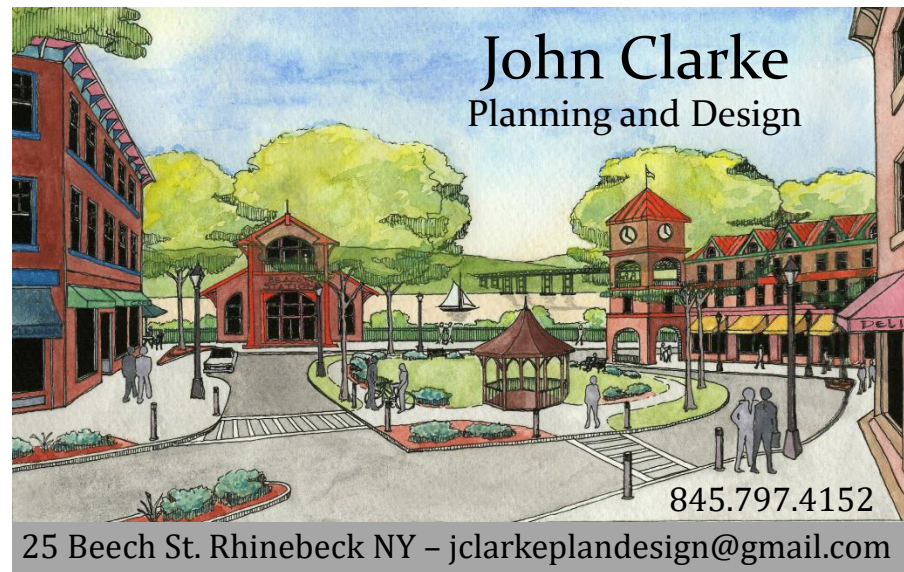


City of Beacon Planner Proposal May 4, 2016



Etha Grogan
City of Beacon City Hall
One Municipal Plaza, Suite One
Beacon, New York, 12508

**Re: Request for Proposals
Beacon City Planner**

Dear Ms. Grogan and members of the selection committee:

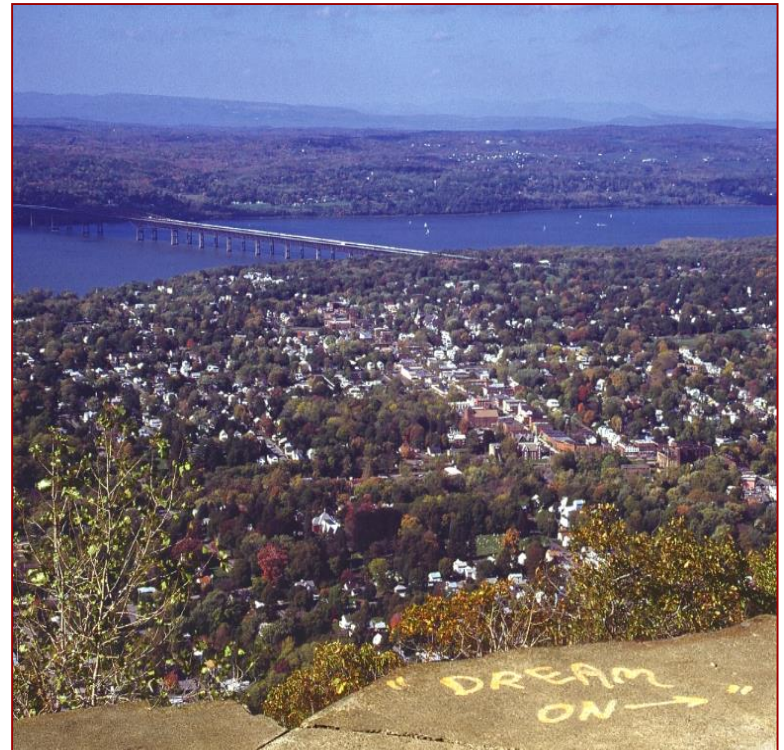
Beacon is one of my favorite places in the Hudson Valley. To me, it is an exemplary small town city set in a nest of natural beauty, wedged between the Highlands ridgeline and its Hudson River harbor and parkland frontage. Working for more than 20 years as Dutchess County's lead planner for the City, I have witnessed a remarkable transformation, as once empty buildings have been reclaimed for active uses and Main Street sidewalks have come alive with more storefront businesses, new residents, and outside visitors.

My work with the county gave me an extensive range of experience, allowing me to interact with many municipalities. However, I have also served as a Planning Board member for my home village for 15 years. I have found that working directly with applicants and other board members, from beginning concepts to the completion of projects, has been in many ways more important and satisfying. The local level is where final decisions are made and the responsibilities for community improvements are most evident.

So now having left county service, but not nearly ready to retire, to become Beacon's consulting planner would be an ideal position. The City can take advantage of my regional experience and contacts and I can concentrate on helping local board members make meaningful site design decisions. I am not looking to take on multiple community contracts, so I will be available for your City in any capacity that is needed. My goal is to help Beacon build on its recent success stories and make the City a better place to live.

Thanks for your consideration and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

John Clarke
Planning and Design

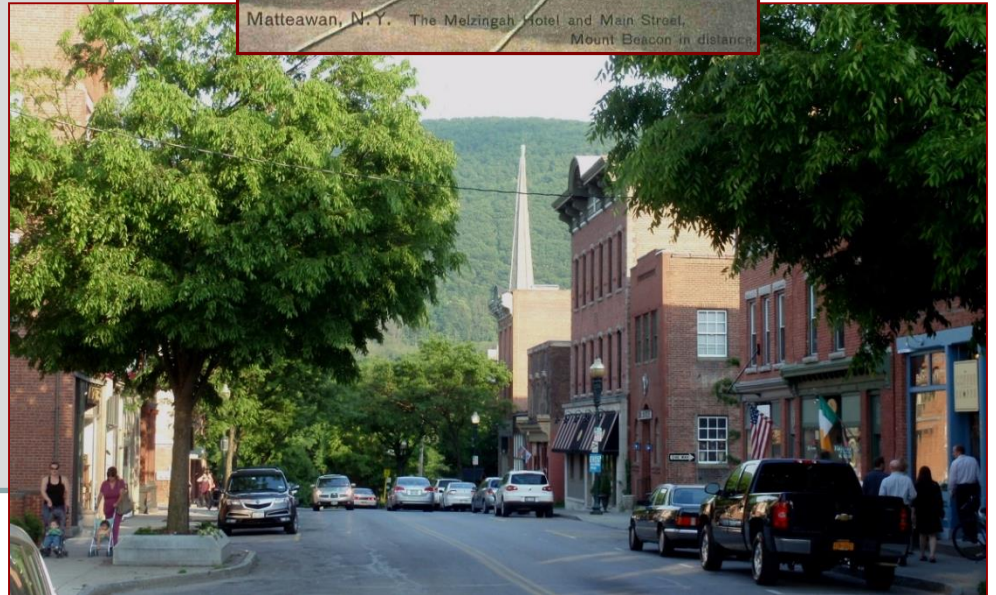
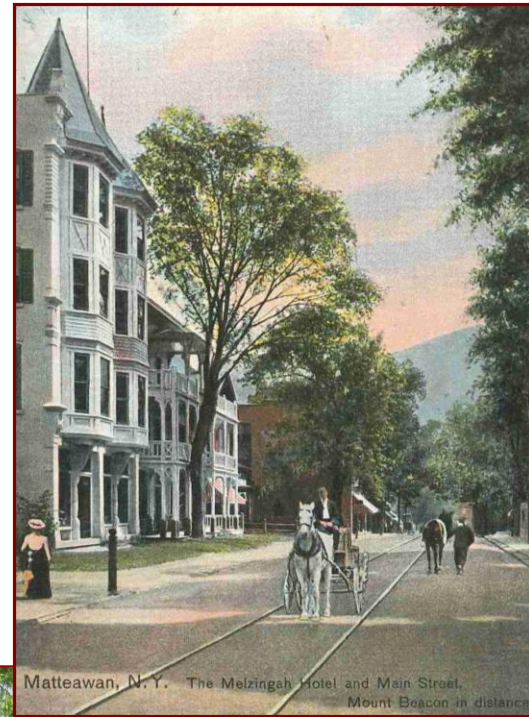


