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AICP CM CONFERENCE #TBD

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AICP members must be in attendance for the duration of the event in order to receive CM Credit. **CM# TBD**



WORKSHOP AGENDA



8:30 AM	Registration, Networking, and Breakfast		
9 AM	Housing Trends Shaping the Capital Region: What Local Officials Need to Know Sandy Misiewicz & Mark Castiglione 1.5 CM		
10:30AM	Coffee Break Sponsored by MJ, LaBella, & Planning4Places		
11 AM	Auditorium Avoiding Article 78 Challenges: Building Defensible Land Use Decisions Mark Schachner 1.25 CM	Room 1 Site Plan Review - What to Look For, What to Ask Nan Stolzenburg 1.25 CM	Room 2 Short-Term Rental Regulation Paula Gilbert, Monica Ryan & Jasleen Jaspal 1.25 CM
12:15 PM	Lunch Sponsored by Hodgson Russ		
1:15 PM	Auditorium Let Them Build: Understanding New York's New SEQR Exemptions for Multifamily Housing Terresa Bakner & Steve Feeney 1.25 CM	Room 1 Area Variances: A Deep Dive Paula Gilbert, Monica Ryan & Jasleen Jaspal 1.25 CM	Room 2 Online Tools for Sustainability Planning Madison Hrysko & Josh Dranoff 1.25 CM
2:30 PM	Coffee Break Sponsored by MJ, LaBella, & Planning4Places		
3:00 PM	Auditorium Case Law Update Javid Afzali 1 Law CM	Room 1 Unlocking Housing Choices Matthew G. Rogers & Mirren Galway 1.25 CM	Room 2 Local Climate Action Planning Jim Yienger & Haley Balcanoff 1.25 CM
4:15 PM	End of Program		

SESSION DETAILS

9:00 AM Plenary Session
Housing Trends Shaping the Capital Region: What Local Officials Need to Know **1.5 CM**

Housing has become one of the most pressing issues facing communities throughout the Capital Region. From rising rents and shifting development patterns to short-term rentals, accessory dwelling units, and the relationship between housing growth and transportation infrastructure, local planning and zoning officials are increasingly being called upon to address complex housing challenges with limited resources and rapidly changing data.

This plenary session will highlight findings from a series of recent housing studies conducted by CDRPC in partnership with the Capital Region Transportation Council. Presenters will explore regional trends in housing affordability, the growth and geographic concentration of short-term rentals, emerging opportunities and policy considerations related to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and the continuing expansion of multifamily housing development throughout the region. The session will also introduce findings from CDRPC’s newest research examining the relationship between multifamily housing growth and transit accessibility, including how development patterns may influence future transportation demand and regional mobility. Recent analysis found that the majority of both completed and proposed large multifamily developments are occurring outside areas identified as most supportive of transit service, raising important questions about future land use and transportation planning.

Participants will gain a data-driven understanding of how housing trends vary across the Capital Region and leave better equipped to evaluate development proposals, update local policies, and support housing solutions that balance community character, affordability, economic growth, and transportation needs.

- Learning Objectives:
- Understand current housing market and affordability trends across the Capital Region.
 - Examine the impacts of short-term rentals, ADUs, and multifamily housing on local communities.
 - Explore the connection between housing development patterns and transportation investments.
 - Identify planning and zoning strategies that can help municipalities address housing needs while supporting long-term community goals.

Presented by: Mark Castiglione, AICP, Capital District Regional Planning Commission, and Sandy Misiewicz, AICP, Capital Region Transportation Council

11:00 AM Concurrent Session #1 | Auditorium
Avoiding Article 78 Challenges: Building Defensible Land Use Decisions **1.25 CM**

Article 78 challenge is the primary risk facing planning boards, zoning boards of appeals and other local land use bodies. While no Board can eliminate the possibility of litigation, most challenges can be avoided through sound procedures, complete Records, clear findings and well-reasoned decision-making. In this practical session, veteran municipal attorney Mark Schachner will discuss the most common procedural and substantive mistakes that lead to successful Court challenges and provide strategies for creating legally defensible land use decisions. Topics will include public hearing practices, SEQRA compliance, record development, findings and Resolutions, conflicts of interest and due process considerations. Participants will gain actionable guidance to help ensure that Board decisions are fair, transparent and capable of withstanding judicial review.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the purpose and scope of Article 78 proceedings.
- Identify common procedural errors that can expose Boards to legal challenges.
- Learn how to develop a thorough Record and findings that support Board actions.
- Apply best practices for conducting hearings and making defensible land use decisions

Presented by: Mark Schachner, Esq.

