecticut planners led facilitated discussions on ways to improve customer service to applicants and residents through technology and common practices. At SNEAPA in Providence, our members generated over 50 ideas based on insights gained in our own communities and wisdom from the hundreds of years of experience in the room.

Our Government Relations Committee Co-Chairs Amanda Kennedy and John Guszkowski merit special recognition for their contributions to Start with Planning in addition to their already-demanding responsibilities on the legislative side. Even in a short session, the Government Relations Committee reviews a significant number of bills and represents CCAPA on matters pertaining to both regulation and policy. Thank you, Amanda and John, for your efforts on behalf of Connecticut's planners!

Enjoy this very special edition of the magazine. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming CCAPA program or event, including this June at our annual Hot Topics program, and at the Southern New England Planning Conference to be held October 18-19, 2018 in Hartford.

If you would like more information on the many ways CCAPA can assist you in professional practice, please do not hesitate to call me at (203) 946-2867 or email at mpiscite@newhavenct.gov.

— Michael Piscitelli, AICP in



FROM THE EDITOR

We hope you enjoy learning more about "Start with Planning," an important initiative that the Chapter has undertaken. Moreover, we hope it will prompt you to get involved in whatever capacity, especially as we inch closer to elections this year. One way you might get



involved is simply by sharing all or parts of this issue with elected officials in your own communities. Spread the word on the important planning issues facing our state and how planners play a part in finding the solutions.

Finally, if you've been missing Connecticut Planning, then this message is for you! Please let me know of a topic that interests you, a great article you read recently, or if you have any interest in contributing to the magazine. I can't guarantee it will result in an issue; however, I can guarantee my gratitude for your ideas and contributions in any form! Happy planning!

— Rebecca Augur in



Start with Planning

To Move Connecticut Forward, Take the Long Road

pepresenting nearly 400 planners and related professionals, CCAPA is a trusted resource In for the planning profession across Connecticut. Our membership is deeply passionate about the art and craft of planning. Members have an important role in the physical change of our common home, primarily through land use but also in planning for economic development, transportation, social equity and a host of other disciplines. True to the hallmarks of the American Planning Association and the American Institute of Certified Planners, CCAPA members pay special attention to the interrelatedness of decisions and the long-range consequences of our current actions.

As noted in various sections of this edition of the magazine and in the deeper dive sections found at www.ccapa.org, the next two years are vitally important for Connecticut. The November election will usher in a new governor and new statewide policy. Even in our own ranks and in society at large, the demographic shift is seismic in reach. Nationally, according to the Pew Research Center, nearly 10,000 Baby Boomers are retiring every day, a staggering transition of institutional memory. Across the state, transitions are already occurring as new leaders emerge to replace those who have served for decades.

CCAPA's Start with Planning initiative begins with the premise that Connecticut is ramping up for a dramatic relaunch over the next two years. The relaunch will seek to address the state's balance sheet (and in turn the financial

condition of many municipalities), as well as the need for a stronger and more robust economic recovery.² Sound planning is essential to this recovery.

CCAPA forecasts that this change will happen in waves, beginning with immediate actions and new policy directions followed by structural and systemic change. The latter activities will take longer but could lead to more lasting and transformative benefits. All of this work should take place as part of a long-haul strategy so that short-term efforts are built on a solid foundation for future growth.

As a non-partisan participant in state policy, CCAPA has developed policy papers to help guide planning and decision-making which are critical to any growth plan. Economic development, transportation, conservation, housing and

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CCAPA's Start with Planning initiative begins with the premise that Connecticut is ramping up to re-energize over the next two years.

Special Thanks

In addition to members recognized elsewhere in this special edition, CCAPA wishes to acknowledge our contributing researchers and authors for Start with Planning: Rebecca Augur, Jamie Bratt, Glenn Chalder, Jon Curtis, Jeanne Davies, Maryellen Edwards, Stephen Gazillo, Emmeline Harrigan, Emily Hultquist Jennifer Kaufman, Ken Livingston, Craig Minor, Christine Nelson, Donald Poland, Kate Rattan, Christopher Smith, Jason Vincent, Susan Westa, and Erin Wilson, as well as all of the attendees of the various related events over the past six months. Thank you, members!

CCAPA has identified three prevailing themes to guide the dialogue: core value, pace of work, and teamwork. For each theme, CCAPA believes there is an important role for planning and planning professionals.

Start with Planning, cont'd

resiliency were selected among the many areas of need as they are all central to unlocking fiscal and economic recovery. In addition to the summaries herein, policy papers, references and precedent work are posted at www.ccapa.org. These sections are living resources, and CCAPA expects to advance the knowledge base and continue the dialogue over the course of the next two years.

CCAPA has identified three prevailing themes to guide the dialogue: **core value**, **pace of work**, **and teamwork**. For each theme, CCAPA believes there is an important role for planning and planning professionals.

