

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Welcome to the third *Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter* brought to you by the Madison County Economic Development (CED) Committee. We hope this semi-annual newsletter provides an update to some of the initiatives the CED Committee has been working on as well as acts as a resource with tools and ideas to further advance the principles of Smart Growth within our communities. It is our hope that this newsletter can facilitate communication to help communities learn from each other.

In this issue:

- ◆ Madison County selected for U.S. EPA Smart Growth Implementation Grant, pg. 2
- ◆ Paul Beyer, Smart Growth Director for NY Dept. of State Visits Oneida, pg. 3
- ◆ Shades of Green Conference, pg. 4
- ◆ City of Oneida Walkability Study Report, pg. 5
- ◆ Trails of Madison County, pg. 6
- ◆ Smart Growth Principle Spotlight: 9) *Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective*, pgs. 7-9
- ◆ Resources, pg. 10

Please click on and utilize all the links and videos provided throughout the newsletter!



Paul Beyer, Director of Smart Growth for the NY Department of State, visited the City of Oneida on April 24th for a special presentation, “Smart Growth Planning for New York Communities.” **Read more on page 3.**

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Madison County selected for U.S. EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program



Madison County was one of only 5 places in the country selected by the U.S. EPA Smart Growth for the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program, worth \$65,000.

Through this program, EPA provides technical assistance from private-sector experts to help communities find the best tools and resources to plan for growth in ways that sustain environmental and economic progress and create a high quality of life.

The goals of the project are to provide well-informed recommendations for codes and policies for both comprehensive planning and current land use ordinances, needed if Madison County is to move forward with its desire to incorporate the key principles of Smart Growth such as mixed use and priority to multi-modal transportation. **The City of Oneida was chosen to pilot this project.** To accomplish this goal, EPA will help to develop an audit tool, similar to the [Smart Growth Audit Toolkit](#) created by Smart Growth Leadership Institute (SGLI) but tailored specifically for small town and rural communities with varying needs and at varying degrees of familiarity with smart growth. This toolkit will provide a framework with essential items that communities should look to incorporate to accomplish smart growth. After it is piloted in Oneida, it will continue to benefit Madison County as County staff will be trained on how to use the audit tool enabling them to assist the other 15 towns and 10 villages in Madison County with incorporating smart growth. The tool will also contain a series of long and short term metrics to measure success. Metrics will help show how specific recommendations worked or didn't work to achieve the communities' goals, giving the audit tool better replicability in Madison County and beyond.

The deliverables produced in this project have the potential to have impact well beyond the borders of Madison County. By providing assistance to rework the City of Oneida's comprehensive plan and land use ordinances, it can inform current shortfalls - most likely typical of many rural places - of existing policies. The development of a smart growth audit toolkit for rural communities has the ability to move the concepts of Smart Growth into action items for the thousands of rural communities throughout the country looking to grow more sustainably, but in need of more direction to accomplish it. **Ultimately, the U.S. EPA believes this tool will be used by rural places throughout the country.**

For full press release follow this link:

<http://www.madisoncounty.org/planning/topics/EPAPressRelease.pdf>

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter Spring 2012: Issue #3

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Smart Growth Director for New York State visits Oneida



Paul Beyer, Director of Smart Growth Planning at the NYS Department of State visited the City of Oneida for a Common Council's special meeting presentation, "Smart Growth Planning for New York Communities," which was held on Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 6:00 pm in City Hall.

During his presentation, Paul gave an overview of smart growth principles and provided examples of how different communities in New York are incorporating these principles into their ordinances, policies, and comprehensive plans. **Nearly 40 were in attendance** at the presentation including city leadership, Planning and Zoning Board members as well as representation from the Oneida Downtown Business Association, Oneida Chamber of Commerce, Oneida Public Library, and the general public.

The City said the presentation played a timely role as the City works to review and update of its comprehensive plan. The City of Oneida Planning Commission is hoping the update to their comprehensive plan and revise their zoning ordinances to incorporate smart growth principles in renewing its strategy for growth, development and establishing community-wide priorities.

PAC 99 filmed this special event which can be viewed below!

"[Oneida] has so many pieces of Smart Growth here, it is just a matter of refocusing attention on what you have." – Paul Beyer



"[Smart Growth] tries to plan for the economy, fiscal stability, environmental sustainability, and people. Now that is a great theory, but what does it mean on the street? You bring it down to Earth and it really means two things: communities have to make strategic decisions on **where they want to grow and **how** they want to grow." – Paul Beyer**

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



Speaker: Peter
Fleischer,
Director of Empire State

Shades of Green



Shades of Green in Madison County: A Green Living Experience, held on February 24, 2012, in Morrisville was a huge success with over 250 participants including 30 speakers and 22 exhibitors. The full day conference, which focused on living green, smart growth and sustainability, was a first of its kind for the county and featured four breakout sessions: energy/greenhouse gas reduction, sustainable diet, cradle to cradle design, and smart growth. With three simultaneous tracks going on for each session there was something there for everyone whether a homeowner, business owner or community leader.

