

The Way it used to be



The Way it is Now



Americans sense that something is wrong with the places where we live and work... We hear this unhappiness expressed in phrases like ‘no sense of place’ and ‘the loss of community’. We drive up and down the gruesome, tragic suburban boulevards of commerce, and we’re overwhelmed at the fantastic, awesome, stupefying ugliness of absolutely everything in sight - the fry pits, the big box stores, the office units, the lube joints, the carpet warehouses, the parking lagoons, the jive plastic townhouse clusters, the uproar of signs, the highway itself clogged with cars – as though the whole thing had been designed by some diabolical force bent on making human beings miserable.”

James Kunstler, The Geography of Nowhere

- *We all react, consciously and unconsciously, to the places where we live and work, in ways we scarcely notice...our ordinary surroundings, built and natural alike, have an immediate and a continuing effect on the way we feel and act, and on our health and intelligence.*

– Tony Hiss in The Experience of Place

The Way It Can Be Again



- **What does Smart Growth advocate?**
- **Respect for historical patterns of growth**
- **Compact development form**
- **Reinvestment in urban areas**
- **Equitable distribution of affordable housing**
- **Preservation of agriculture and natural resources**
- **Multiple modes of transportation**
- **Construction of diverse, walkable neighborhoods**

Smart Growth Basics

- Consumption of land is growing faster than population (LA in 1970-90 grew 45% in population and 300% in size)
- NH fastest growing state in New England; rate of growth tied with California for 8th fastest in the US
- Fragmented government in New England is a challenge
- Costs: environmental degradation, loss of community, fiscal costs, poor quality of life, poor public health (obesity, diabetes)

“It ain’t ignorance that causes so much harm, as knowing so damn much that ain’t so!”

Frank Knight, Economist

Contexts for development

- **Infill**
- **Redevelopment (gray field or brown field)**
- **Incremental development at the edge**
- **Greenfield development - new towns and villages**
- **Greenfield development – subdivisions and office parks**

Smart Growth Basics

- Virtually every town in NH has a primary goal in the master plan to “preserve rural character”; in cities it is to “revitalize the downtown” but this is not reflected in the ordinances
- The only thing people hate more than sprawl is density!
- Traditional NH pattern of development is at odds with what we are doing now.
- “We cannot continue to believe that the landscape is sacred and the city profane. They must both be considered sacred” (Paul Murrain)

Characteristics of Sprawl

- Rigid separation of uses
- Separation of housing by type
- Commercial uses in strips and at interchanges
- Automobile is exclusive transportation mode
- Large scale roads and parking lots
- Wide dispersal of development
- Undifferentiated form of development
- Lack of attention paid to architecture
- Absence of civic spaces

Smart Growth Goals

- Foster a human scale of development
- Promote compact settlement pattern
- Direct development toward existing or designated growth areas and away from rural areas
- Promote a mix of uses - single family, multifamily, commercial, institutional, recreational
- Promote options for transportation other than the single occupancy vehicle

Images of Sprawl



Smart Growth Principles

- Protect downtowns from inappropriate changes!
- Protect older neighborhoods from inappropriate changes!
- Do not direct large scale multifamily to older neighborhoods. Maintain scale
- Keep the post office downtown
- Keep municipal activities downtown
- Open space design is far more effective than large lot zoning

Impacts of Sprawl

Disinvestment in central cities

Deterioration of towns and villages

Loss of agricultural lands

Environmental degradation

Loss of sense of place

Lack of beauty in built environment

Lack of housing opportunities

Segregation of people by race and income

Higher taxes

Diminution of social capital

Smart Growth Goals (cont'd.)

- Preserve the working landscape
- Protect natural resources
- Promote regional planning
- Push for more than engineering and utilitarian concerns. This will be a habitat for human beings to dwell in
- Create a culture that celebrates excellence in design

672:1 Declaration of Purpose. – The general court hereby finds and declares that:

I. Planning, zoning and related regulations have been and should continue to be the responsibility of municipal government;

II. Zoning, subdivision regulations and related regulations are a legislative tool that enables municipal government to meet more effectively the demands of evolving and growing communities;

III. Proper regulations enhance the public health, safety and general welfare and encourage the appropriate and wise use of land;

III-e. All citizens of the state benefit from a balanced supply of housing which is affordable to persons and families of low and moderate income. Establishment of housing which is decent, safe, sanitary and affordable to low and moderate income persons and families is in the best interests of each community and the state of New Hampshire, and serves a vital public need.

...

IV. The citizens of a municipality should be actively involved in directing the growth of their community;

What is planning?

- Use, management, development of land and related issues

Master Plan elements/chapters

- land use
- transportation
- public facilities (not programmatic issues)
- infrastructure
- recreation
- economic development
- community development

674:2 Master Plan; Purpose and Description.