Core Value

The Connecticut landscape is rich in variety and authenticity. The fundamental sense of place found in cities, small towns, mill villages and rural communities is likewise a part of our core value. Last year, CCAPA recognized the landmark redevelopment of 99 West Main Street in



99 West Main Street New Britain a recently renovated mixed-use building in New Britain's Downtown TOD area.

New Britain. This project demonstrates the value of collaboration to carry out an architecturally-significant transit-oriented development.³ In our policy paper on economy, we reinforce the value of place-based infrastructure as a pathway to growth. Connecticut's rich cultural authenticity, dedication to craftsmanship, and overall pride in place should be at the forefront of an economic strategy built

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Start with Planning, cont'd

on localization and our attachment to the Connecticut brand.

As a practical matter, adherence to core value will also require serious tactical intervention. By way of example, land-banking, regulatory controls, and flexible financing vehicles allow place-oriented projects to take hold over time. In some communities and with some property owners, there can be an immediate rush to tear down an historic building rather than land bank it for future use. This was the case in Downtown New Haven during the mid-1990s when the historic Liberty Building was slated to be demolished. The Liberty is now renovated and there are 60 market-rate apartments and a bar/restaurant on the first floor and an open patio to Temple Square, and New Haven is now one of the hottest rental markets in the country.4 Each "and" in the Liberty story demonstrates that sound advance planning will lead to far greater economic impact down the road.

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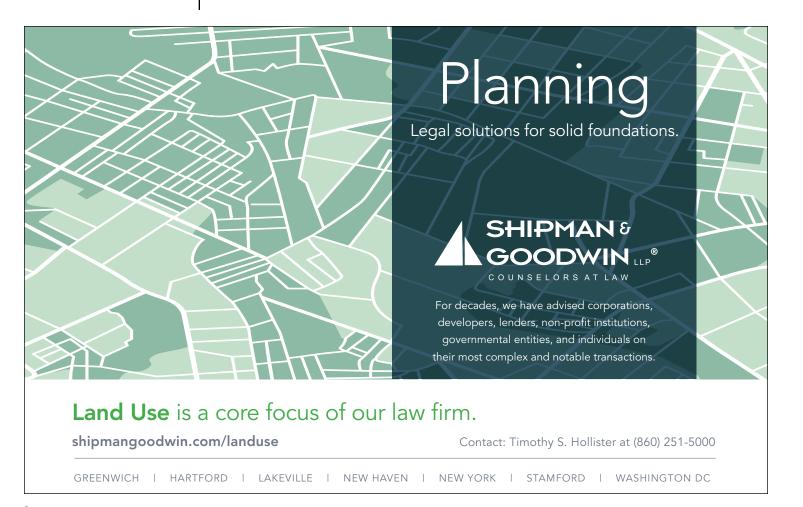
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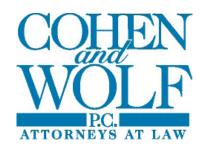




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Start with Planning, cont'd

Our core value likewise recognizes that place-based economic strategy is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Rather, through local planning and statewide policy, CCAPA is calling for renewed focus on conservation and land stewardship. Connecticut's landscape and its sense of place are irrevocably tied to its preserved lands. State parks and beaches, town greens, dairy farms and orchards, and networks of trails and forests all define Connecticut's quality of life and place. In every corner of the state, conservation advocacy groups and land trusts work to preserve Connecticut's heritage and natural resources. While the state has outlined a big picture goal of preserving 21% of Connecticut's land area as open space, individual efforts and state programs lack coordination and the necessary integration with other public policies.⁵ This needs to change.

Pace of Work

Connecticut's multi-faceted and time-consuming land use permitting process, at both local and state levels, is slowing progress and siphoning away precious time that could otherwise be used for long-term and strategic planning, and improvements to service delivery. Planners are faced with these challenges every day, particularly when staff is reduced and regulatory requirements increase. CCA-PA members and many key stakeholders recognize the frustration associated with processes that we have collectively put together over the years that no longer improve outcomes but actively stymie worthy projects.

At a working session with the Connecticut Bar Association's Planning and Zoning Section, planners and attorneys discussed at length the potential efficiencies which would accelerate this process. These efficiencies are both technological in nature, such as online permitting, as well as policy-driven. Even in the land of steady habits, regulatory protocols must be based on sound underlying theory. Take for one example, the site plan review process. Theoretically, site plan review is

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Start with Planning, cont'd

driven by the need to certify a site development plan meets the standards of the zoning ordinance. As a practical matter, the public discourse (at times through public hearing) deviates significantly from that underlying basis for the site plan review in the first place. Professional review of the site development, coupled with a zoning code that reflects the comprehensive plan, could accelerate the permitting process without compromising the core value of our communities.

The new form-based zoning code for the City of Hartford is one recent example of the transformative impact that is possible through focus on long-term change. The new code is a forward-thinking regulatory approach that encourages transit-oriented development and economic growth while still enhancing Hartford's unique sense of place. Hartford prioritized this work through sound and consistent decision-making. In doing so, the city will open up resources for longterm planning.

