

## Training School Course Descriptions

### August 3<sup>rd</sup> - Canandaigua, NY:

- Don Young: **Introduction to Planning, Zoning and Land Use** - This presentation will offer a general overview of planning and zoning concepts, including: the comprehensive plan, zoning districts, rezoning, spot zoning, grandfathering, subdivisions, site plans, use and area variances, county approval, and enforcement.
- Diana Smith: **Public Engagement Tools** - This session is for both planners and elected officials and will discuss one of the most important elements of community planning: public engagement. Explore some unique tools that help achieve increased participation, even from those who normally won't speak up, and encourage organized communication with discussions that stay on track. When done well, the benefits of public engagement go beyond any single planning effort; they are long-lasting and impactful -- for everyone.
- Patricia Burke: **Site Plan Review** – This course is an overview of the statutory authority local governments have to review site plans. It will address the scope and content of a site plan and the role of the site plan in municipal review of development projects. A discussion of design and the reasons some approaches might be preferable to others is included in the course.
- Tom Robinson and Hanna Quigley: **DESIGNING FOR RESILIENCY** – Discussion of design strategies associated with resilient and sustainable design, highlighting multiple case studies.

### September 9<sup>th</sup> – Sand Lake, NY

- Mark Schachner: **Motions, Criteria and Decision-Making Guidelines** – Three most important words: FOLLOW THE PROCESS! This presentation focuses on identifying and applying proper criteria, making motions and deciding application and conducting Planning and Zoning meetings in the most effective, efficient and lawful manner possible.
- David O'Brien: **Recreational Marijuana Implications for Planning and Zoning in New York State** - This session will provide an overview of the provisions of the law that will impact planning and zoning decision making, highlight discretion communities have implementing the law, foreshadow the regulatory landscape and explore lessons learned from other states that have initiated recreational cannabis.
- Monica Ryan: **Short Term Rental Regulation** – Short-term rentals have been around for years, but the availability of online booking sites and the growth of local management companies has had dramatic effects on neighborhoods big and small across the state. A number of cities, towns, and villages in New York have come up with a variety of means to permit or restrict short-term rentals consistent with the character of respective communities. This session looks at the problems short-term rentals posed for several of those municipalities and summarizes the regulations with which they responded to the challenge.
- Michael N'dolo: **Community Tools for Addressing the Housing Crisis** - Communities across the country have recognized a growing housing crisis with many facets: affordable housing, workforce housing, the "missing middle" housing, substandard properties, lack of housing options, homelessness, housing insecurity, supportive housing, etc. Join us for a session on practical tools and case studies of how communities can address these issues head-on. We will examine the trends impacting housing, tools for you to gauge the scope of the problem in your

community, the spectrum of housing options to consider, and policies and programs that can be used to address the problems you are currently experiencing. We will walk through an example of the process of creating a housing strategy and two case studies of community-sponsored housing developments.