Beacon City Planner Proposal

John Clarke Planning and Design

Contents

Regional and Countywide Experience	1
Site Review and Design Experience	5
Planning Board Experience	7
Beacon-Related Experience	8
Resume	12
Work Program and Fees	14
References	14



Regional and Countywide Experience

To be fully competent and creative, a City Planner needs a broad regional perspective. That means understanding the geography, history, and ecological systems of the Hudson Valley, how to work with the county and neighboring communities, how to interact with state agencies, and how take advantage of available outside funding sources.

County Background

I have 30 years of experience with the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, working at all levels from regional planning initiatives and neighborhood-scale plans to site design alternatives. I was originally hired to coordinate a three-year study of Dutchess County's historic resources and to work on environmental reviews for municipalities all over the county as part of the federally-funded Community Development program.

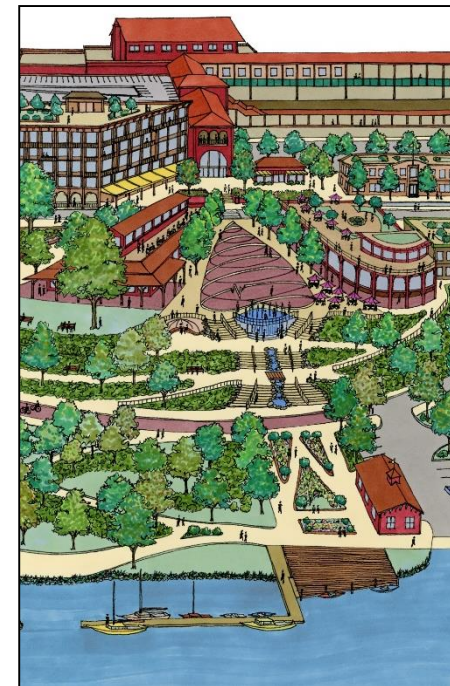
While still working full-time in the early 1990s, I attended night classes at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, receiving a Master of Science in Urban Design degree with the 1994 Department of Graduate Architecture Certificate of Excellence in Urban Design. With this distinctive training in urban design, I was assigned as the department's lead planner for the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie. In 1999 I was promoted from Senior Planner to Development and Design Coordinator, a unique civil service title in the region created to reflect my specialty design skills.

Over the years I have literally worked with and prepared plans for every city, town, village, and major hamlet in the county, including:

- Wrote Comprehensive Plans for the Village of Rhinebeck and the towns of Clinton, Dover, Pleasant Valley, and Poughkeepsie;
- Facilitated adoption of a new zoning law for the Town of Clinton and form-based code amendments for the City of Poughkeepsie Waterfront-Transit Oriented District and the Beacon Central Main Street and Linkage districts;
- Worked on or led multiple transportation planning projects for the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess County Transportation Council, such as pedestrian-oriented design plans for Rhinebeck, Hyde Park, Millerton, and Pine Plains;
- Directed major place-based plans, such as the City of Poughkeepsie Transportation Strategy, the LaGrange Town Center, and the Poughkeepsie Waterfront Redevelopment Strategy.

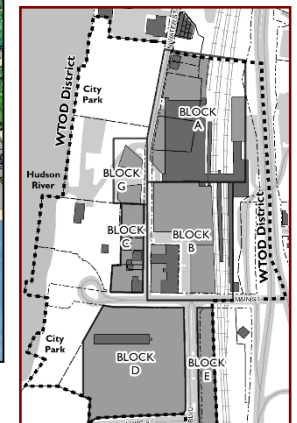


Worth Walking Plan for Rhinebeck Village reimagined the Post Office and Beekman Arms front yards as a unified village green, proposed a new infill building on the corner, and extended curbs to shorten crosswalks at the main intersections.



Poughkeepsie Waterfront Redevelopment Strategy

Sketch shows a new hotel, park plaza flanked by a public market and cafés, and a grand stairway on the path from the Railroad Station to the riverfront. The City also adopted a form-based code with specific standards for the Waterfront-TOD District.



Along with a wide variety of other assignments, my key role at the department was to interact with municipalities, local boards, and developers on specific design-related issues, from community streetscape plans to detailed site design alternatives. In more recent years with the department I supervised the Planning Section, including work programs, training, budgeting, and, most importantly, coordinating the county referral program. I reviewed all the major site plans, special permits, variance requests, and proposed zoning changes with the planning staff and helped to formulate the county recommendation letters. When appropriate, I would attach site plan sketches to illustrate design suggestions for the board and applicant on building configuration, parking lot layout, or supplemental landscaping.