State policy makers have for years de-

with no progress toward implementation or developing a revenue alternative to shore up transportation funds. We need to make a decision and then quickly pivot attention to smart-city technology and evolving into the transportation system of the next generation.⁶

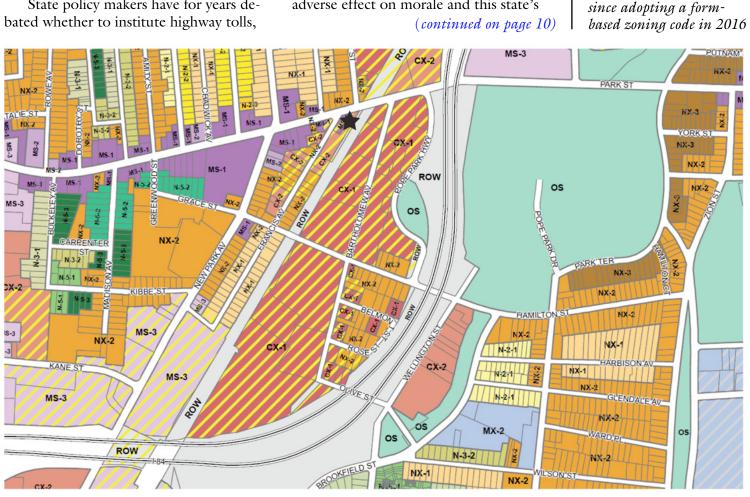
As a general point, the policy papers recognize the significant and transformative work now underway in Connecticut, such as the expansion of commuter rail and the associated efforts to advance TOD and job growth in transit-rich communities. Likewise, efforts across Connecticut are leading to the elimination of barriers to fair housing and to the reduction of chronic homelessness. In focusing on the pace of work, these efforts will be more impactful and in keeping with the overall goal of moving Connecticut forward.

Team Connecticut

Through the Start with Planning process, CCAPA strives to better understand the dimensions of Connecticut's challenges. The process reinforces that the current state of affairs is having a collective adverse effect on morale and this state's

Stay current with CCAPA happenings! Bookmark our online events page at ww.ccapa.org/events-calenda so you don't miss out!

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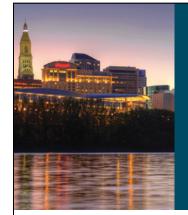
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Start with Planning, cont'd

spirit of ingenuity. Fiscal and economic issues dominate the airspace, attenuating the incredible gains in certain economic sectors as well as in housing, conservation and

Pushing Connecticut fully into a growth mode will require a team effort, starting from the ground up with citizens, elected officials and the technical professionals

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The Start with Planning Process

Over the course of the past six months, CCAPA has initiated conversations with our members, peer organizations, and political leaders to better understand the various perspectives that will likely take center stage during Connecticut's upcoming elections. In lending our voice to this important statewide dialogue, CCAPA first used a traditional planning process and organized teams to research current practice in resiliency, economic development, transportation, conservation and housing. There is an extensive amount of work being done across Connecticut, including work by our own members. Rather than initiate new primary research, the work teams instead synthesized existing material and then developed insights on the current setting and potential next steps for Connecticut, all from a planner's point of view. These insights were shared with the membership via email and in person at the SNEAPA chapter meeting in October, 2017. Final work products were developed earlier this year, taking the form of a presentation document for stakeholder conversations, policy papers for each of the focus areas and this special edition of the magazine. All told, CCAPA reached nearly 500 people through the process with all of the Start with Planning backup material now posted on our website at www.ccapa.org.



SNEAPA Chapter meeting discussion of the Start with Planning initiative.

Start with Planning, cont'd

at all levels of governance and advocacy. This includes our peer professional organizations in civil engineering, economic development, affordable housing, architecture and landscape architecture. CCAPA and its members have a role to play in this process. Key interventions and recommendations contained herein are based entirely on member insight and professional skill. As professional planners, CCAPA members are well-practiced in community engagement and are some of state's best facilitators. This will be one of many important roles for CCA-PA members to play on team Connecticut, recognizing that better and more efficient development coupled with social equity and preservation of core values, is a truly a way forward that starts with planning.

Endnotes

- ¹ The demographic shift in CCAPA's membership stood out of a 2017 survey prepared by CCAPA's Member Services Committee which reported that over half the survey respondents were over age 50. The national trend in retirements is quantified by the Pew Research Center in this often-cited 2010 article: www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/12/ 20/baby-boomers-approach-65-glumly/.
- ² Connecticut's slow economic recovery is well-documented. The policy paper on economic development cites the 2016 economic diagnostic prepared for the Fairfield County Business Council traced Connecticut's economic performance back to 1980. Since then, the national GDP increased 147% while the Connecticut GDP increased 126%. Since the Great Recession of 2008, the data shows a widening gap between national and state economic performance.
- ³ The West Main Street project also highlights the work of the Connecticut Main Street Center and the technical assistance often required to both save a distinctive structure and build up a downtown with complementary land uses for economic activity of a whole greater than individual parts.
- ⁴ There are now over 80,000 jobs in New Haven in part due to the growth of Yale University and Yale-New Haven Hospital and in part due to a quality of life strategy that started with historic preservation and quality of place projects such as the Liberty. With a 2% rental vacancy rate, there are over 1,300 units in the residential pipeline in New Haven. Similar market-rate rental resurgence is happening in Hartford, and of course there is a longstanding growth trend in Stamford.
- ⁵ Now is an ideal time to both support open space conservation and the agricultural economy as there are now over 6,000 farms in Connecticut; this 22% increase between 2007-2015 was the highest in New England during that period according to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture.
- ⁶ In addition to state-of-good-repair maintenance and important pivots to bike/pedestrian friendly communities, transportation officials must also ready the state for autonomous vehicles and smart technologies. While none of the first ten USDOT pilot projects will be based in Connecticut, state policy makers have initiated efforts in various cities in keeping with this national movement. See www.transportation.gov/AV for more details on the national pilot