The topics were geared to feature things that participants could take action on immediately and included home energy efficiency, improving business energy performance, shopping for local foods, gardening to eat with the seasons, community gardens, applications of reusing waste, green buildings, green jobs, composting, buses and trails in Madison County and historic preservation.



Speaker: Neil Murphy
President SUNY ESF

As with other CED initiatives, this the event serves as a “springboard” for participants to network and gather ideas and motivation for sustainable development.

Watch a 2 min. video of the event here: <http://www.oneidadispatch.com/articles/2012/02/25/news/doc4f482ab1458d4789764208.txt>

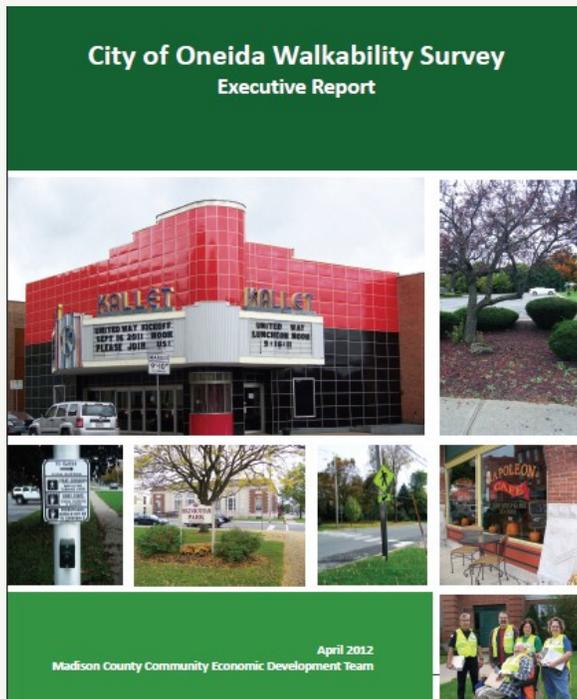


Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Walkability Study in Oneida

In the previous newsletter we highlighted the City of Oneida Walkability Study that was performed by the CED Committee on October 13, 2011. Since then, the survey results have been analyzed and a final report entitled "[City of Oneida Walkability Survey Executive Report](#)" was completed with recommendations provided to the City of Oneida Planning Commission to consider for their comprehensive planning.



The Report identifies specific observations including which street crossings are adequately marked and those that are not, areas where sidewalks are in need of repair and even a few places where they currently do not exist but would be very helpful, such as outside the City's Farmer's Market building. Overall, the study showed that the City of Oneida is an enjoyable place to walk; one of the largest contributors identified to the enjoyment of walking downtown were the businesses that took care in sprucing up their storefronts by providing seasonal decorations, flowers, shrubs, and outdoor seating and window shopping.

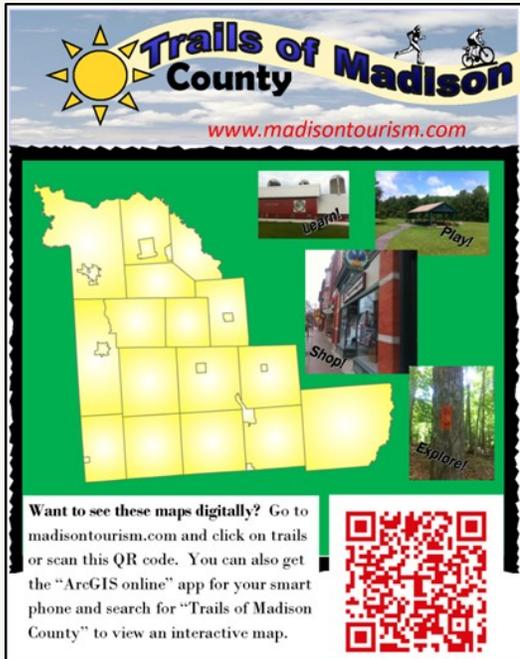
By implementing some of the recommendations from this study, the City of Oneida can enhance the walkability of its downtown which can lead to increased foot traffic for businesses and a healthier community.

Background: Through the use of [AARP Sidewalks and Streets survey](#), the CED Committee organized a walkability study along three routes in the City of Oneida. Facilitated by Madison County Public Health Department Health Educators and Madison County Planning Department staff, the study focused in on the downtown area. Under the theme "Put Your Best Foot Forward," community members were recruited and three groups were formed to walk the routes and conduct the survey. Volunteers included residents of the downtown who were of all ages and ranges of mobility as well members of the Oneida Police Department, Oneida Planning Department, and Oneida Fire Department.

