

**Planning Commission Meeting Agenda  
Wednesday, March 6, 2013  
Underhill Town Hall**

- 6:30 PM – Call to order
- Minutes
- Town Meeting follow-up
- Elect officers (?)
- 7:00 PM - Guest speaker: Regina Mahony, CCRPC  
Topic: The ECOS Plan and Enhanced Consultation
- Public Comment
- Other business
- 8:30 PM – Adjourn (tentative)

Note: this is a flexible agenda.

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Underhill Planning Commission Members

**FROM:** Regina Mahony, CCRPC

**DATE:** March 6, 2013

**RE:** The ECOS Plan and Enhanced Consultation

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I look forward to meeting with you on March 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss the following:

I'd like to give you a quick overview of the implementation sections of the ECOS Plan (specifically the strategies and actions in Chapter 3 & the Regional Plan components of Chapter 4); explain the schedule for approval of the Plan (including the first public hearing on March 20th); and describe how we are using the Plan to help inform our work plan for FY14 and the next 3 years or so. Excerpts from the ECOS Plan are **attached** and the full plan can be found here: [www.ecosproject.com/plan](http://www.ecosproject.com/plan).

In addition, we'd also like to get a sense of your implementation priorities, and if there are ways that we can help you with those priorities, including any trainings that you'd be interested in. Through this discussion we hope to better understand your community's needs, improve the effectiveness of municipal and regional plans, and planning programs by achieving the goals of Title 24, §4302. Unfortunately, I have not yet had the chance to review your Town Plan – but I will review the plan in time for the meeting.

Finally, information regarding two training sessions that we are going to host in April are **attached**.

I look forward to meeting with you.

## Chapter 3 – ECOS Plan Priorities & Implementation

### 3.0 Introduction

The State of Vermont is projected to add 60,000 people by 2030 (US Census Bureau - <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/projectionsagesex.html>). This is a very small part of the population growth in the entire US, but will be significant for Vermont. If the past is any indicator, Chittenden County will feel the pressure from a majority of that growth. Woods and Poole estimates that Chittenden County may see **50,000 new residents by 2035** (refer to the first figure in Section 2.1).

This Plan is not a plan to achieve growth, rather it is a plan that recognizes that there are many external factors over which we have little control locally. Our region continues to be an attractive place from environmental, economic, and social perspectives. Therefore, this Plan recognizes that we have growth pressures and existing concerns that we address in the strategies below. In large part, the strategies are focused on how we manage growth to accomplish positive outcomes.

The ECOS Project has attempted to be very broad and inclusive in both the process of developing this plan and in comprehensively addressing the major issues within the Chittenden County community. We have developed a vision, principles and goals in Chapter 1. We have analyzed our community in relation to these goals and identified areas of concern in Chapter 2. Having identified areas of concern we now need to focus on the strategies and actions that will have positive impact. This is the focus of Chapter 3. See the table on the next page that describes which strategies address the concerns identified in Chapter 2.

The process leading up to this plan identified public preferences for future growth. The vision; principles, and goals highlight these preferences, tying the public process to a guide for future decisions. Because of broad public participation, the planning process provides local leaders with a basis for action. Each goal could be implemented in a variety of ways to address local needs and challenges and to enhance the region as a whole. The Plan becomes reality as the public, private and non-profit organizations apply the principles in the incremental choices they make over time leading us to collective solutions.

This Chapter summarizes the scenario planning effort that establishes the basis for implementation and the recommended high priority strategies and actions for achieving the future that we all want.