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Roger Kemp's background and professional skills are highlighted on his website. Dr. Kemp was a city manager in politically, economically, socially, and ethnically diverse communities, on both coasts of the United States

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Building Blocks for Success

Community Planning Assistance Teams

Consistent with APA's national program for community involvement, CCA-PA has launched a new program that offers volunteer professional planning assistance for communities throughout Connecticut. The program is intended to partner professional planners with residents and community stakeholders in an effort to enhance community involvement and education while working to address specific local planning needs, goals or concerns. The following briefly describes the Community Planning Assistance Team ("CPAT") program, how you can participate, and how we can work together to create a partnership.

CCAPA provides leadership in planning, land use and development in order to build strong communities and improve the quality of life in Connecticut. Our



membership includes professional planners, from across the state, with expertise in various specialties such as economic development, land use, transportation, urban design, environmental, parks and recreation, historic preservation, and many other areas.

At SNEAPA and throughout the year, CCAPA has been enlisting volunteers who would then form a team with the specific expertise needed to address your community's planning needs, goals or concerns. The team will assist in the process by directly engaging with the community and various stakeholders, providing technical assistance, and developing specific findings, strategies and recommendations.

To be a program volunteer, simply fill out the form and include your specific interest(s) and areas of expertise. To request a CPAT in your community, fill out the request form and include more specific information on the problem statement, stakeholders who are involved to date along with goals and objectives for the project. Here are some key points about the CPAT process to help you get started:

- Identify the Community Sponsor. An organization (Board of Selectmen, Town Council, Planning Commission, Business and Economic Development Committee, etc.) is identified as the lead sponsor for the CPAT. The sponsor completes the CPAT request form, which includes the problem statement.
- Convene Kick-Off Meeting with **CPAT Team.** The CPAT volunteers will meet with you to discuss the preliminary problem statement, the sponsor's obligations, and plan the community workshop.
- Schedule the Workshop. Once the date is picked, the sponsor will reserve the work space, arrange for catering and supplies and most importantly — publicize the workshop in the community. The final agenda will be based on the community and the problem, a general outline of activities

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Building Blocks for Success, cont'd

may include group brainstorming, walking and/or driving tours, small group work on solutions, and a public open house.

• Complete Deliverables. CCAPA will produce a final report on the event and submit it to the sponsor approximately one month after the workshop. CPAT volunteers will also be available for on-call assistance as well.

For more information on the CPAT program, email the Chapter at info@ccapa.org.

Regional Plan Association, CT Section: 4th Regional Plan

In July 2017, CCAPA and the Regional Plan Association convened a roundtable discussion about the 4th Regional Plan, which was released later in the year. The meeting was an important opportunity to talk about the plan in a peer-to-peer setting with Melissa Kaplan-Macey, AICP, PP, who heads RPA's Connecticut office and is also a CCAPA member. The discussion focused on key areas of the plan, including resiliency and land use development, as well as public policy as it relates to plan implementation regionally and at the local level. Some of the key insights:

• Municipal planners in the coastal communities are spending a disproportionate amount of time on single-family resiliencyrelated land use applications. After Sandy,

we are still seeing market demand and new construction in the coastal hazard zones. Even when homes are built to a more resilient standard, the time and effort takes away from needed planning for public infrastructure and other resiliency projects.

- The 4th Regional Plan highlights the challenge of "acute stressors" that will adversely affect communities across Connecticut in future years. These include more frequent street flooding, coastal erosion and the effects of a warmer climate.
- In spite of budget challenges and slowgrowth indicators, Connecticut is a leader in digital/new media, advanced manufacturing and the knowledge economy.
- Transit-oriented development is a prevailing public policy goal. However, local opposition remains in many communities and planners still have work to do in order to demystify the concept.
- Affordable housing is clearly articulated as a need in the 4th Regional Plan, but are we doing enough strategically to enable new development in compact, transit-rich settings?