Regional Activities

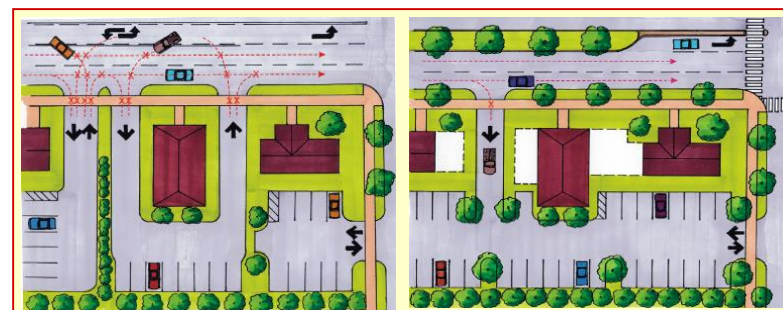
In the late 1990s, we were asked by the New York State Greenway Communities Council to prepare the first countywide Greenway plan, becoming a model for the Hudson River Valley region. I managed the project and was the principal author of *Greenway Connections*, *Greenway Compact Program and Guides for Dutchess County Communities*, which subsequently received a New York State Planning Federation award. I was in charge of Greenway coordination with the State, adjacent counties, and the 29 of 30 municipalities in Dutchess County that have voluntarily joined the Greenway Compact by cross-referencing *Greenway Connections* in their zoning and subdivision regulations.

Dutchess County's Greenway successes over the last 15 years include:

- Contributed to the protection of over 3,400 acres of priority greenspaces through the county's open space and farmland protection program;
- Built new regional trail systems, including the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, segments of the Hudson River Greenway Trail, Dutchess Rail Trail, and connections to the Walkway Over the Hudson;
- Created Quiet Cove Riverfront Park, a new park along the Hudson River;
- Encouraged a majority of Compact communities to undertake revisions to their comprehensive plans and zoning laws, consistent with the Greenway principles and guidelines; and
- Dutchess County communities have received almost \$2 million in Greenway-related grants.



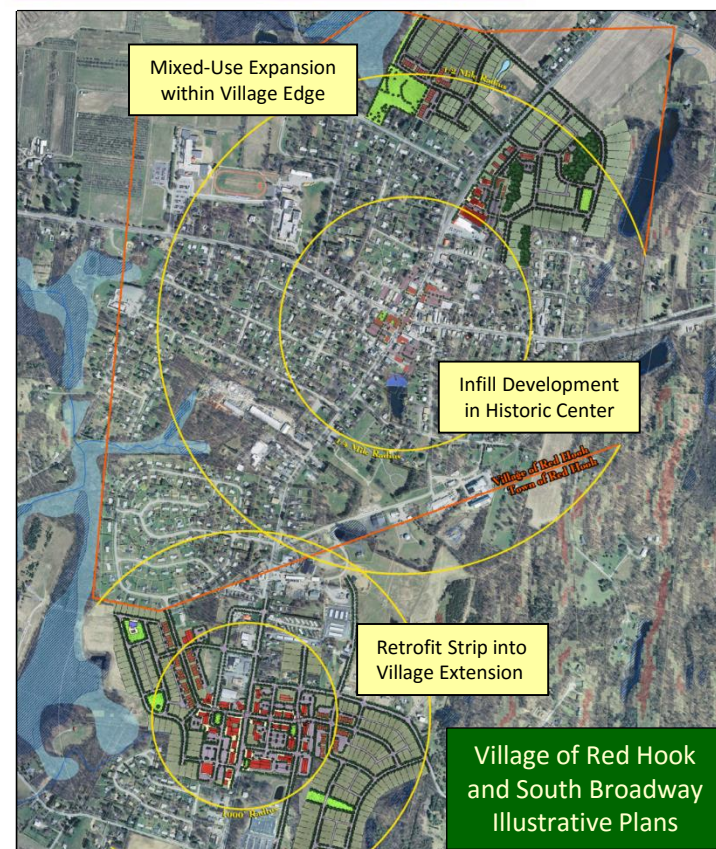
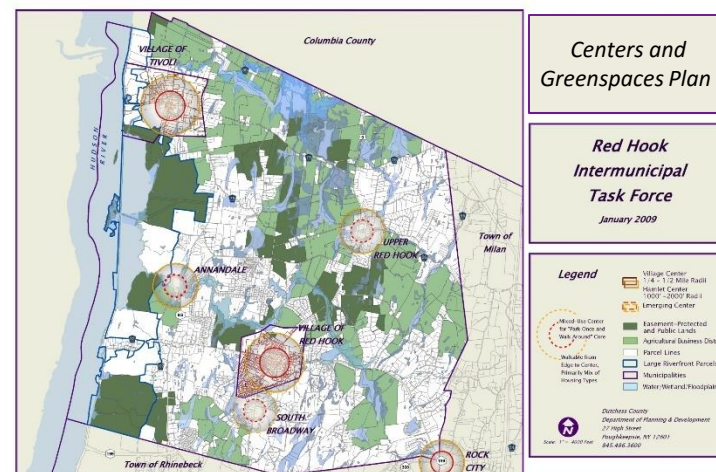
Centers and Greenspaces vision map for Dutchess County



Greenway Guide image shows that sharing driveways and parking and channeling left turns can ease congestion, drastically reduce potential accident points (x), add parking, and make space for business expansion.

I am an original Charter-signing member of the Congress for the New Urbanism, a national organization of architects, planners, design professionals, developers, businesspeople, government officials, and interested citizens who promote well-designed, walkable cities and neighborhoods. I was on the Board of Directors of the New York CNU Chapter for eight years and also taught for more than ten years in the Vassar College Urban Studies program.

Since the Red Hook Intermunicipal Plan was adopted in 2011, almost 1,000 acres of priority agricultural land have been protected. Also, through incentive zoning, the first major development proposal in the Traditional Neighborhood District next to the Village will contribute \$660,000 to the Town's purchase of development rights fund for additional farmland.



Sample Two-Page Greenway Guide

Site Specifics

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Manage rainwater runoff near its source to emulate the area's pre-development hydrology, using green infrastructure practices that allow rainwater to percolate into the soil.

Green Infrastructure, also known as low impact development, light imprint, or environmentally sensitive design, is used to avoid or minimize the impact of rainwater runoff on the environment, especially upon wetlands and water bodies located downstream from development. New buildings, streets, and parking lots introduce impervious surfaces and modify the existing ground cover and vegetation, thereby accelerating runoff, increasing flooding, and intensifying the amount of pollutants and sediment that drain to water sources.

The conventional approach to handling increases in runoff is to use storm drains and pipes to convey the runoff to a detention pond or nearby waterbody. This not only modifies the natural water cycle of the land, it involves highly engineered solutions that are expensive to construct and maintain. A much better approach is to replenish the groundwater by retaining the hydrologic cycle as close to the natural pre-development state as possible.