## Excerpts from Chapters 3 & 4 of the 2/15/2013 First Public Hearing Draft ECOS Plan

Concerns for the Future (from the end of Chapter 2)	Strategies (in brief) to Address the County's Concerns							
	3.2.1 Improve Economy	3.3.2 Concentrate Development & Infrastructure	3.3.3 Improve Water Quality and Safety	3.3.4 Protect Working Landscapes and Habitats	3.3.5 Increase Health and Personal Safety	3.3.6 Educate our Residents	3.3.7 Improve Efficiency of Financing and Governance	3.3.8 Ensure Equity
1. Habitat Loss		✓		✓			✓	
2. Unstable Rivers			✓					
3. Non-point Source Water Pollution			✓	✓			✓	
4. Climate Change		✓	✓	✓	✓			
5. GHG Emissions		✓		✓				
6. Climate Health Impacts		✓		✓	✓			
7. Tobacco & Substance Abuse		✓			✓			
8. Obesity		✓			✓			
9. Emergency Preparedness			✓	✓	✓			
10. K-12 Proficiency						✓	✓	
11. Workforce Development	✓					✓		
12. Inclusion	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
13. Disparities	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
14. Aging		✓			✓			
15. Job Opportunities	✓							
16. Manufacturing Diversity	✓							
17. Industrial Sites	✓							
18. STEM	✓					✓		
19. Housing Cost	✓	✓					✓	
20. Working Lands Loss	✓	✓		✓				
21. Sprawl	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
22. Lack of Rental Housing		✓					✓	
23. Affordable Homes		✓					✓	
24. Maintenance of Existing Housing		✓						
25. Supportive Housing		✓						
26. Mode Share		✓			✓			
27. Road System & Funding		✓					✓	
28. Energy Conservation		✓					✓	
29. Renewables Siting		✓						
30. Water & Wastewater		✓	✓				✓	
31. Stormwater Investments		✓	✓				✓	

FIGURE 54 - CHART OF HOW STRATEGIES ADDRESS CONCERNS

### STRATEGIES – BEGINNING ON PAGE 83 IN CHAPTER 3

3.2.1 Improve and strengthen the economic systems of our region to increase opportunities for Vermont employers and employees.

## Excerpts from Chapters 3 & 4 of the 2/15/2013 First Public Hearing Draft ECOS Plan

3.2.2 Strive for 80% of new development in areas planned for growth, which amounts to 15% of our land area.

3.2.3 Improve the safety, water quality, and habitat of our rivers, streams, wetlands and lakes in each watershed.

3.2.4 Increase investment in and decrease subdivision of working lands and significant habitats, and support local food systems.

3.2.5 Increase opportunity for every person in our community to achieve optimal health and personal safety.

3.2.6 Equip our residents with the education and skills that they need to thrive.

3.2.7 Develop financing and governance systems to make the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars and reduce costs.

3.2.8 Ensure that the projects and actions in all ECOS strategies assess equity impacts, and that the design and development of programs are inclusive of all and engage underrepresented populations.

### PLANNING AREAS – FROM PAGE 115 IN CHAPTER 4

The ECOS Plan uses the Planning Areas concept to identify places that share similar existing features and future planning goals. The basis for the future planning goals is municipal zoning and they were supported by the scenario exercise described above. The Planning Areas aim to describe the appropriate type of future growth expected in each Planning Area. The Planning Areas also aim to illustrate a regional picture of future land use policies in the County necessary to promote a regional conversation about land use in Chittenden County municipalities. The six Planning Areas are depicted on the DRAFT Future Land Use Plan Map. They are Center, Metro, Suburban, Village, Rural, and Enterprise.

**Center Planning Areas** are intended to be regional centers or traditional downtowns that serve the County and beyond and contain mix of jobs, housing, and community facilities. Center Planning Areas also contain the County's highest density and largest-scale developments with residential densities generally ranging from 7 to more than 60 dwelling units per acre. Center Planning Areas may contain a state designated New Town Center or Growth Center. Development in downtown centers primarily happens through infill development of underutilized vacant land and adaptive reuse of older structures. Whereas, development in municipal Growth Centers occurs in targeted areas that will accommodate future anticipated growth. These land uses are locally planned and managed to coexist successfully with neighborhoods and natural areas. Places within Center Planning Areas are served by wastewater facilities, other infrastructure, and offer a variety of transportation options, including non-motorized modes