### **September 12<sup>th</sup> – Hyde Park, NY**

- Jennifer Gray: **SEQRA Basics** - The program will focus on fundamentals of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) including an overview of the step by step process set forth the regulations beginning with the classification of the Proposed Action and ending with the adoption of a Findings Statement. Discussion will include factors to consider when determining whether to issue a positive declaration or negative declaration, case studies from NYS case law, helpful resources and tools, and best practices for the administration of a board or agency's SEQRA obligations.
- Emily Svenson and Ingrid Haeckel: **Safeguarding water resources through local wetland and stream protections** - Water is one of our most precious resources. Protecting wetlands and streams is vital to clean water, but gaps in federal and state regulations leave these resources vulnerable to degradation and loss. This session will cover: the diversity and importance of wetlands and streams in the Hudson Valley; status and changes to federal and state wetlands regulations; and ways local government can provide more comprehensive protection for these key water resources.
- David O'Brien: **Recreational Marijuana Implications for Planning and Zoning in New York State** - This session will provide an overview of the provisions of the law that will impact planning and zoning decision making, highlight discretion communities have implementing the law, foreshadow the regulatory landscape and explore lessons learned from other states that have initiated recreational cannabis.
- Max Stach and Jonathan T. Lockman: **Three common avoidable SEQR pitfalls** - SEQR is a complex law with requirements subject to wide interpretation. This study, which is intended for those with a working knowledge of SEQR, will discuss three common pitfalls: not doing a thorough enough review, avoiding an EIS when one is prescribed, and delegating lead agency responsibilities. This session will draw from the experience of agencies accused of not properly conducting SEQR in order to help attendees avoid pitfalls and make thorough, defensible decisions. This course will include:
  - 1. A discussion of the "hard look" requirement under SEQR, what does it mean, what do courts review, and what are industry-standard practices for technical studies.
  - 2. A discussion of when to require an EIS and when an "expanded EAF process" is sufficient, and how the EAF process does not meet the standards inherent to an EIS process.
  - 3. A discussion of lead agency responsibilities and the fine line between consultation and delegation of responsibilities.

### **October 5<sup>th</sup> – Utica, NY**

- Matt Horn and Emma Falkenstein: **Experimenting with Urbanism** – Testing Concepts on the Ground to Address Downtown Challenges: As downtowns grow and change, communities are forced to review streetscape and other public facing infrastructure to ensure pedestrian safety

and a lively backdrop for downtown visitors and customers. MRB Group will share live examples from the City of Utica and other communities, who have successfully experimented with small scale changes that, in many cases, evolved to permanent downtown streetscape improvements.

- Katie Hodgdon: **Tiny House, Big Questions: Regulating Tiny Homes in Your Jurisdiction** - while tiny houses have been around for years, recent trends in downsizing and “going off of the grid,” as well as a lack of affordable housing, has caused the popularity of tiny houses to skyrocket. With increased popularity comes many questions at the local level, including how to regulate these “structures” that don’t quite fit the definition of a typical structure, recreational vehicle or mobile home. This course will provide an overview of the current laws governing tiny homes in New York, as well as the regulatory options available at the local level. Questions are encouraged!
- John Steinmetz: **AREAWIDE LAND USE PLANNING** – Case study of Utica BOA and how to leverage various state funding sources to achieve community objectives.
- Dominique Albano: **Case Law Update** - This session will examine recent NYS court cases concerning land use and planning involving challenges to the issuance or denial of special use permits, site plan approvals, and use and area variances as well as rezoning and comprehensive plan amendments. These cases will be examined and discussed with the goal of determining what useful information they provide to land use and planning boards to assist the boards in future decision making. These cases often involve challenges based on alleged procedural deficiencies; for example, failure to refer an application to the county planning board or department and failure to follow the procedures set forth for public hearings and notices, as well as in connection with the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

### **October 12<sup>th</sup> – Lake Placid, NY**

- Mark Schachner: **Motions, Criteria and Decision-Making Guidelines** – Three most important words: FOLLOW THE PROCESS! This presentation focuses on identifying and applying proper criteria, making motions and deciding application and conducting Planning and Zoning meetings in the most effective, efficient and lawful manner possible.
- Liz Podowski King and Kimberly Baptiste: **RESILIENCY & ENGAGING COMMUNITY MEMBERS** – Community engagement and how it can help inform policy and decision-making specific to Resiliency Planning.
- Katie Hodgdon: **Tiny House, Big Questions: Regulating Tiny Homes in Your Jurisdiction** - while tiny houses have been around for years, recent trends in downsizing and “going off of the grid,” as well as a lack of affordable housing, has caused the popularity of tiny houses to skyrocket. With increased popularity comes many questions at the local level, including how to regulate these “structures” that don’t quite fit the definition of a typical structure, recreational vehicle or mobile home. This course will provide an overview of the current laws governing tiny homes in New York, as well as the regulatory options available at the local level. Questions are encouraged!
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