These and other insights, as well as the final 4th Regional Plan in general, informed many of CCAPA's Start with Planning policy papers. Special thanks to Lynn Haig, AICP and the City of Bridgeport's Planning Department for hosting the event. (continued on page 14)

engaging in roundtable Regional Plan

The discussion

focused on key

and land use

areas of the plan,

development, as

well as public policy

as it relates to plan

implementation

regionally and at

the local level.

including resiliency

CCAPA members discussion of the RPA's 4th





Building Blocks for Success, cont'd

Connecticut Bar Association, Planning and Zoning Section: New Approaches to Land Use Regulatory Systems

As part of APA's Community Planning Month activities, CCAPA joined the Connecticut Bar Association's Planning and Zoning Section at its October 2017 meeting. Following dinner, CCAPA members facilitated a workshop discussion at each table on governance-related topics looking for new approaches to land use regulatory systems. With municipalities of various size and makeup, each with multiple land use commissions and boards, land use regulation in Connecticut is locally-driven and integral to responsible growth and development. However, what have we learned in recent years about process improvement and efficiency? Are we adapting well to new technologies and digital platforms? What is working in one municipality that might make sense elsewhere? Each table explored ways to use innovation and technology to improve efficiency; to make the permitting process; to build in more meaningful input from regional agencies or councils of government; and to brainstorm possible improvements concerning land use permitting process throughout the state. Some of the key insights:

- An electronic application form, with searchable fields, is increasingly common at the municipal level. However, there may be little in common from municipality to municipality. A more standard application form would open up efficiencies for legal notices, searchable records and general consistency of process.
- There could be standardized regulatory definitions. For example, each community has its own way of measuring building height. If communities could settle on a consistent method to measure height, that would assist any number of technical professionals, including architects and

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Building Blocks for Success, cont'd

civil engineers with the preparation of plan sheets and drawings.

• With no way to search land use applications, land use attorneys often spend extraordinary amounts of time simply researching precedents, case law and other land-use related history.

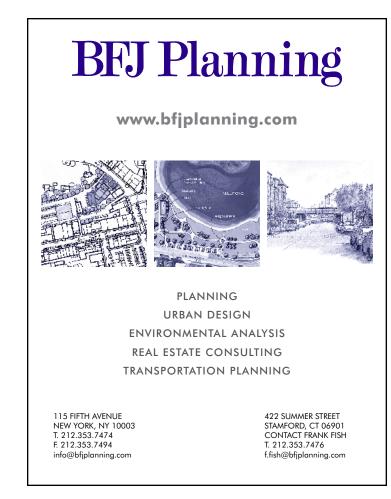
These and other ideas generated out of the workshop will be further reviewed and discussed with Bar Association members in the hope of pursuing legislative and/or administrative implementation measures with the support of both organizations. As a Start with Planning exercise, the workshop is another timely reminder of the need to accelerate our pace and work as a team to move Connecticut forward.

Special thanks to our CCAPA facilitators, Chris Smith, Esq., Patrice Carson, AICP, Deanna Rhodes, AICP, Craig Minor, AICP and Jeremy Ginsberg, AICP for leading the table discussions.



CCAPA leading CBA members in discussion on new approaches to land use regulatory systems.





The Traffic Engineer

KWH ENTERPRISE, LLC KERMIT HUA, PE, PTOE (203) 807-5482

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POLICY PAPER

Recent storms

have awakened

need to focus on

climate change

seas and to plan

future.

the state's natural

hazard vulnerability,

impacts, and rising

for a more resilient

Connecticut to the

Planning for Resiliency

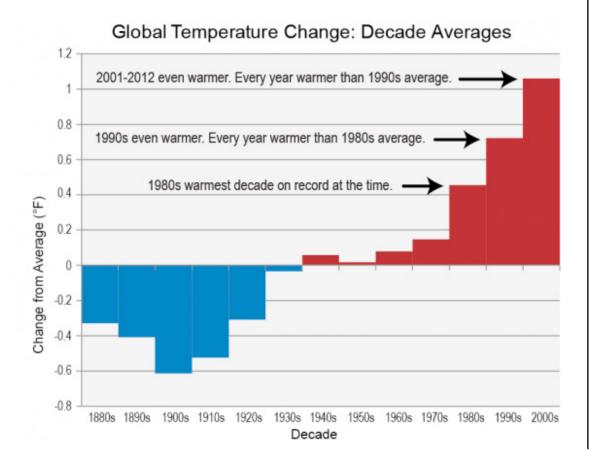
ccording to the EPA, eight of the top 10 warmest years on record since 1901 for the contiguous 48 states have occurred since 1998, and 2012 and 2015 were the two warmest vears on record. Recent storms have further awakened Connecticut to the need to focus on the state's natural hazard vulnerability, climate change impacts, and rising seas and to plan for a more resilient future. CIRCA forecasts 50 cm of sea level rise by 2050 and recommends municipalities use this future inundation height for regulatory and planning purposes in high risk flood areas. Communities in turn can be most effective in responding to climate change through carbon reduction strategies, resiliency plans, and community education. CCAPA recommends a regional approach to disaster and mitigation planning (replacing the current town-by-town model) together with the following key actions:

- Prioritize Resiliency Investment to Protect Public Infrastructure;
- Include Habitat Protection and Regional Fisheries in Resiliency Planning;
- Protect Tax Revenue by Promoting Expanded Private Investment out of Future Flood Risk Areas; and
- Buffer High Risk Areas with Green Spaces and Greenway Amenities.