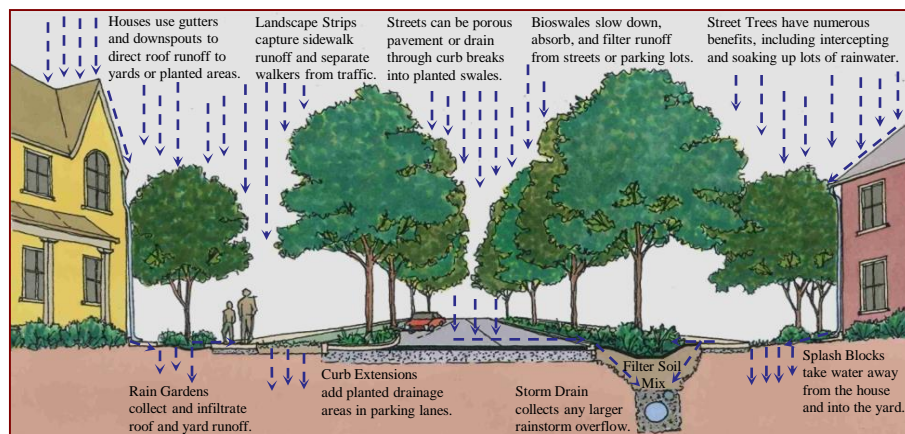
The New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual provides guidance on implementing and designing Green Infrastructure techniques. Under the New York State Stormwater Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES), Green Infrastructure methods are required for new development that will disturb one acre or more of soil, but these best practices should be implemented for projects of any size and redevelopment projects.



Bioretention swale at Marist College collects runoff from the parking lot, absorbs and filters rainwater, and includes an overflow grate for any flooding.



Green roof with greenhouse and vegetable gardens at New York City school reduces runoff and provides students all-season, hands-on ecological education.



Model green drainage strategies for a residential street.

Green Infrastructure Principles:

Conserve existing natural land. Reuse of sites and buildings in developed places saves farmland, woods, wetlands, and natural drainage systems.

Promote compact development. For example, building at an average of eight dwelling units per acre rather than one unit per acre consumes far less land, creates fewer roads and parking lots, and can reduce impervious surfaces in the watershed by 60% and overall runoff per dwelling by 74%.

Take advantage of existing site features. Existing trees, well-drained soils, and natural drainageways may be used to emulate the pre-development hydrology, fit development into the site, and reduce infrastructure costs.

Minimize new impervious surfaces. Less impervious area means less runoff treatment, so avoid excessive paving, road widths, and parking lots.

Absorb stormwater near the source. Provide the maximum level of on-site infiltration that is feasible, given the constraints in the area.

Green Infrastructure Techniques:

Green roofs absorb rainwater with lightweight soils and plantings or they can be used to grow food in urban areas.

Roof downspouts should be directed to rain barrels, cisterns, yards, or planted areas, not stormwater pipes or impervious driveways and roads.

Rain gardens are small landscaped depressions that gather and infiltrate rainwater, usually planted with native, ornamental vegetation.

Bioswales are linear vegetated ditches along roads and parking lots, used for infiltration instead of conventional curbs and storm drain systems.

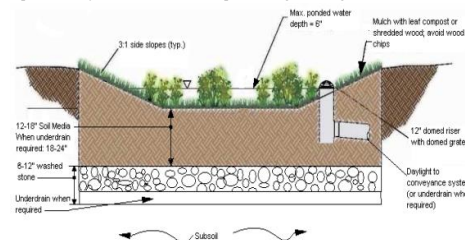
Stream daylighting replaces sub-surface pipes with an open stream to improve water quality, increase flood storage, and provide wildlife habitat.

Dry wells and infiltration chambers are underground storage structures, often used under parking lots on smaller parcels or in urban locations.

Planting trees is an effective way to soak up rainfall. In urban areas they can be used in planter boxes along sidewalks, roads, and parking lots.

Planted curb extensions are landscaped areas extending into parking lanes to absorb road runoff, provide space for street trees, and slow traffic.

Permeable pavement, including porous concrete and asphalt, pavers, and open block systems, allow water to pass through into a gravel base below.



Profile of a typical rain garden from the New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual, August 2010

Sources:

Rutgers Cooperative Extension, *An Introduction to Green Infrastructure Practices*, Fact Sheet FS1197, December 2012
USEPA, *Using Smart Growth Techniques as Stormwater Best Management Practices*, December 2005

Local Case Study: New York State Parks Taconic Region Headquarters in Staatsburg, Hyde Park

The park offices received the highest level of green building certification by incorporating a full range of energy and cost efficient features, such as low-flow water fixtures, geothermal heat pump system, solar panels, and model green infrastructure techniques.



Adaptive reuse of a vacant 1930s school building in the National Landmark Hudson River Historic District.



Underground pipe converted back into a stream, pond, and native vegetation for natural drainage and riparian habitat.



Rain garden built into a planter box at the building entrance.



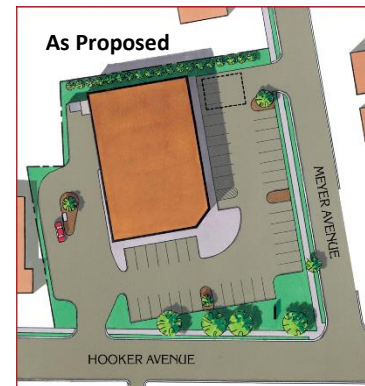
Permeable pavement and brick pavers in the parking lot with reinforced grass overflow parking to the rear.

Site Review and Design Experience

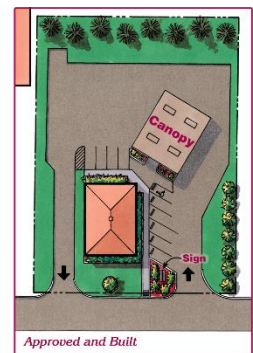
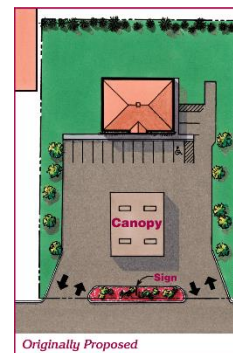
The Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development receives around 500 to 600 local referrals every year. As lead planner for multiple communities over 30 years, and in more recent years a supervisor of the entire referral process, I have reviewed thousands of site plans, special permits, variance requests, proposed plans, and zoning amendments and have submitted recommendations to local boards on all possible planning issues. I prepared comments on numerous environmental impact statements and other SEQRA documents. I am very familiar with New York State planning procedures and best practices in the field.

Beyond this wide range of planning review experience, my specialties are design guidelines and site plan alternatives. Too many local boards in Dutchess County are purely reactive to submitted proposals, limiting comments to compromises on minor improvements or just giving in to poorly conceived plans because of the minimal standards in their law and the arguments from attorneys and engineers on the applicant's side. My preference is to provide stronger, more specific guidance in the adopted Plan and Zoning Law. By offering highly visual standards up-front, applicants will better understand what a community wants and be able to propose more compatible projects in the first application. This strategy helps to streamline the development review process for proposals that fit in with locally approved guidelines. Developers are also more likely to make investments that truly improve the community with a less confrontational, more predictable process.