Site Plan Review - What to Look For, What to Ask | Room 1 **1.25 CM**

At its core, Site Plan is about understanding how a proposed project will actually work on the ground. This session will take planning board members through the essentials of site plan review – from understand what site plan review is (and isn’t) to reading the plans, asking the right questions, and making a well-supported decision. We’ll look at what to pay attention to on a site plan (such as access, parking, circulation, landscaping, environmental resources, and neighboring properties, as well as process including hearings, SEQR, and County 239-m review. The session will also walk through the review process, discuss the roles of the application, planning board, consultants, and public, and explore how to crate a clear record for decision-making. Participants will gain practical tips that planning board members can bring back to their next application review.

Presented by: Nan Stolzenburg

SESSION DETAILS

3:00 PM
Unlocking Housing Choices | Room 1

1.25 CM

This session offers planning and zoning board members, local leaders, and community planners practical strategies to update local land use regulations to expand housing opportunities. Moving beyond a one-size-fits-all approach, we will examine the full spectrum of regulatory reform - from minor code tweaks and "gentle density" (such as accessory dwellings, duplexes, and right-sized lot and parking standards) to larger-scale overhauls, commercial corridor retrofits, and mixed-use revitalization. Attendees will also learn effective methods to audit existing land use patterns, evaluate current zoning barriers, and meaningfully engage residents and stakeholders to build local consensus around housing solutions tailored to their community.

Presented by: Matthew G. Rogers & Mirren Galway

Online Tools for Sustainability Planning | Room 2

1.25 CM

An overview of CDRPC's online Climate Action Portal and Natural Resource Inventory Mapper, showcasing how these tools support climate action, sustainable land use planning, and Natural Resource Inventory development. As a visual and dynamic interface to the Capital Region Climate Action Plan, the Climate Action Portal includes a wide variety of indicators of Capital Region municipal climate actions and how these actions are helping to achieve the goals of the Capital Regional Climate Action Plan. This session will also give a tutorial overview of how municipalities and use the Natural Resource Inventory Mapper to review development proposals within a mapped context of the natural resources present on any development site. In addition this session will demonstrate how municipalities can use the NRI Mapper tool to develop their own community NRIs, including how to access the ready-made maps included in the application, as well as how to integrate them into the NRI template also included with the application.

Presented by: Madison Hrysko & Josh Dranoff

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Session: Housing Trends Shaping the Capital Region: What Local Officials Need to Know

Sandy Misiewicz, AICP, has been with the Capital Region Transportation Council, formerly the Capital District Transportation Committee, for over 25 years. The Transportation Council is the designated metropolitan planning organization for the counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady, responsible for facilitating a regional transportation planning process. With a background in environmental, land use, and transportation planning, Misiewicz worked in various planning roles at the Transportation Council until becoming executive director in 2021. As executive director, Misiewicz manages activities related to a federally funded annual planning work program, a capital program of federally funded transportation projects, and the implementation of a regional transportation plan. Misiewicz holds a bachelor's in environmental studies from the University at Binghamton and a master's in urban and regional planning from the University at Albany. She is also a member of the American Planning Association and the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Mark Castiglione, AICP, is CDRPC's fifth Executive Director, having joined the Commission in 2016. Mark has worked with both public sector and nonprofit organizations to advance regional planning, economic development and environmental protection goals. His collaborative approach, focus on leveraging assets and finding common ground underpins his work at CDRPC. Mark is a certified planner by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and currently serves as the Treasurer of the American Planning Association (APA) - New York Upstate State Chapter. He holds a BA in U.S. History and a Master Degree in Regional Planning from the University at Albany, State University of New York. Mark is a native of New York State, originally from the Kingston area. He, his wife Elizabeth and their family reside in the City of Albany.

Session: Avoiding Article 78 Challenges: Building Defensible Land Use Decisions

Mark Schachner is the Senior Principal Attorney of MILLER, MANNIX, SCHACHNER & HAFNER, LLC in Glens Falls. While the firm maintains a general practice of law, Mr. Schachner's efforts are concentrated in the areas of municipal, environmental, land use and planning/zoning law. Mr. Schachner and his colleagues represent numerous municipalities in Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Saratoga, Warren and Washington Counties. They also serve as Counsel to the Saratoga County Water Authority, Gloversville-Johnstown Joint Sewer Board and Glens Falls Open Door Mission. His practice includes extensive participation in regulatory proceedings before the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Adirondack Park Agency and Lake George Park Commission. Mr. Schachner is a graduate of Brown