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Trails of Madison County



Want to see these maps digitally? Go to madisontourism.com and click on trails or scan this QR code. You can also get the "ArcGIS online" app for your smart phone and search for "Trails of Madison County" to view an interactive map.

The CED Committee has been working with the variety of trail groups throughout the County to produce an eye-catching "Trails of Madison County" set of maps which will highlight the trails (horse, bike, walking, snowmobiling, etc.) of Madison County along with local restaurants and retailers near them.

In September 2011, Madison County was awarded the Central New York Community Foundation grant for the project; this money will be used to print 6,500 copies of the maps.

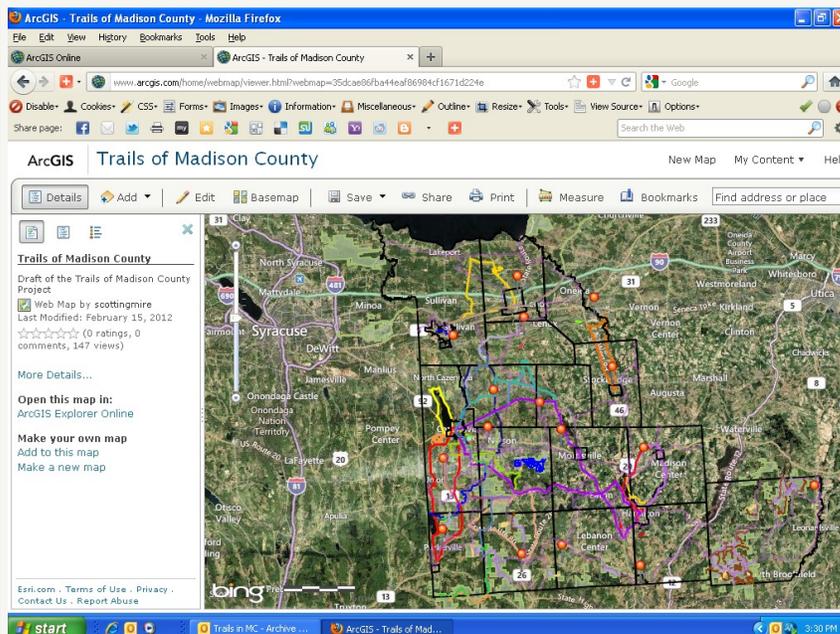
The 15 maps created with this project will be attached to carabineers for easy transport for people on the go. The maps will also feature QR codes so smart phone users can scan them to get more information. For instance the red QR code (looks like a bar code) to the left can be scanned from this e-newsletter, and it will take you directly to the Madison County Tourism website.

One of the greatest aspects of this project was working with the different groups to get the trails within

the county mapped into one place. We now have an up to date database of the variety of trails that exist.

Be on the lookout for these maps to be disseminated this summer!

The CED Committee is also looking to launch a digital version of these maps through ArcGIS online. This would allow anyone with access to the internet to locate any of the trails in the county and start exploring!



Planning for a Healthy Madison

County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Smart Growth Principle #9:

Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective

- This information is from [A Healthy Design for Smart Growth: Primer for Smart Growth](#) -

If development has not been occurring the way the community desires, there is a reason. Many times the rules in place do not match what a community says it wants. Local governments need to make certain that their policies, codes, and incentives are not unintentionally creating barriers to the type of development they wish to achieve. Policies and codes need to make it easier, not harder, for developers to do the right things. Similarly, there is a reason why most people are skeptical of new development: they look around and see what has already been built. New development needs to be done in a way that is predictable where a community knows what it is getting.

10 Smart Growth Principles

The 10 Smart Growth Principles are based on the findings of the Smart Growth Network, a network of non-governmental organizations. After identifying best practices, policies, and strategies and looking at experiences of communities around the country, the Smart Growth Institute developed these principles to help communities get the results they want from growth and development:

Mix Land Uses

Take Advantage of Compact Design

Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

Create Walkable Communities

Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas

Strengthen and Direct Development Toward Existing Communities

Provide a Variety of Transportation Options

Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective

Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

This



Even with chains, developers will make what the community wants as long as the community is clear about what that is.

Not this



There is a reason that development looks the way it does: there are no rules in place to make it look it otherwise.

“We deserve good, thoughtful developers who preserve our lifestyle and who work with our community instead of dividing it.”

— South Valley, New Mexico activist Pat McCraw

Solution: Madison County, through the U.S. EPA Smart Growth Implementations Assistance grant, is going to work to create a Smart Growth Audit Tool to help municipalities comb through their codes and identify areas that need to be updated to better reflect and help create the type of place their community envisions. Read more on page 2!