I recommend that potential applicants meet with the board very early in the process. Pre-application sessions are the best opportunity to sketch site design alternatives and make architectural suggestions, before developers get locked into expensive, already-engineered plans. I have prepared hundreds of such sketches, showing possible site plan improvements that are consistent with the community's Comprehensive Plan principles and zoning standards. Many have been successfully adopted and made a dramatic difference. However, most came to the county too late in the process, after the local board had already committed to decisions that were too difficult to reverse. Working directly with the City's boards and applicants at the very beginning of the process would make the ability to sketch design options an invaluable addition to the process.

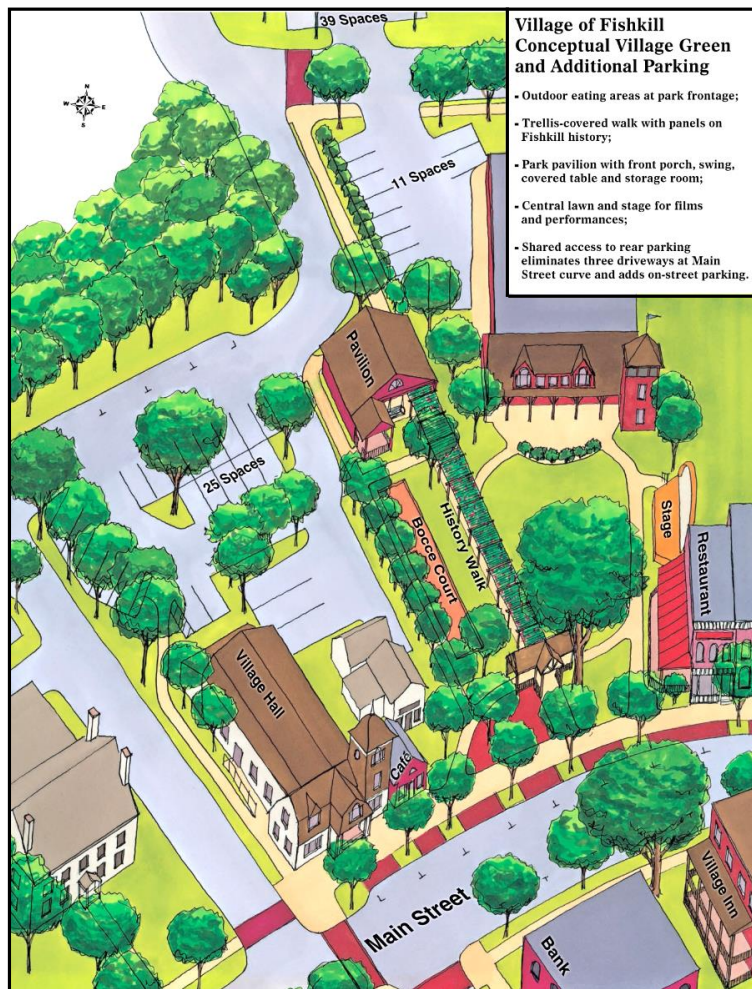


Proposed drug store in the City of Poughkeepsie would have taken down a house and featured front yard parking. My alternative saved the house, placed the store along the sidewalk, and put the parking in a secondary position to the side.

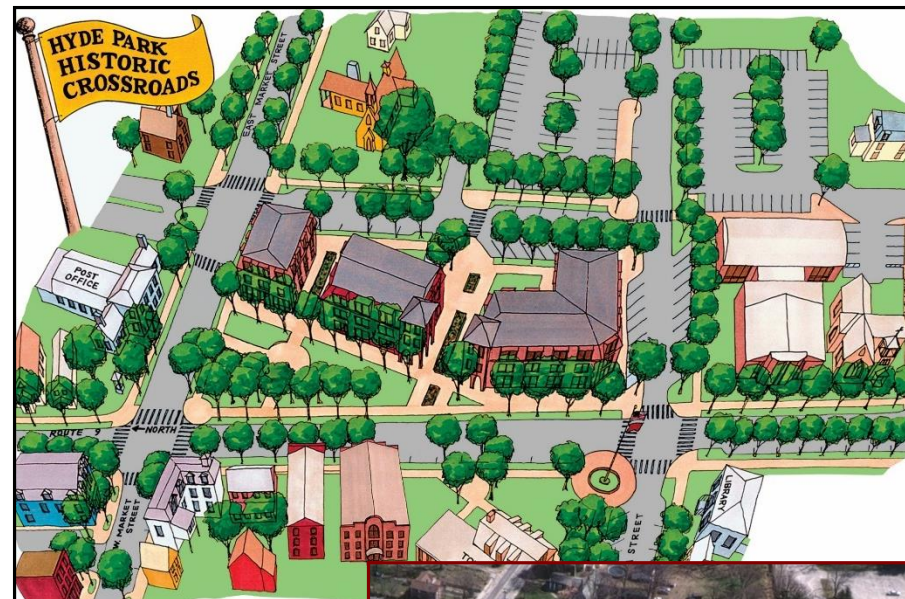


Alternative drawing convinced Rhinebeck to put the convenience store in front and the pumps and parking toward the rear, flipping the typical gas station layout for the first time in the region.





Three plans for inserting public greens in central places, incorporated into the Village of Fishkill Comprehensive Plan, the Crossroads Core zoning district in Hyde Park, and the Poughkeepsie Town Plan.



Rebuilding a Walkable Center

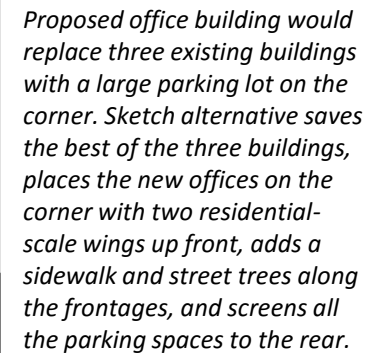
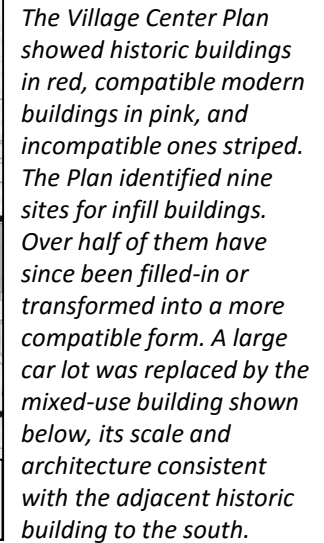
- Create corner park to visually link FDR-era Post Office and Library;
- Frame park with mixed-use buildings;
- Add on-street parking and street trees to slow cars and protect pedestrians;
- Place shared parking behind buildings.