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

University and Boston University School of Law. He is author of the chapter entitled “Environmental Law – New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”)” in the book Pitfalls of Practice published by the New York State Bar Association and several articles on Open Government and Ethical Issues in Planning and Zoning. Mr. Schachner has lectured about municipal, environmental, planning and zoning law matters at numerous conferences throughout the State and is a Vice President of the New York Planning Federation

Session: Site Plan Review – What to Look For, What to Ask

Nan Stolzenburg, FAICP, CEP, is the founder and principal consultant of Community Planning & Environmental Associates (CP&EA), with more than 30 years of experience in rural community and environmental planning across New York. She has worked with more than 80 communities on comprehensive planning, land use, SEQR, natural resource inventories, zoning, and economic development. Nan co-authored the award-winning NYS DEC SEQR Environmental Assessment Form Workbooks and was inducted as a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners (FAICP) in 2022. She also teaches planning and community design as an adjunct faculty member at the University at Albany.

Sessions: Area Variances: A Deep Dive | Short-Term Rental Regulations

Paula Gilbert is the Local Government Training Manager for the New York State Department of State, Division of Local Government Services. Prior to joining the Department of State in 2017, she worked for three years as the Executive Director and two years as an Urban Policy Associate at the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of NYS, Inc., a technical assistance and advocacy not-for-profit organization working with a group of more than 140 affordable housing and community development organizations within the urban and suburban neighborhoods of New York State. Paula received a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies and Planning and a Master’s in Regional Planning from the University at Albany, where she interned with the New York Planning Federation.

Monica Ryan is a Local Government Specialist with the New York State Department of State. Prior to joining the Department of State, she was a planning consultant for more than twenty years, specializing in zoning and community revitalization planning. Simultaneously, she was the planner for her town, working with the town’s boards and staff, residents, and developers on planning and development. Monica began her

career in the NYS Legislature. She received her Master’s Degree in Regional Planning from the University at Albany and a Bachelor of Arts from Siena College.

Jasleen Jaspal is a Local Government Specialist with the New York State Department of State, Division of Local Government Services. Jasleen’s planning career began with the City of Albany’s Department of Planning and Development, where she advanced from an intern to a Senior Planner. She managed development review processes, supervised planning staff, and served as a frontline resource for municipal officials, boards, and community members navigating land use and regulatory decisions. She subsequently joined the Capital District Regional Planning Commission as Senior Planner, where she led regional water quality initiatives, including source water protection planning and the advancement of green infrastructure practices, and provided direct technical assistance to municipalities across the region. Her promotion to Planning and Economic Development Manager provided her with the opportunity to deliver continued leadership and support to economic development activities in the region by administering federal Economic Development Administration programming, coordinating resources through the Northern Borders Regional Commission, and supporting Foreign Trade Zone operations. Prior to her planning career, Jasleen built two decades of experience in hospitality and residential facility management, allowing her to cultivate cultural competence, adaptive leadership, and interpersonal fluency that remain central to effective technical assistance and community engagement. She holds a BA in Urban Studies & Planning and Geography from the University at Albany.

Session: Let Them Build: Understanding New York’s New SEQR Exemptions for Multifamily Housing

Terresa M. Bakner, Esq., a partner at Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna LLP, represents clients in permitting, administrative and enforcement proceedings before State and federal agencies, such as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York State Department of Public Service, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and OSHA, among others. Ms. Bakner assists in obtaining land use approvals for commercial, industrial, residential and energy projects and represents clients in projects involving brownfield redevelopment, wetlands laws and regulations, protection of endangered species and critical habitats, and the preservation of archaeological and historic resources. Ms. Bakner is a past Chair of the Environmental Law Section of the New York State Bar Association. Ms. Bakner routinely lectures on wetlands regulations, the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act, and other land use and development topics, including RLUIPA, for organizations such as the New York Planning Federation and the New York State Association of Towns.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Stephen J. Feeney is a professional planner with 40 years of experience providing technical assistance to many communities on a variety of zoning and planning matters, environmental impact review, economic development, land preservation, and development issues. A past member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 1993, Steve recently retired from the Schenectady County Department of Economic Development and Planning where he worked for over 30 years. Since 2000 he has served as Chairman on the Town of Guilderland Planning Board and is the past Chairman of the Capital Region Transportation Council Planning Committee. He received a Bachelor of Science degree (forest biology) from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse, N.Y. and a Master of Public Administration (public finance) from the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University of Albany.