CCAPA members have assisted in the development of sound planning and conceptual designs for coastal and inland resiliency. With the urgent need at hand, CCAPA member planners will continue to develop sound planning and conceptual designs as well as to advocate for systemic funding, regulatory alignment and the administrative capacity necessary to carry-out specific projects, particularly for public infrastructure.

(continued on page 17)

Planning for Resiliency cont'd



Global warming is having a profound effect on Connecticut's climate. In terms of coastal impacts alone, UConn's CIRCA program forecasts 50 centimeters or 1 foot 8 inches of sea level rise by 2050 and recommends that municipalities use this future inundation height for regulatory and planning purposes in high risk flood areas.



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POLICY PAPER

Population

projections from

the Connecticut

State Data Center

for at least 50,000

additional homes

by 2025

indicate a need

Housing: Remove Disincentives and Plan Smarter

ne in four Connecticut households currently earns less than \$50,000 and lives in unaffordable housing: 336,000 households struggling to meet basic needs. Since 2000, the share of renters in Connecticut paying more than they can afford has climbed from 36% of renters to almost half (48%). What can Connecticut do to support the development of more housing that meets current and future needs?

Population projections from the Connecticut State Data Center indicate a need for at least 50,000 additional homes by 2025, a 5% increase in inventory from 2015. In particular, Connecticut will need housing that appeals to Baby Boomers looking to downsize from larger single-family homes as well as young households with limited budgets. Both populations will be looking for the same housing characteristics: affordable, low-maintenance housing in or near vibrant, walkable communities.

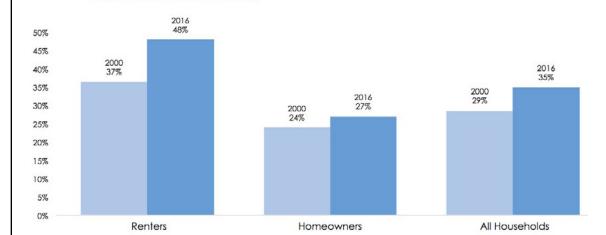
Housing affordability challenges have skyrocketed [Share of households paying more than

30% of income towards housing]

The current statutory framework places the burden on municipalities to plan and zone for a diverse housing stock. The state facilitates this process through best practices and advocacy; however, we remain well short of expected housing production. The 8-30g Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Act is a blunt tool: municipalities in strong real estate markets that can support internally-subsidized 8-30g developments lose their ability to regulate local land uses, while 8-30g does nothing to incentivize housing in weaker market areas. Moreover, Connecticut's reliance on local property tax complicates decision-making due to the cost of providing municipal services for any new residents. To move forward and unlock the pipeline of housing demand, CCAPA recommends the following action steps:

• Develop a more informed and connected framework for planning and implementing housing policy based on sound data and consistency of plans.

(continued on page 19)



Even with significant affordable housing progress statewide, projections from the Connecticut State Data Center indicate a need for at least 50,000 additional homes by 2025, a 5% increase from 2015. Approximately 48% of Connecticut's renters pay more than 30% of their household income on housing, the 8th highest percentage in the nation.



Housing cont'd

- Move away from one-size-fits-all housing plans and target housing investments where demand is highest and residents will have access to employment and educational opportunities.
- Harness existing federal and state funds to promote the production of diverse housing options and meet the federal obligation to affirmatively further fair housing established by the Fair Housing Act of 1968.
- As part of overall state fiscal reform, aggressively pursue actions that will reduce municipal reliance on property tax for funding local education costs in order to relieve pressure on local mill rates.

The current statutory framework places the burden on municipalities to plan and zone for a diverse housing stock.



The American Planning Association's ethics code directs its planners to serve the public interest with compassion for all people and to consider the long-range consequences of actions. We recognize the pivotal role that access to safe, affordable, appropriate housing plays in the lives of Connecticut residents and families. We are committed to developing a housing policy framework that better meets the needs of Connecticut's residents now and in the future.

POLICY PAPER

Economy: Expand Focus to Place and Talent

ven with strong headwinds, Connecticut has a fundamentally sound economic base in sectors ranging from advanced manufacturing and health care to financial services and even the arts. The out-migration of a younger workforce and negative perceptions of Connecticut's economy affect our ability to attract and retain young talent along with creative industries. In addition, deferred capital investment in recent years has left Connecticut with an aging infrastructure

which, in turn, impacts our competitiveness in the global marketplace.

While job creation and opportunities are significant drivers for one to live and do business, CCAPA believes that the quality of place is just as critically important.

Therefore, in addition to longstanding recommendations in support of job creation, urban reinvestment, brownfield remediation and sector-based economic

(continued on page 20)

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In addition to longstanding recommendations in support of job creation, urban reinvestment, brownfield remediation and sector-based economic strategy, **CCAPA** believes that a "value of place" strategy will further leverage economic development and support our major companies as they compete globally for top-tier talent.