Alumnae House Lawn Arlington Town Center

I have worked directly with many Planning and Zoning Boards, providing advice from the County and Greenway perspectives. In the 1990s I trained and supervised several county-employed planners who were hired to be consultants to local boards under contracts with eastern Dutchess communities. However, as a member of the Village of Rhinebeck Planning Board for the last 15 years, I fully appreciate the local viewpoint as well. Rhinebeck has a rotating Chair system, so I have also served as Board Chairman for several years.

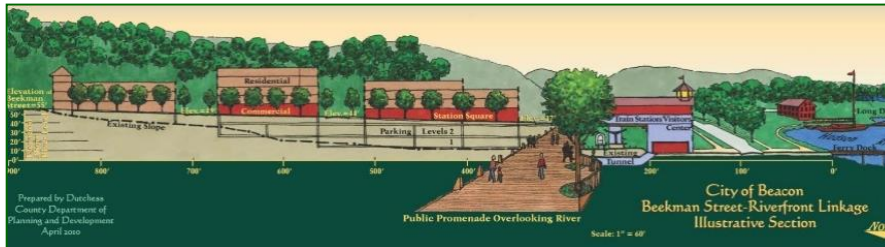
As in my county work, I am not hesitant to offer site design suggestions or sketch out possible alternative designs. I believe it is the job of board members to fully represent the best long-term interests of the Village and insist on wholesale changes if the proposals are not consistent with the community context and the stated purposes and standards in the adopted Plan and Zoning Code.



Beacon Experience

I have been the County's lead planner for Beacon for more than 20 years, answering questions about the City from the public, working with business owners and potential developers, and responding to requests from city officials. I helped to prepare the winning nomination for the intense state competition to find a site for the Rivers and Estuaries Center, now the Beacon Institute. I was a member of the Beacon Transportation Linkages Committee and the group working with the City and Metro-North, trying to create positive changes for the area currently dominated by dead-all-day parking lots around the Train Station. I prepared streetscape designs for the Chamber of Commerce's successful application for a sizable state Main Street improvement grant.

I was an active participant in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan process, providing assistance to the project committee and consultants and contributing maps and design drawings that were included in the Plan's appendix. The Beacon Centers and Greenspaces map highlighted major greenspaces, trails, and centers defined by walking distances. It also identified prime redevelopment opportunities and a series of locations for redesigned public places and transit stops, connecting the riverfront and Train Station with Main Street east to Fountain Square. More detailed drawings illustrated what a new Station Square might look like and how to replace the large parking lot frontage at the County Center on Main Street with a compatible new building and a pocket park.

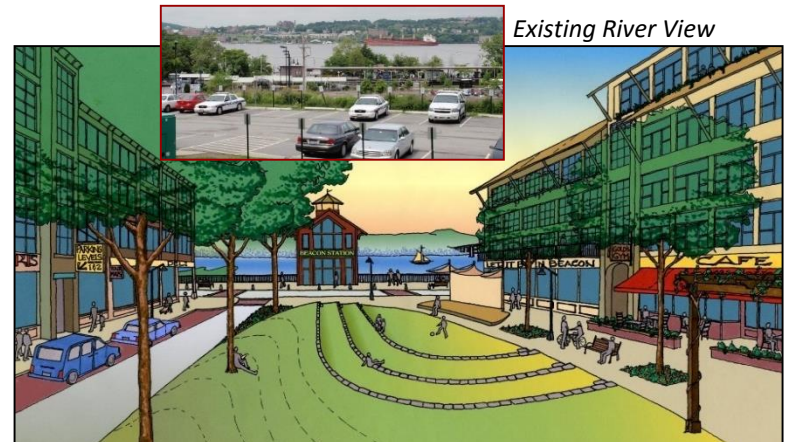


Design from Chamber of Commerce Main Street grant request showing:

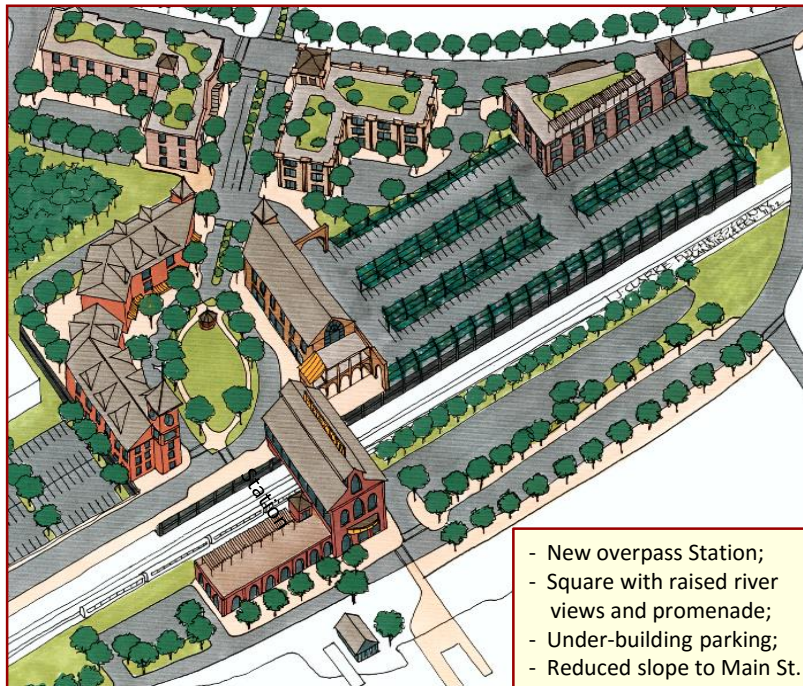
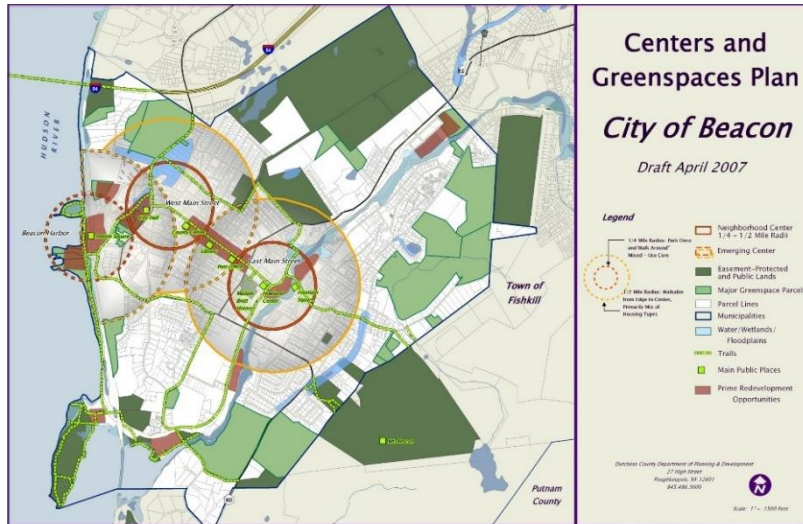
- reorganized parking lot;
- wider store sidewalk;
- 6' planter/rain garden;
- row of shade trees.