—

I. The purpose of the master plan is to set down as clearly and practically as possible the best and most appropriate future development of the area under the jurisdiction of the planning board, to aid the board in designing ordinances that result in preserving and enhancing the unique quality of life and culture of New Hampshire, and to guide the board in the performance of its other duties in a manner that achieves the principles of smart growth, sound planning, and wise resource protection.

Land Use Boards

Planning Board

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Historic District Commission

Conservation Commission

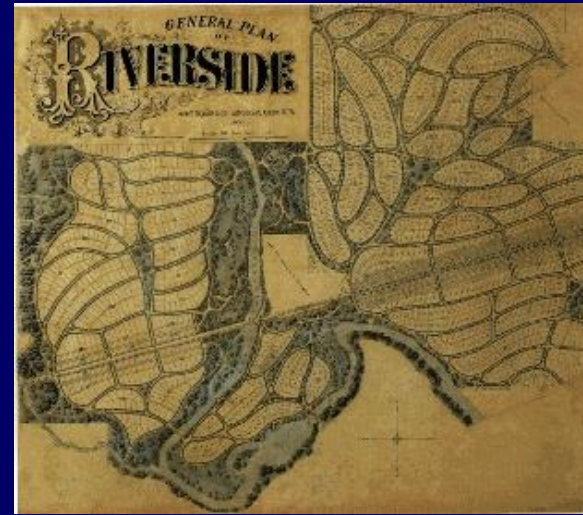
Street Walls



Quotes of Note (cont'd.)

- “In a city the street must be supreme. It is the first institution of the city. The street is a room by agreement, a community room, the walls of which belong to the donors, dedicated to the city for common use. Its ceiling is the sky.” (Louis Kahn)

Network of Streets



Walking

Some comments from 3rd graders lobbying the Maryland State legislature to make walking the official state exercise.

“Walking is good because it doesn’t pollute the population,” wrote Victor Bonilla

“It gives weak people exercise and gets people strong and very healthy, because if people did not have exercise they will be humongous and very truly fat,” wrote Dakari Abraham.

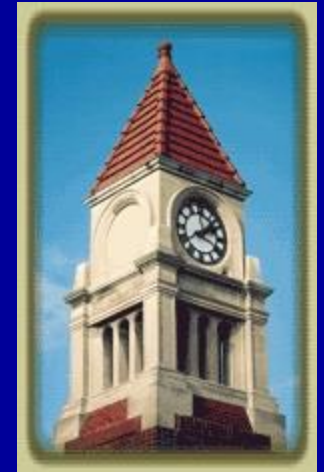
Walking

“Some people walk to talk to each other. Some people go walking to the store and buy ice cream,” wrote Dennis Navarrate

“If you have a dog, you could take it for a walk and then people would like to pet it,” wrote Jenice Rubio.

“You can walk with friends or by yourself. Just put one foot in front of the other and you’ll get the hang of it,” wrote Emma Gorin.

Focal Points



TND vs. CSD

Traditional Neighborhood Development

Distinct center and edge

Interconnected street network with short blocks

Pedestrian oriented and human scale

A mix of uses

A mix of housing types

Moderate/high density

Diversity

Vitality

Buildings oriented to the street

Narrow local streets, wider "boulevards"

Large shade trees close to street

On street parallel or diagonal parking

Multi-modal including bikes and transit

Concern for architecture, civic design, and beauty

Public realm

Community

Neighborhood parks, greens, squares

Conservation of open space

Conventional Suburban Development

No particular form or pattern

Cul de sacs and collector roads

Oriented to ease of movement for automobile

Separation of uses

Separation of housing types

Low density

Homogeneity

Placidity

Buildings turning away from the street

Uniformly wide streets

No trees near street for fear of liability

Off street parking lots fronting street

Oriented strictly for the automobile

Concern with engineering, utility, and cost cutting

Private realm

Isolation

Large private lots

Large private lots

Issues to review:

- traffic
- circulation
- parking: amount, location, handicap
- architectural design
- signage
- landscaping
- drainage
- utilities
- lighting
- site details: curbing, extent of paving

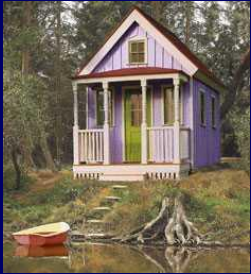
Parks



Not So Traditional Architecture



Housing



“Asphalt is the last crop you’ll grow on the land.”
Bill Gay, Colorado Rancher

Downtown Revitalization (cont'd.)