**Metro Planning Areas** are areas where local zoning authorizes places to accommodate jobs and housing in a compact development pattern that supports transit service and

## Excerpts from Chapters 3 & 4 of the 2/15/2013 First Public Hearing Draft ECOS Plan

encourages pedestrian activity and are within the sewer service area. Commercial land uses found in the Metro Planning Area are intended to serve the nearby residential area. Existing densities within Metro Planning Areas are typically higher than those found in the Suburban, Rural, Village, and Enterprise Planning Areas and generally range between 4 and 20 dwelling units per acre. Future development in the metro area should be encouraged to occur at the higher end of this range to ensure that there is adequate housing and jobs in these areas.

**Suburban Planning Areas** are areas near a Center Planning Area, Metro Planning Area, Village Planning Area, or Enterprise Planning Area where local zoning authorizes future development to occur at compatible scales, densities, and uses with existing development with general residential densities greater than 1 and less than 4.5 dwelling units per acre. Many parts of the Suburban Planning Area already have been developed, often in suburban styles of development and are predominantly within the sewer service area. Future development and redevelopment in this Planning Area should be publicly sewered, minimize adverse impacts on natural resources, and protect strategic open space.

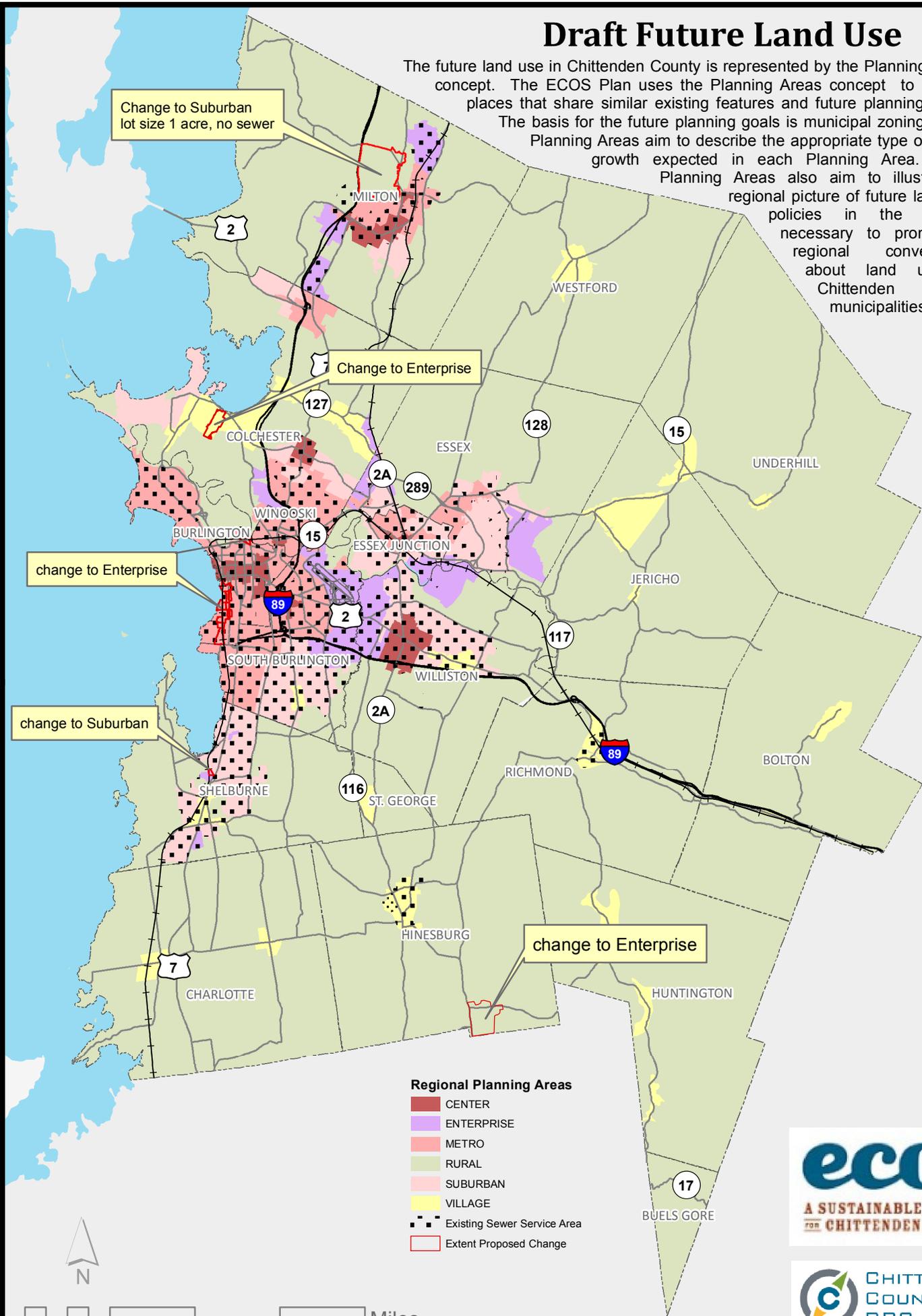
**Enterprise Planning Areas** are areas where local zoning authorizes a future concentration of employment uses that attract workers from the County and multi-county region. Development in these Planning Areas should have adequate wastewater capacity and access to transit or be near these services.