Session: Local Climate Action Planning

Jim Yienger is Principal of Climate Action Associates (CAA) where he leads the firm’s policy and technical services for state and local government clients. He has been working with local communities on energy and climate planning for more than 15 years helping them find practical solutions for protecting the environment while saving money and improving services. He is a recognized leader in New York and led a statewide GHG Working Group convened by NYSERDA to develop protocols and policy recommendations for the Climate Smart Communities Program. Prior to founding CAA, Jim led the technical division of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability where he created that organizations tools and services. He has published numerous peer-reviewed papers in the fields of air pollution, emissions, climate, energy, and local sustainability.

Haley Balcanoff is a Senior Sustainability Planner at CDRPC. She provides outreach and technical support with NYSERDA’s Clean Energy Communities and NYS Climate Smart Communities programs. Haley has assisted many communities in earning match-free grant funding for clean energy projects, as well as facilitated the development of municipal greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans. She graduated with distinction from Pratt Institute’s Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment with a Master of Science in Sustainable Environmental Systems and has a BA from Fordham University.

Session: Case Law Update

Javid Afzali, as a commercial litigator and trusted strategic advisor, counsels domestic and international companies on issues involving a range of business, real estate, land use, and environmental matters. He works directly with company principals and in-house counsel to help them achieve their goals related to corporate governance, project development, corporate and commercial dispute resolution, and business and ownership separations. Given that many of Javid’s global clients are from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, he is knowledgeable about issues that multinational organizations face doing business in the United States, particularly in New York state, as well as contract disputes governed by New York law.

Session: Unlocking Housing Choices

Matthew G. Rogers is a Senior Planner at LaBella Associates who brings extensive, hands-on experience guiding New York municipalities through zoning modernization, comprehensive planning, and regulatory reform. He specializes in helping communities of all sizes evaluate outdated land use frameworks, dismantle barriers to development, and craft practical, community-supported regulatory tools that unlock diverse housing opportunities, encourage mixed-use infill, and streamline local review procedures. Having partnered closely with local boards, advisory committees, and stakeholders across the state, Matt focuses on bridging the gap between local vision and actionable, legally sound code updates that balance new housing growth with community character.

Mirren Galway is a Planner with LaBella Associates where she has a focus in public engagement, downtown revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, and comprehensive planning. She works directly with communities all over upstate New York, focusing on creative, implementable, and community driven solutions. Based in Albany, she has a background in public administration, starting her career in the New York State Assembly and graduating with a bachelor’s in political science and a master’s in public administration from the University at Albany. Mirren also serves as secretary to the Capital District Planner’s Association.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Session: Online Tools for Sustainability Planning

Madison Hrysko is the GIS and Data Analyst at CDRPC, where she works on a variety of data-focused planning topics relevant to the Capital Region. Her work includes supporting data-driven planning, developing maps and visualizations, and translating data into useful information for communities and regional partners. Madison joined CDRPC in 2023 after earning her Master of Science in Biodiversity, Conservation, and Policy and Master of Science in Geographic Information Science from the University at Albany.

Josh Dranoff is a Senior Sustainability Planner at CDRPC with over 10 years of experience in clean energy and sustainability with local governments and private institutions. He has been part of the Sustainability Team for over four years, providing technical assistance and outreach to communities engaged in NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities program and NY DEC's Climate Smart Communities program. He also assists communities with Climate Action Planning and community-level GHG inventories through the Capital Region's recently released Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) under EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant. He received a Master of Science in Sustainable Systems from the Golisano Institute for Sustainability at the Rochester Institute of Technology and a B.S. in Biology from SUNY Oswego.

CDRPC

The Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) is a regional planning and resource center serving the upstate New York counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady. CDRPC objectively analyzes data, trends, opportunities, and challenges relevant to the Region's economic development and planning communities.

CDRPC serves the best interests of both the public and private sectors by promoting intergovernmental cooperation; communicating, collaborating, and facilitating regional initiatives; and sharing information and fostering dialog on solutions to regional problems. Our organization provides added capacity to local municipalities through its regional coordination programs. By partnering with CDRPC, local municipalities can leverage the expertise of a full-time professional planning staff with significant network resources to provide added benefit to the work regularly performed in the Region.

PURPOSE

CDRPC was established in 1967 as a regional planning board by a cooperative agreement among the counties of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady. Its original purpose was to perform and support comprehensive planning work, including surveys, planning services, technical services, and formulating plans and policies to promote sound and coordinated development of the entire Region.

CDRPC PROGRAMS