Existing River View



2009 drawings show a new Station and overpass, parking hidden below buildings, elevated Station Square, and promenade with extensive river views, thereby eliminating the existing steep slopes to Beekman Street.

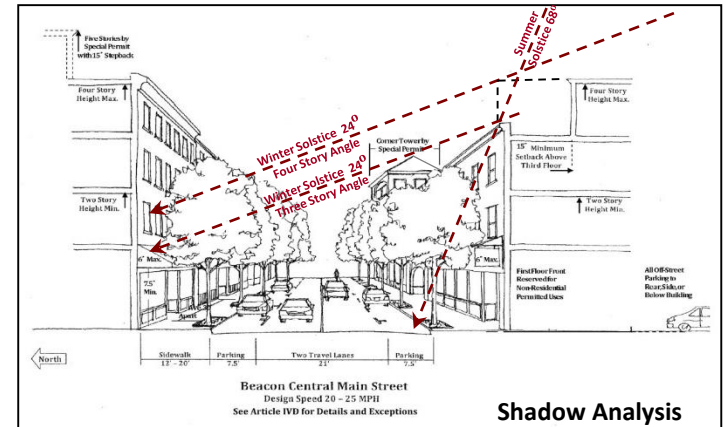
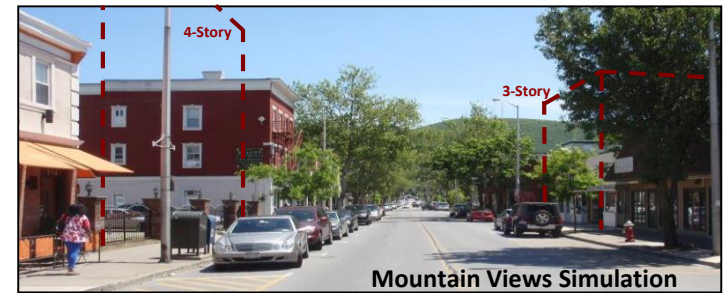


Centers and Greenspaces map and site plan sketches from 2007 Comprehensive Plan process, showing infill buildings linking the Train Station up to Main Street.

The City appointed the Central Main Street Linkage Committee in 2012 to rezone high priority redevelopment areas, as recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. Joel Russell, a land use attorney from Massachusetts, was hired to draft the amendments. I wrote the original mission statement for the Committee and, because of the limited nature of Joel's contract, I worked with the Committee Chair to help facilitate the public presentations, documentation of existing and historic conditions, work meetings, and revision process.

When questions were raised at the initial public meetings about the disruption of mountain views from taller buildings, I assembled a block-by-block photo-simulation analysis of the impacts from three- to four-story building heights. When other questions emerged about the shadows from four-story structures along the south side of Main Street, I produced a sketch showing shadow limits from the summer and winter solstices and a method to minimize shadows and apparent building heights by stepping back the top story 15 feet. This solution for a top story step-back was included in the final Central Main Street and Linkage districts, as were my streetscape sketches to illustrate the standards.

Joel drafted the overall zoning amendments, but asked me to write the Design Standards for the two districts. I also prepared two pages of annotated photos of Beacon buildings and other compatible structures to graphically demonstrate the individual standards. My original drawings from the Comprehensive Plan of potential Main Street and Linkage area infill buildings were also included in the final zoning amendments as Illustrated Sketch Plans.

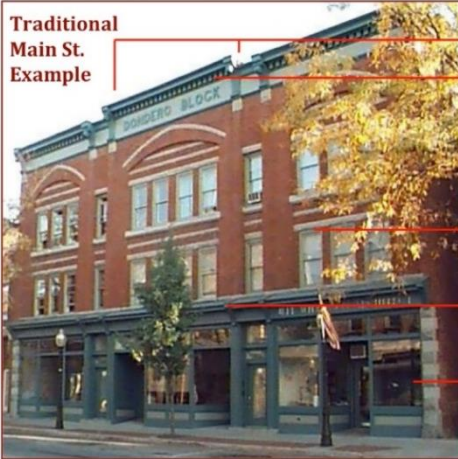


Original Main Street sketch from Comprehensive Plan to left illustrated potential infill ideas. The drawing to right, after adoption of the Central Main Street district, provided more detailed height, square footage, and parking counts for the County Center parcel and adjacent properties.



Photo-Illustrated Design Standards for the Central Main Street and Linkage Zoning Districts

Traditional Main St. Example



- Façade and roof line breaks at intervals of no more than 35'
- Top floor cornice feature
- Bay windows, balconies and open porches may encroach up to 4' over the sidewalk
- Primary window proportions greater in height than in width
- Secondary storefront cornice or first floor articulation
- Commercial first floor facing Main Street

More Modern Example



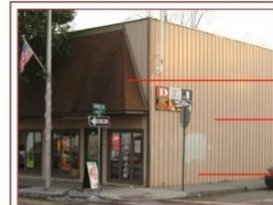
Design Standards Consistent Examples



- Wood, brick, stucco, stone, or fiber-cement siding and trim recommended
- Metal, glass, or canvas-type awnings and canopies or projecting signs may encroach up to 6 feet over the sidewalk above 7 feet
- Street trees planted on average 30' - 40' apart
- Commercial buildings shall have at least 70% glass on first floor facades between 2' and 10' above the sidewalk



Design Standards Inconsistent Examples



- Two-story minimum required, allowing second floor occupancy
- Architectural features and windows should be continued on all sides, avoiding any blank walls
- Vinyl, aluminum, or sheet metal siding or sheet trim shall not be permitted



- Buildings should have a top floor cornice feature
- Primary window proportions shall be greater in height than in width
- Commercial buildings shall have at least 70% glass on the first floor facade



- Vinyl and aluminum awnings shall not be permitted

Design Standards Consistent Examples



- Wood, brick, stucco, stone, or fiber-cement siding and trim recommended
- Bay windows, balconies and open porches may encroach up to 4' into the setback
- Required landscaping between the sidewalk and building to enhance the streetscape



- In the Linkage District, a setback of at least 15' behind the façade above the third story
- Primary window proportions greater in height than in width
- Secondary cornice or first floor articulation
- Residential buildings shall have at least 30% glass on first floor facades



- Top floor cornice feature
- Façade and roof line breaks at intervals of no more than 35'
- Street trees planted on average 30' - 40' apart
- Metal, glass, or canvas-type awnings and canopies may encroach up to 6 feet over the sidewalk above 7 feet