**Village Planning Areas** are areas where local zoning authorizes a variety of future residential and nonresidential development at densities and scales in keeping with the character of a Vermont village, generally between 2 and 9 dwelling units per acre if sewered and between 0.2 and 4 units per acre if not sewered. Village Planning Areas are compact areas of mixed-use activities that maintain the character of a Vermont village. This type of Planning Area is intended to serve its local surroundings as a place where people can live, work, shop and recreate.

**Rural Planning Areas** are areas where regional and town plans promote the preservation of Vermont's traditional working landscape and natural area features. The Rural Planning Area also provides for low density commercial, industrial, and residential development (generally 1 dwelling unit per acre or less) that is compatible with working lands and natural areas so that these places may continue to highlight the rural character and self-sustaining natural area systems. Development in the rural planning is typically outside the sewer service area.

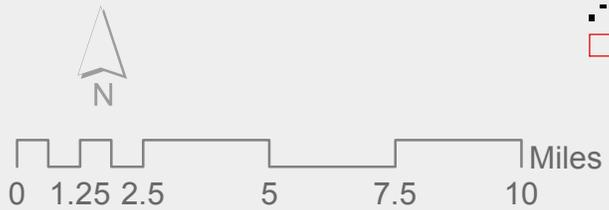
# Draft Future Land Use

The future land use in Chittenden County is represented by the Planning Areas concept. The ECOS Plan uses the Planning Areas concept to identify places that share similar existing features and future planning goals. The basis for the future planning goals is municipal zoning. The Planning Areas aim to describe the appropriate type of future growth expected in each Planning Area. The Planning Areas also aim to illustrate a regional picture of future land use policies in the County necessary to promote a regional conversation about land use in Chittenden County municipalities.



**Regional Planning Areas**

- CENTER
- ENTERPRISE
- METRO
- RURAL
- SUBURBAN
- VILLAGE
- Existing Sewer Service Area
- Extent Proposed Change



## American Planning Association Short Courses from the National Conference

These will be broadcast live at the CCRPC Offices on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> – The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Planning Commission and Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> – Zoning to Shape Urban Form.

If you would like to attend either of these two trainings (for the entire day or portions of them) please RSVP to [rmahony@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:rmahony@ccrpcvt.org).

### Short Course Webinar

## 21st Century Planning Commission

The live program will take place at the National Planning Conference on Saturday, April 13, 2013. Those attending the conference pay no additional fee for this program.

Webinar attendees may join the program as it is streamed live from the conference.

[Register online](#)

On April 13, 2013, planning commissions around the country will join in a training program delivered live from the National Planning Conference. Planners, lawyers, planning commissioners, and advocates will provide insight on the duties of the planning commission as well as the issues facing planning in the second decade of the 21st century.