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Smart Growth Principle #9:

Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective

Town Boards, Planning Boards, and communities in general can often underestimate the power they have over determining the type of development that comes to their areas. Developers will make what the community wants as long as the community is clear about what that is. Therefore, not only is it important to revisit and revise policies and codes as necessary to ensure they are supporting the creation of places the community truly want to see, but **perhaps even more important is that those responsible in overseeing their approval feel empowered to uphold those policies so desirable infill development can truly be achieved.**

In a time where bigger, faster, cheaper is the mantra, communities have to be prepared to actively seek out other alternatives and hold to their community vision if they do not want to see their area lose its unique community character like what has happened to so many other places.

Subways around Madison County: An illustrative example demonstrating that developers will make what the community wants as long as the community is empowered and clear about what that is. These are all the same business but the type of space each creates and the uses it influences are very different.



V. Hamilton



V. Chittenango



V. Canastota



V. Cazenovia



C. Oneida



V. Morrisville

Your eyes aren't fooling you, it is the same business: What is different is the *type of space* each of these creates. The location and design of a building directly impacts the economic vitality, livability, health, environment, and cultural resources of a community. Development decisions influence where people choose to live, how they can move around, what activities are available to them, and how they interact and connect with the people and places around them. The quality of life impact of these decisions necessitate that communities be designed with intention: in a way that reflects what the community values and supports the lifestyle people want.

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter

Spring 2012: Issue #3

Smart Growth Principle #9:

Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective

Land Use Planning in Madison County						
	Comp Plan	Zoning Ordinances	Subdivision Regulations	Site Plan Review	Planning Board	
Oneida	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Towns
Brookfield	N	N	Y	Y	Y	
Cazenovia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
DeRuyter	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Eaton	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Fenner	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Georgetown	N	N	Y	N	Y	
Hamilton	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Lebanon	N	N	Y	Y	Y	
Lenox	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Lincoln	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Madison	Y	N	Y	Y*	Y	
Nelson	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Smithfield	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Stockbridge	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Sullivan	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Canastota	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Villages
Cazenovia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Chittenango	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
DeRuyter	N	N	N	N	N	
Earlville	N	N	N	N	Y	
Hamilton	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Madison	N	N	N	N	N	
Morrisville	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	
Munnsville	N	N	N	N	N	
Wampsville	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	

One of the most treasured aspects in New York State is the home rule municipal law which grants significant authority to local governments. As a home rule state, municipalities are the ones granted the power to determine the majority of the land use decisions within their jurisdictions. Legislature states “among the most important powers and duties granted by the legislature to a city government is the authority and responsibility to undertake city comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens.”

Despite this, some communities in Madison County have yet to adopt or take advantage of these tools. Out of the 15 towns in Madison County 7 do not have comprehensive plans and 4 do not have zoning; all have subdivision regulations. Of the 10 villages, 5 do not have comprehensive plans, 4 do not have zoning, and 4 do not have subdivision regulations. 4 villages in Madison County do not have planning boards. These tools and systems are important as they can help communities protect agriculture, property values, and the community’s way of life. These tools are often vital to creating environments where development decisions are predictable and fair (smart growth principle #9) which can attract business and economic development.

Source: *New York Land Use Tools: A 2008 Survey of Land Use Planning*, NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

* Information update since time of Survey

Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter Spring 2012: Issue #3

Resources:

The U.S. EPA recently released, “[Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes](#).” This publication provides a range of strategies organized around 10 chapters that focus on key issues that rural communities face. It is intended to provide smart growth policy options that communities can implement. These policies can help small towns and rural areas ensure that their development is fiscally sound, environmentally responsible, and socially equitable. It includes expected benefits and steps to implementation.

Other Resources developed by the CED Committee:

[Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter Spring 2011, Issue #1](#)

[Planning for a Healthy Madison County Newsletter Fall 2011, Issue #2](#)

[A Healthy Design for Madison County: Primer for Smart Growth](#)

Background on CED Committee:

The CED Committee was formed to help implement the [Health Improvement Planning \(HIP\) Report for Madison County](#) developed in October 2009. As part of the HIP Report, a community-based vision was developed:

“A place of natural beauty where families and individuals thrive”

In order to achieve this vision, the concepts of smart growth and sustainability were quickly identified as models to guide future growth and development in Madison County. The focus of the CED Committee, formed by a partnership with Madison County Planning Department and Madison County Public Health Department along with representatives from several other agencies and organizations, has been to provide towns, villages and the City of Oneida with tools and resources to implement Smart Growth.

Please look out for the next Planning for a Healthy Design Newsletter in Fall 2012. If you are not currently on the listserv to receive the newsletters and would like to be, please e-mail Gwen at gwen.williamson@madisoncounty.ny.gov

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