Economy cont'd

Job Growth Trends

New York City

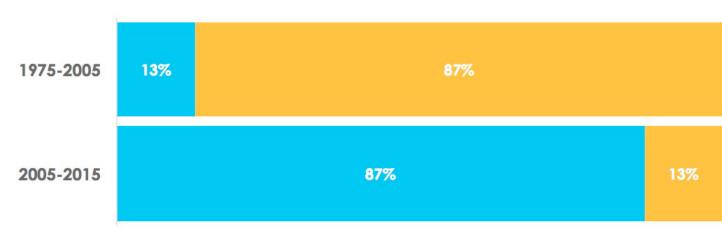
strategy, CCAPA believes that a "value of place" strategy will further leverage economic development and support our major companies as they compete globally for top-tier talent. These strategic actions which, taken together, will build on the strong quality of place in Connecticut and connect residents to work in higher-tech, knowledge-focused industries:

• Invest in "place-based" infrastructure, including investments that enhance design, improve daily function, protect our heritage, and increase amenities within Connecticut's village centers and urban downtowns.

- Strengthen brand attachment to highlight Connecticut's local craft and a quality of place, where creative work leads to success in business.
- Understand and adapt to the needs of the talent workforce, through community, professional and social networks.

Connecticut's economy is globally significant and the very inspiration for our spirit of innovation. To further support business growth and, in turn, the economic turnaround of the state, CCAPA members will continue their work in these three areas of focus and strive for meaningful impact in their home communities.

Rest of Region



The Regional Plan Association of New York estimates new job growth is increasingly concentrating in New York City, reversing a 30-year trend. POLICY PAPER

Land Conservation and Agricultural Viability: Fundamental Assets for Connecticut's Future

onnecticut's landscape, its character, and its sense of place are irrevocably tied to its preserved lands. State parks and beaches, town greens, dairy farms and orchards, and networks of trails and forests all define Connecticut's quality of life and place. In every corner of the state, conservation advocacy groups and land trust work to preserve Connecticut's heritage and natural resources.

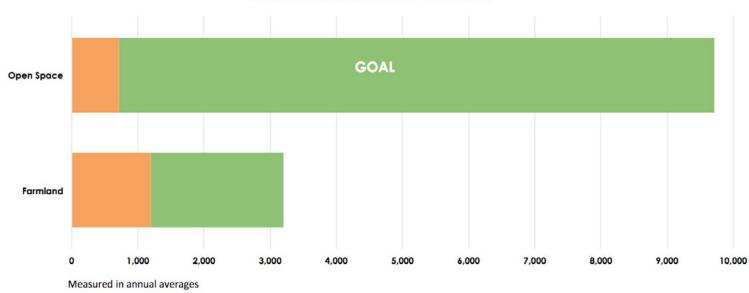
While the State has established ambitious goals for the permanent protection and of both open spaces and farmland soils, progress on these goals is difficult to track and monitor. Hundreds of organizations and entities, including municipalities, land trusts, nonprofits, farmers, water companies, and several state agencies have all been working for decades in a relatively uncoordinated way. There is no unified mapping protocols and no permanent, central repository of this information. As



a result, progress has been slower than targeted, and opportunities for coordinated, leveraged planning for conservation are lost.

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Land Conservation Goals vs. Actual



Connecticut's rate of farmland and open space conservation is far behind established goals. The chart above compares the annual average number of acres preserved relative to average annual targets needed to meet long-term goals.

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committed to the planning and coordination of conservation efforts and the long-term viability of our local agriculture

Connected and integrated multimodal expansion will be key to unlocking future economic growth and improvements in quality of life for residents.



Land Conservation cont'd

CCAPA's strong recommendation is for the State of Connecticut to take the lead in establishing a single, consistent digital mapping protocol and a central repository for the baseline parcel, open space, and preserved farmland information across Connecticut. For a relatively modest outlay, the State could provide strong leadership and coordination of our numerous conservation efforts and provide opportunities for high-level guidance on partnerships for future preservation.

Our secondary recommendation is to maintain and increase the funding streams and land preservation programs already in place in the state.

CCAPA is deeply committed to the planning and coordination of conservation efforts and the long-term viability of our local agriculture. We will work with partners and stakeholders to assist in the development of mapping and data standards, the promotion of coordination efforts, and the planning for Connecticut's conservation future.

POLICY PAPER

Planning for the Transportation System of Tomorrow

n integrated, comprehensive transportation system knits together towns and cities, urban and rural areas, supports economic vitality and is respectful of ecosystems, cultures and communities. While state-of-good repair is the critical baseline, connected and integrated multi-modal expansion will be key to unlocking future economic growth and improvements in quality of life for residents. This future will require thoughtful and strategic planning, heavily reliant on new technologies.