Pay one registration fee and invite an unlimited number of planning commissioners, officials, and staff to attend this training. In addition to the live program, attendees have access to a special program website with copies of the PowerPoint slides, note sheets, concise reading materials, and discounts on training books.

In addition, registrants have the option of viewing a recording of the program on Friday or Saturday, June 14 or 15, 2013. For colleagues who cannot attend the live event or for those who prefer the recorded format, the optional viewing of the recording is a convenient addition.

## Schedule

### Overview of the Planning Process (S404)

9:00–10:15 a.m. CT **10:00 to 11:15am ET**

This is the first session in the short course for planning commissioners. This session will provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities, an introduction to the documents, tools, and procedures that you will use in carrying out your responsibilities as a planning commissioner.

Topics to be covered will include the following: 1. Roles and responsibilities of a planning commissioner • Long-range planning • Development review • Planning commission authority • Staff roles and responsibilities 2. Long-range planning – Imagining the Future • Why do we plan? • What is a comprehensive plan? • How a plan is prepared • Other types of plans • Planning commissioners role in plan-making 3. Development Review • How the process works • Role of the planning commission • Role of staff and other participants • Unraveling the development application 4. Tools and Building Blocks of Planning • Plans • Zoning ordinance • Subdivision regulations • Design standards 5. Engaging the Community • Role of the public in the planning process 6. Putting the Pieces Together

*Ben A. Herman, FAICP, Clarion Associates*  
*Anne McBride, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion*

### Defensible, Ethical Decision Making (S410)

10:30-11:45 a.m. CT **11:30 – 12:45pm ET**

This is the second session of the Planning Commissioner Short Course. Defensible and ethical decisions do not occur simply by how a commission votes on a particular application. Learn how to ensure you have a framework in place to guide your actions and decisions in a manner that leads to fair and reasonable actions. Examine how appropriate rules, regulations and procedures can shape your final decisions. Review the significance of meeting conduct, the creation of the record and the importance of findings of fact.

In this session you will gain knowledge from experienced planning commissioners and planners on key points that will assist commissioners write and/or vote on clear, fair and defensible decisions. This includes criteria that should be included in your zoning regulations and commissioner rules and regulations, consideration of appropriate conditions to impose in the decision and writing tips for the decision itself.

*Robert P. Mitchell, FAICP*  
*W. Shedrick Coleman, Chatham County-Savannah MPC*

### Break

11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m. CT **12:45pm to 2:00pm ET**

### How to Conduct a Planning Commission Meeting (S421)

1:00–2:15 p.m., CT **2:00pm to 3:15pm ET**

Learn the nuts and bolts of the decision-making process. This session will focus on how commissions and boards can better make fair, reasonable, and defensible decisions. It will involve discussion of decision making practices for planning and zoning commissions. It will cover the ways in which large and contentious crowds can be managed in a public hearing environment, the legal principles underlying decision making, how to encourage appropriate testimony, how to deliberate fairly, how to make motions, and tips for running meetings. The speaker will provide perspectives from both a planning and legal perspective. Practical application of legal due process will be emphasized.

*C. Gregory Dale, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion*

### **Legal Framework for the Planning Commission (S428)**

2:30–3:45 p.m., CT **3:30pm to 4:45pm ET**

The planning commission conducts its work within the framework of state law and specific federal statutes. It makes decisions within the context of local plans, codes and guidelines. Learn what the framework is and how it applies to your community and commission. You will also explore pertinent case law that has influenced the way planning is implemented. It is critical for all commissioners to understand their authority and responsibility and to know how the landscape of planning and land-use changes over time.

