

## Planning and Zoning Board Members Recognized



Photo from Madison County's first Planning & Zoning Board Appreciation Dinner held on October 29, 2013

Local Planning and Zoning Boards are responsible for making a majority of the planning and land use decisions in our communities, but what many may not know is that these boards are made up almost entirely with volunteers. To recognize the service and dedication of these volunteers, Madison County held the first Planning and Zoning Board Appreciation Dinner on October 29, 2013 at the Colgate Inn in Hamilton, NY.

“These Planning and Zoning Board members are on the front line, creating comprehensive plans, spearheading key community projects, and implementing land use decisions that have real impact in shaping their community’s future, and we wanted to recognize them for all their time and the work they have been able to accomplish,” said Jamie Hart, Senior Planner at Madison County Planning Department. The Banquet also serves as an opportunity for participants to attain hours needed for their annual four hour training requirement

Nearly all of Madison County's 15 towns, 10 villages and 1 city were represented at the event with over 120 people in attendance. With such a high turnout, the County hopes to make the appreciation dinner an annual event.

Three communities were selected to receive the inaugural Smart Growth Award which honors accomplishments in planning and land use:

- Town of Brookfield Comprehensive Planning Committee – for efforts to create the Town's first Comprehensive Plan
- Village of Chittenango Creek Walk & Neighborhood Trail Committee – for moving from plan to reality with the highly acclaimed multi-use Creek Walk trail; Phase 2 of the project is currently underway
- Village of Cazenovia Planning Board and Allure Dance Studio Mixed-use Project – for rehabilitating an existing building in the downtown into a mixed-use building with both a business and upscale rental apartments

The communities awarded also made presentations on key aspects of their project and what they have learned along the way. Sharing experiences was a key focus of the banquet, and this first time event provided a unique opportunity for Board members from different municipalities to network and exchange ideas.

“It is great and inspiring to hear what other towns and villages in Madison County are doing,” said Bill Nickal, a Village of Chittenango Zoning Board & Appeals member and an award recipient as Co-President of the Village of Chittenango Creek Walk & Neighborhood Trail Committee. “Some of the best resources a community has are often from sharing and learning from neighboring communities so we hope this event can further open up that dialogue,” Hart said.