- Parking on street and at the rear
- Fight vigorously against parking lots fronting the street!
- Mandate two way traffic
- Two lanes of traffic maximum
- Eschew access management!
- Plant street trees only if they will fit in
- Protect historic buildings
- Establish tax relief under RSA 79E



Environmental Characteristics Zoning

- RSA 674:21 allows “environmental characteristics zoning”
- Typically include wetlands, floodplain, aquifer protection, steep slope regulations
- May also include stormwater management, ridgeline, wildlife habitat, drinking water, shoreland

**“Asphalt is the last crop you’ll grow on
the land.”**

Bill Gay, Colorado Rancher

Benefits of Street Trees

- Provide shade
- Reduce heat
- Improve air quality
- Mitigate pollution
- Provide moisture
- Reduce energy consumption
- Enhance property values
- Provide beauty
- Provide habitat
- Prevent erosion
- Obscure unattractive development
- The planting strip:
 - physically protects the pedestrian
 - breaks up expanse of pavement

Landscaping



Hannaford



Wal-Mart



McDonald's



Northeast Credit Union



**Frisbie Parking Lot
Conference Center**



**Frisbie Parking Lot
Whitehall Road**

Transportation

The physical organization of the region should be supported by a framework of transportation alternatives. Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems should maximize access and mobility throughout the region while reducing dependence upon the automobile.

Charter of the New Urbanism

Downtown Projects



Conroy Building



China Palace



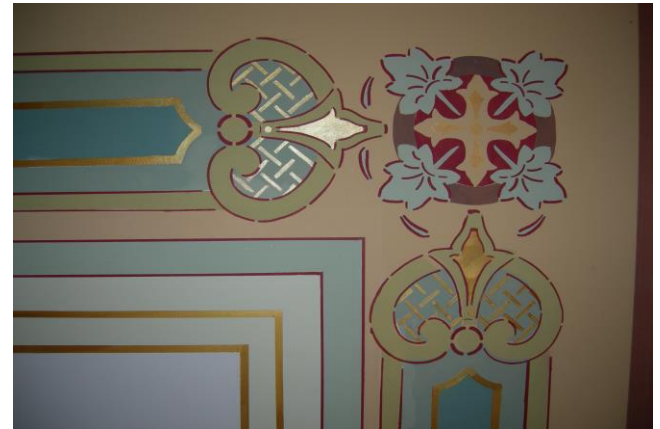
Edgerly's



Roseland Manor, Gonic



Lortie & Carignan



Downtown

Build to the sidewalk

Place parking on street and at the rear

Build wide sidewalks

Stipulate multi-story buildings

Mandate two way traffic

Encourage commercial uses – preferably retail – on the first floor

Plant street trees only if they will fit in

Protect historic buildings

Everyone is Welcome



Downtown Revitalization

- Multi-story buildings
- Commercial uses – preferably retail – on the first floor
- Residential and office uses above
- Moderate to high density
- Build to the sidewalk
- Wide sidewalks

Architectural Principles

- Buildings relate to the street
- Parallel or perpendicular to the street
- Multiple stories
- Windows in front
- Shutters should be properly sized
- Pitched roofs not flat roofs (except on multistory buildings downtown)

Signage



Architecture



Home Depot



Hannaford



Wal-Mart

Architecture



Pizza Hut



Ocean Bank



Raspberries & Quiznos



Harley - Davidson



Frisbie - Skyhaven

McDonald's







Rochester HDC





Enhancing the Review Process

- Be strong on design and flexible on process
- Educate the Planning Board about design principles
- Find legal ways to work with unduly restrictive RSA's
- Be positive and confident that you will get a good project
- Celebrate enlightened developers

Enhancing the Review Process

(cont'd.)

- Form a partnership with developers
- On large projects, encourage the Planning Board to appoint a committee to work with the applicant
- “Negotiation” is good!
- Engage neighbors if they participate constructively
- Empower your staff and treat them like gold!

Historic District Ordinance

(cont'd.)

- New construction
- Demolition
- Do not review rear façades, interiors, landscaping, site layout, peripheral elements
- Can include site elements like signage and fencing
- Contributing vs. noncontributing structures
- Can use Secretary of the Interior's Standard for basic guidelines



Historic District Ordinance

- Similar principles to general Architectural Regulations
- Set as an overlay zoning district
- Exterior architectural appearance visible from a public way:
 - Additions
 - Alterations

Elements Subject to Review

Approval is required for activity affecting the exterior architectural appearance of a building that is visible from a public way including:

- the construction of new buildings**
- additions to existing buildings**
- alterations to existing buildings**
- demolition of existing buildings or portions of existing buildings**
- relocation of a building into, out of, or within the District**

General Standards for Review

- **Minimize alteration of significant features**
- **Preserve distinct original features**
- **Later changes to the building may be worthy of preservation**
- **Repair rather than replace deteriorated architectural features, where feasible**
- **Contemporary designs are encouraged when harmonious with building and surroundings**
- **Less strict review for non-contributing buildings**

Have a Great Day!