*David Therique*

### **Current Issues in Planning for Commissioners (S437)**

4:00–5:15 p.m., CT **5:00 to 6:15pm ET**

This final session in the short course webinar for planning commissions provides a series of short overviews of critical and current issues in planning. This is the ideal session for new planning commissioners as it introduces them to terms and concepts such as sustainability. The session begins with an overview on the economy and how it affects and will continue to affect community planning. Planning commissioners will become familiar with concepts that are in current use in planning, such as sustainability, smart growth, and health impact assessments. They will learn what they are, how they relate to planning, and the role the planning commission may play in furthering these programs.

*Robert W. Burchell, Rutgers University*

### **Short Course Webinar**

## **Zoning to Shape Urban Form**

The live program will take place at the National Planning Conference on Sunday, April 14, 2013. Those attending the conference pay no additional fee for this program.

Webinar attendees may join the program as it is streamed live from the conference.

[Register online](#)

On Sunday, April 14, 2013, APA will be streaming a live short course from the 2013 National Planning Conference for professionals who are unable to attend the live conference. Zoning to Shape Urban Form will feature five live conference sessions that cover how codes have shaped urban form over the years and the connection (and disconnection) between regulations imposed by zoning and the resulting pattern and form of cities.

The short course will also examine moderate applications of form based controls and big questions planners should ask (and answer) before drafting a form-based code. Zoning to Shape Urban Form will provide you with the form-based code knowledge you need for this expanding planning topic.

## **Schedule**

### **How Zoning Regulations Affect Urban Form (S446)**

9:45–11:00 a.m. CT **10:45 to 12:00pm ET**

This is the first of five "Zoning to Shape Urban Form" sessions. Learn how codes have shaped urban form over the years. Explore the connection (and disconnection) between regulations imposed by zoning and the resulting pattern and form of cities. And examine other municipal regulations that affect urban form, including subdivision regulations, street design standards, and fire codes.

**CM | 1.25**

*Emily Talen, FAICP, Arizona State University*

### **Questions to Answer Before Drafting a Code (S462)**

1:00–2:15 p.m. CT **2:00 to 3:15pm ET**

The second session in the short course examines moderate applications of form based controls. Topics like entire town vs. key parts; mandatory vs. optional; discretionary review vs. objective standards will be covered. Panelists discuss the big questions planners should ask (and answer) before drafting a form-based code. Will rezoning be required to use the new code? Find out asking the big questions before drafting a code will save you headaches later.

**CM | 1.25**

Donald L. Elliott, FAICP, Clarion Associates  
William M. Spikowski, FAICP, Spikowski Planning Associates

### **Form-Based Zoning 'Light' (S482)**

2:30–3:45 p.m., CT **3:30pm to 4:45pm ET**

The third session in the short course examines moderate applications of form based controls. Case studies illustrate strategic additions of form regulations to existing zoning codes and to codes undergoing major rewrites. These case studies derive from the new PAS Report Rules that Shape Urban Form and include the cities of Austin and Mooresville, plus the Denver Main Street.

**CM | 1.25**

Donald L. Elliott, FAICP, Clarion Associates  
Matthew Goebel, AICP, Clarion Associates

### **Form-Based Zoning 'Heavy' (S498)**

4:00–5:15 p.m., CT **5:00 to 6:15pm ET**

This is the fourth of five "Zoning to Shape Urban Form" sessions. Learn about more extensive applications of form-based controls. Presenters will describe four major methods of integrating form-based codes within land development regulations (mandatory integrated, mandatory freestanding, parallel/optional, and floating zone) and use case studies to illustrate those methods.

**CM | 1.25**

William M. Spikowski, FAICP, Spikowski Planning Associates  
Dan Parolek, Opticos Design, Inc.

### **Administering Form-Based Land Development Regulations (S509)**

5:30–6:45 p.m., CT **6:30 to 7:45pm ET**

This is the last of five "Zoning to Shape Urban Form" sessions. Now that your code is drafted, who is responsible for administering it? Planning staff or perhaps a consulting town architect? And what are the practical issues to consider in administering a code?

**CM | 1.25**

Tina Axelrad, City and County of Denver  
Richard Tucker, Arlington County Planning Division  
Luciana Gonzales, City of Miami Planning Dept