Smart Growth Takes
Smart Preservation
New Partners for Smart Growth, 2-3-12

Professor Tom Daniels,
University of Pennsylvania

Alex Hinds, Center for Sustainable Communities

Rick Pruetz, Lasting Value, Planners Press
- American Planning Association
Preservation & Smart Growth

Ahwahnee Principle 10

“Each community … should have a well defined edge, such as agricultural greenbelts or wildlife corridors, permanently protected from development.”

Promotes compact, walkable, efficient, center-focused communities
Principle 6: “Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas”

- **Direct benefits**
  - Economy
  - Natural resources
  - Quality of life
  - Infrastructure efficiency
  - Local food security
  - Hazard protection

- **Supports other principles:**
  “Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities”
Preservation helps “create communities of lasting value”

*Lasting Value* - 24 profiles

- Open space planning balances development planning
- Demonstrates planning as proven path to success
  - Motivation
  - Strategic thinking
  - Creativity
  - Collaboration
Planning Motivates

Open space benefits
- Economy - jobs & income
- Green infrastructure
- Efficient services

Stewardship
- Olmstead 1908 Plan
- “Priceless” … “Don’t spoil it”
- 1910: Lookout Mountain
- 1967: Olmstead Plan promotes first voter-approved open space sales tax

Now 10 programs
- 134,000+ acres
Plans track trends, sound alarms
Suffolk County, New York
• 1964 open space plan led to first farmland PDR program
• Now ten programs
• Pine Barrens Plan
2007, Long Island’s Last Stand
• “End game” - 2015
• $5.1 billion - 35,000 acres
• Suffolk County over $1 billion
Opportunity

Plans demonstrate wisdom of starting now

1883: Planner Horace Cleveland urged Minneapolis to buy parkland while affordable

The Grand Rounds Plan was also inspirational: “… the city itself a work of art…”

World class park system

Start with great plan and keep perfecting and implementing it
All communities use both temporary and permanent protection.

*Lasting Value* communities excel at permanent preservation.

Plans reveal the need for permanent preservation.

**Chester County, PA plan**

- Lost 5,000 acres / year
- Permanently preserve 5,000 acres annually
- Because regulations change
Montgomery County 1980 Farmland Preservation Plan: “Impermanence Syndrome”

- Temporary regulations cause uncertainty
- Reduced investment, stewardship and support services
- Rural parcels rezoned
- Worsens Syndrome Since Plan adoption
- No Reserve land rezoned
- Permanently preserved 72,000 acres
Strategy: How?

Berks County, PA: When others permanently preserve land
- Boosts confidence in future
- Motivates more preservation
- 67,000+ farmland acres

Lancaster County, PA
- 90,280 farm acres preserved
- Example set by leaders and neighbors
- “Preservation is contagious”
Strategy: What?

Planning process
- Recognize funding limitations
- Strategize priorities
- Meet multiple goals

Santa Fe County plan: protect land combining historic, environmental and cultural significance
- Transform “…physical spaces into meaningful places.”
- Cerrillos Hills Park: wildlife, trails, cultural and historic sites
Santa Cruz, CA combines

- Environmental/farmland
- Recreational opportunities
- Greenbelts reinforcing urban and rural service lines

City of Santa Cruz now

- Encircled by preserved farms, parks and public beaches
- Buffered by contiguous parks preserving Coastal Redwood ecosystem
Montgomery County, MD
1980 Plan: entire rural area

- Multiple benefits
  - Farm economy & jobs
  - Local food security
  - Environment
  - Character
  - Recreation

- Agricultural health requires preservation of integrated countryside

- TDR program assigns equal value to all 92,000 acres

- 72,000 acres preserved
Strategy: What?

Lexington-Fayette County, KY

1958 First UGB: APA National Planning Landmark

10-acre zoning accelerated sprawl

1999 Rural Area Plan documented

- Almost $1-billion farm/tourism industry
- 13,000 jobs
- Status: Horse Capital of the World
Lexington-Fayette County, KY

Plan: rural resources linked
- ESAs cross all land
- Rural development requires road widening
- Loss of trees and stone fences

Plan called for preservation of rural area as a whole
- Downzoning to 1/40 acres
- PDR program
- 50% preserved
Action: Innovation

Finite preservation dollars
Planning fosters creativity
Pioneer new tax strategies
Taxes insufficient
Most supplement tax-based tools with TDR

Montgomery County separates TDR and PDR

- TDR preserved 52,000 acres
- PDR preserved 20,000 acres
Combining Tools

King County, WA

Stretches PDR with TDR
- Tax revenues pay for easements
- TDR bank sells TDRs, creating ongoing revolving fund

Cities agree to accept TDRs from land under County jurisdiction
- 25+ miles away
- 142,000 acres preserved
Combining Tools

Palm Beach County, FL
$100-million bond bought 34,000 acres
County banked resulting 9,000 TDRs, creating ongoing funding source
Sale price legislated (now $50,000)
In one year, TDR sales yielded $10 million
Money is used exclusively for expansion and maintenance of Natural Area Preserve System
Collier County, FL: damaged by failed development

1983 Plan stressed conservation and cooperation

- Florida
  - Picayune Strand SF
  - Fakahatchee Strand SP

- Federal agencies
  - Big Cypress National Preserve
  - Florida Panther NWR
  - Rookery Bay Estuarine Reserve

- Collier County
  - Preserves
  - Three TDR programs

80% of County now preserved
Private Sector Collaboration

Chester County, PA assisted by private land trusts:
Brandywine holds easements on 43,000 acres in 3 counties

Open space plan: preserve
• 5,000 acres per year
• 1,500 acres by private non-profit

County open space grant programs
• Local municipalities
• Private conservancies

Public and private already preserved 20% of County
Conclusion

Preservation - key smart growth principle

• Economy, green infrastructure, local food security
• Compact, efficient communities

Planning process ideal for
• Motivation
• Strategy
• Implementation

More
• Lasting Value
• www.SmartPreservation.net