John Clarke

jclarkeplandesign@gmail.com

845.797.4152 cell

PLANNING AND DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development

Development and Design Coordinator, January 1999–November 2015

Senior Planner-Planner positions, January 1986–December 1998

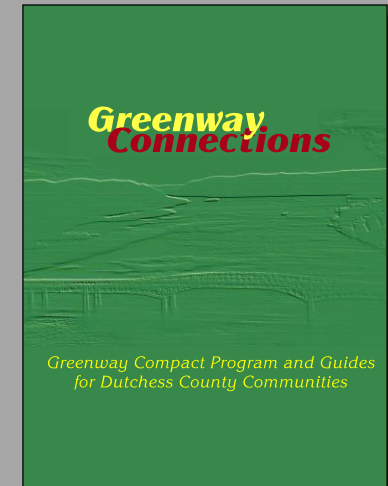
Community Development Consultant, April 1985–December 1985

Community Planning

- Authored and organized the award-winning *Greenway Connections*, the model Greenway Compact program with illustrated design guidelines for Dutchess County communities and the Hudson Valley.
- Created Department's innovative Centers and Greenspaces initiative, most fully implemented in the Town of Red Hook, which won awards from the NYS Planning Federation and Pace Land Use Center.
- Completed long-term community planning projects, including comprehensive plans for the Village of Rhinebeck and the towns of Clinton, Dover, Pleasant Valley, and Poughkeepsie.
- Wrote and illustrated more than a dozen Department publications, including issue-oriented newsletters and an affordable housing booklet entitled *Housing Designed to Build Neighborhoods*.
- Coordinated three-year historic survey project, documenting all significant resources in the County.
- Prepared numerous public presentations on planning issues, including statewide and regional conferences, Planning Federation training courses, college classes, and hands-on design workshops.

Urban Design

- Directed and designed major place-based plans, including Poughkeepsie Waterfront Redevelopment Strategy, LaGrange Town Center, and City of Poughkeepsie Transportation Strategy.
- Facilitated adoption of form-based zoning codes, including City of Beacon Central Main Street and Linkage districts and City of Poughkeepsie Waterfront-Transit Oriented Development district.
- Designed a wide variety of alternative site plans for proposed developments and illustrative plans for centers, including pedestrian-oriented designs for Rhinebeck, Hyde Park, Millerton, and Pine Plains.



PLANNING AND DESIGN EXPERIENCE (con't)

Supervision

- Supervised Planning Section, including budgeting, training, work programs, and daily problem-solving.
- Directed referral program for county recommendations on zoning changes and development proposals.
- Trained and supervised consulting planners under contract with eastern Dutchess communities.

Scenic Hudson, Inc., Historic Preservation Consultant, June 1984–April 1985

- Completed field surveys and archival research leading to three National Register Historic District nominations in the towns of Hyde Park and Wappinger.

ASSOCIATED EXPERIENCE

- **Congress for the New Urbanism** Charter member and NY-CNU Board of Directors for eight years.
- **Vassar College Adjunct Lecturer**, teaching for more than 10 years in the Urban Studies program.
- **Village of Rhinebeck Planning Board** member for 15 years, including several years as Chairman.

EDUCATION

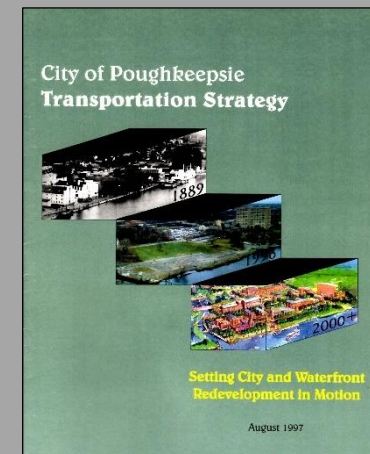
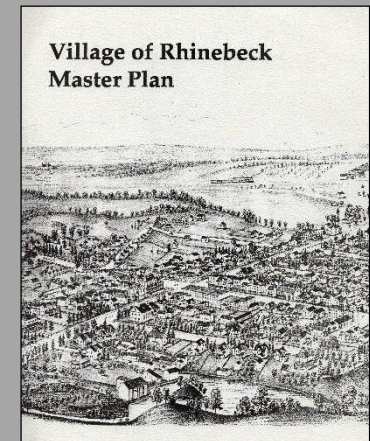
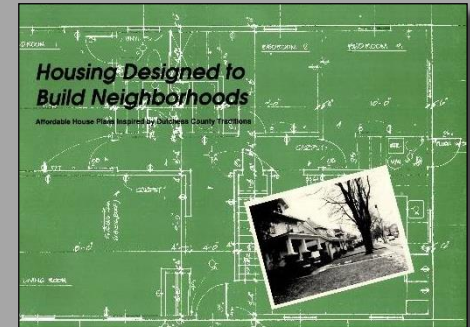
Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY Master of Science in Urban Design, May 1994

Department of Graduate Architecture Certificate of Excellence for Outstanding Merit in Urban Design

Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies, cum laude, May 1984

Phi Beta Kappa, General Honors and Department Honors

University of Oregon, Eugene, OR School of Architecture, September 1968 – June 1971



Work Program and Fees

As a long-time County Planner, a supervisor of community planners, and the department's lead planner for Beacon, as well as a local Planning Board member for 15 years, my many years of experience in the field clearly qualify me for the Beacon City Planner position. I am fully competent to provide a high level of service for all the work items listed in the RFP's Scope of Services, including:

- Provide advise to the Planning and Zoning Boards on site plans, subdivisions, special permits, variances, SEQRA reviews, and other regulated activities and procedural requirements;
- Prepare written reports with recommendations on development activities;
- Offer planning and design options and guidance on best practices;
- Provide technical services, as requested, to the City Council and other city officials;
- Produce studies and planning alternatives on special planning and zoning projects;
- Draft proposed amendments to the Zoning Code and update the City Zoning Map.

Over my career I have prepared countless comment letters and written reports and have given hundreds of presentations to local boards and large public audiences.

I am not looking to take on other regular community contracts or to work full time, so my schedule is very flexible and I can concentrate on Beacon's needs. I am available for night or day meetings with the City Council, Planning Board, other officials, consultants, and project applicants.

I have color printing, copying, and scanning capabilities up to 11" X 17" and can arrange any larger format printing needs through the graphics and GIS services at the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. My reputation for high-quality work, a strong record of creativity, and on-time, over-and-above performance is well earned and can be confirmed by contacting the references provided.

As a top-level professional in the field with specialty skills in urban design, I have set an hourly fee of \$125 per hour. I work as an individual consultant, keeping my overhead costs low and ensuring that the City of Beacon will get my personal attention. I understand that any administrative costs and customary overhead expenses will be covered by the basic hourly rate and that travel time is not to be reimbursed. I have talked to my insurance carrier and will certainly secure the levels of insurance required in the RFP before commencement of work.

References

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