Structural change to our transportation funding model will be a prerequisite first step to system reinvestment. And, transportation funding, perhaps more than other planning realms is and will be performance-based. Federal mandates from MAP-21 require our federal program dollars to be based upon uniform performance measures and regional cooperation through the MPO system. Transportation planners work in multi-disciplinary teams to integrate economic, social and cultural needs into the projects that we undertake. Some key insights moving forward include:

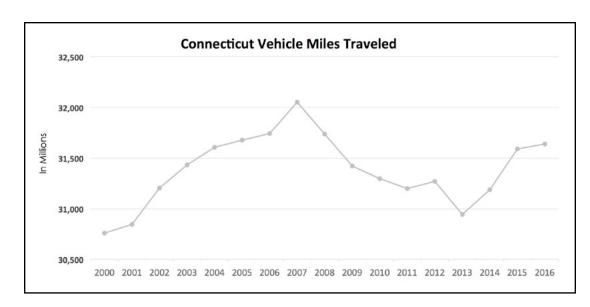
• The expectation, particularly among millennials, is for a seamless system of



connected mobility options. The non-reliance on a car in urban areas is an immediate challenge, as Connecticut catches up with emerging technologies and the sharing economy. To this point, autonomous vehicles are now on the road in other parts of the country. Early pilot projects in Connecticut will need to be well-resourced and prioritized even with other pressing issues at hand.

• Public bus and rail schedules are based on traditional commuting patterns. The resulting "headway cliff" is a challenge for workers with more flexible working schedules. The disconnect in schedules, along with a disconnected fare system, coupled with low density development, is

(continued on page 23)



Transportation cont'd

a cost- and operational-burden for transit users, operators and private employers.

• Potential seismic changes in service, such as the NEC Future/Amtrak high-speed rail, Metro-North access to Penn Station, and commuter rail to Rhode Island and Massachusetts are potential "game-changing" system improvements

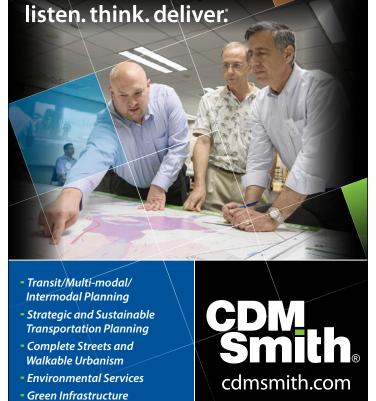
worthy of intense focus and early planning.

Planners also must continue to be at the forefront to make livable places through planning for intermodal systems, growing the bicycle infrastructure exponentially and improving safety. In doing so, our transportation system will be less carbon-dependent and more responsive to user needs.



Vehicle miles traveled in Connecticut are again on the rise at a time when we need to more dramatically pivot to transit and bike/ped commutation.





East Hartford • New Haven

Engineering, Design and

Construction of Urban Systems

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Government Relations Committee Update

by Government Relations Co-Chairs John Guszkowski and Amanda Kennedy

2017 marked the second year that we tag-teamed to head up government relations activities for CCAPA. We were pleased that several bills we supported made it into law. Public Act 17-146 increased the size threshold of septic systems required to go to the state Department of Public Health for approval, thus simplifying the development of small multi-family housing developments in areas without sewer systems. We worked with Senator Cathy Osten and the Office of Legislative Research to develop bill language that would fast-track temporary housing that addresses medical needs through Public Act 17-155, which estab-

Bills this session are expected to introduce proposals to expand inclusionary zoning, to allow subsidized housing voucher holders greater choice in where to live, to review the impact of new regulations on the cost of producing housing, and to strengthen obligations of municipalities to plan and zone to meet local and regional housing needs.

lished a statewide default land use law that allows temporary health care structures per local setback and coverage requirements in single-family areas unless a municipality affirmatively opts out of the provision. Many municipalities have chosen to use their review of the Temporary Health Care housing law as an opportunity to review how their local regulations enable housing options for those needing care, such as mobile units, accessory dwelling units or inhouse accessory apartments. CCAPA also met several times with Planning and Development Co-Chair Representative Roland Lemar (D-New Haven) and legislative staff to develop proposals that support municipal revitalization activities. This work will continue into the current session.

CCAPA was invited to participate in a working group in September 2017 tasked with exploring proposals to expand access to affordable housing in Connecticut. Initiated and Chaired by Department of Housing Commissioner Evonne Klein and Representative Lemar, working group members with diverse interests have met at least monthly since then to debate ideas that could become legislation. Bills this session are expected to introduce proposals to expand inclusionary zoning, to allow subsidized housing voucher holders greater choice in where to live, to review the impact of new regulations on the cost of producing housing, and to strengthen obligations of municipalities to plan and zone to meet local and regional housing needs. While these proposals have already undergone multiple revisions based on working group

member contributions, they will face additional scrutiny as they advance through the legislative process.

This year's legislative season is a short session, somewhat overshadowed by an active gubernatorial race and continuing budget crises, but that doesn't mean that legislative activity has slowed down. Along with on-the-ground intelligence from our consultants at TCORS, we primarily rely on the input of our Government Relations Committee members to help us review bills and develop testimony, often with only one or two days' notice to prep for a hearing. If you are interested in participating in this Committee, we would welcome your help and input. Please let us know at govrel@ccapa.org.

Our work in 2018 also lays the groundwork for the full legislative session in 2019 along with a transition to a new administration. As planners, our primary objective under the AICP Code of Ethics is to "serve the public interest...with compassion for the welfare of all people." The development of Start with Planning will help our chapter define how we can best serve the public interest. Thank you to all CCAPA members who have contributed their time and expertise.

